

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

□ 1600

COLLECTION OF FEES FOR TRIPLOID GRASS CARP CERTIFICATION INSPECTIONS

Mr. SAXTON. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill (S. 268) to authorize the collection of fees for expenses for triploid grass carp certification inspections, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read as follows:

S. 268

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. COLLECTION OF FEES FOR TRIPLOID GRASS CARP CERTIFICATION INSPECTIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Director of the Fish and Wildlife Service (referred to in this section as the "Director"), may charge reasonable fees for expenses to the Federal Government for triploid grass carp certification inspections requested by a person who owns or operates an aquaculture facility.

(b) AVAILABILITY.—All fees collected under subsection (a) shall be available to the Director until expended, without further appropriations.

(c) USE.—The Director shall use all fees collected under subsection (a) to carry out the activities referred to in subsection (a).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. SAXTON] will be recognized for 20 minutes, and the gentleman from California [Mr. MILLER] will be recognized for 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. SAXTON].

Mr. SAXTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S. 268. This legislation establishes a fee-for-service system whereby the Secretary of the Interior may collect fees from private fish producers for the cost of grass carp certification inspections. It also allows the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to retain those funds for that program.

This legislation is important because many States require that grass carp, which are imported by these States to eat aquatic vegetation, must be certified as sterile or triploid. This is to ensure that these carp do not reproduce and have an adverse effect on the environment.

The Fish and Wildlife Service has been certifying the sterility of grass carp since 1979. In fiscal year 1994, over \$70,000 was spent by the Service on this program. Due to budget constraints, however, the Fish and Wildlife Service has announced that it is no longer able to bear the cost of this program. Private producers have notified the Service that they are willing to pay certification costs. This legislation will allow the fee-for-service to be established so the Service can continue the program at no cost to the Federal Government.

This legislation was the subject of a hearing in my subcommittee on June 8

and it was unanimously approved by the House Resources Committee.

It is an excellent example of how a user fee can be established that is both beneficial to those who receive the inspection services and to our taxpayers.

I want to compliment our distinguished colleague from Arkansas, BLANCHE LAMBERT LINCOLN, for her leadership on this legislation.

I urge an "Aye" vote on S. 268.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Mr. MILLER of California asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I strongly support this legislation, which is a very good example of a private-public partnership that benefits the taxpayers, private industry, and the environment.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from Arkansas [Mrs. LINCOLN].

(Mrs. LINCOLN asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. LINCOLN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the gentleman from California, Mrs. MILLER, as well as the gentleman from New Jersey, Chairman SAXTON, for their assistance in this matter.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to urge adoption of this legislation before the House today that epitomizes the type of relationship that should exist between private industry and the Federal Government.

For the past several years the Fish and Wildlife Service has conducted a certification program for the triploid grass carp. This beneficial fish is utilized by 29 States to help control aquatic vegetation in lakes ponds, and streams. The triploid grass carp provides an effective, economical method of caring for these environments without the use of chemical agents.

As the use of the fish has increased over the years, a number of States have adopted regulations which require the grass carp to be certified as sterile. If a reproducing carp were introduced into these environments it could cause serious damage to the existing fish species. The certification process has assured States that the fish were sterile, thereby allowing their shipment by private aquaculturists.

In the past year the Fish and Wildlife Service conducted 550 triploid grass carp inspections at no charge to the producer. The cost of the program was \$70,000. However, this year because of the dire fiscal situation that faces many agencies, the Fish and Wildlife Service has indicated that it cannot afford to operate the program.

The producers who have utilized this program have agreed to pay a fee that would cover the entire cost of the program with the understanding that the funds would be utilized for this purpose

only. The Fish and Wildlife Service supports this arrangement but lacks the authority to implement it without congressional authorization.

This bill is identical to one that I introduced earlier this year and I appreciate the support of Chairman SAXTON, Chairman YOUNG, and Congressmen STUDDS in bringing this measure to the floor today. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I want to commend the gentlewoman from Arkansas [Mrs. LINCOLN] for her work on this legislation. She has garnered partisan support for this legislation. We urge support of the bill.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SAXTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I would just like to build on the comments of the gentleman from California, Mr. MILLER. The gentlewoman from Arkansas, Mrs. LINCOLN, has in fact done a yeoman's job on this bill in an atmosphere where partisan politics seems to play an overly aggressive role around here, both on the committee level and here on the House floor.

She has been able to, No. 1, fashion a bill that makes sense and, No. 2, to get support, I believe almost unanimous support, on the committee in a very, very businesslike and professional way. We appreciate that approach and are glad to have been able to work with the gentlewoman on this.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I strongly support S. 268 and feel it is appropriate to allow private fish producers to fully reimburse the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for the costs of their certification to triploid grass carp.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service began its involvement in the DNA certification of triploid grass carp nearly two decades ago. Since that time, the program has grown to more than 550 inspections per year for private producers whose fish are shipped to some 30 States. In fiscal year 1994, over \$70,000 was spent by the Service on this program.

This certification process is necessary to ensure that only sterile grass carp are released in public and private waters to control aquatic vegetation.

Earlier this year, the Fish and Wildlife Service announced its intention to terminate this certification program. Since States will not allow the release of grass carp without the Service's stamp of approval, this legislation has become necessary.

S. 268 will establish a fee-for-service system and it will allow the Fish and Wildlife Service to retain those collected funds to cover the expenses of the triploid grass carp certification inspections.

I urge an "aye" vote on this measure and compliment our colleague, BLANCHE LAMBERT LINCOLN, for her leadership in bringing this matter to our attention.

Mr. SAXTON. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. RIGGS). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. SAXTON] that the House suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill, S. 268.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the Senate bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SAXTON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on S. 268, the bill just passed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New Jersey?

There was no objection.

EXTENDING CERTAIN VETERANS' AFFAIRS HEALTH AND MEDICAL CARE EXPIRING AUTHORITIES

Mr. STUMP. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2353) to amend title 38, United States Code, to extend certain expiring authorities of the Department of Veterans Affairs relating to delivery of health and medical care, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 2353

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. EXTENSION OF EXPIRING AUTHORITIES OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) HOSPITAL CARE AND MEDICAL SERVICES FOR PERSIAN GULF VETERANS EXPOSED TO TOXIC SUBSTANCES.—(1) Section 1710(e)(3) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking out "December 31, 1995" and inserting in lieu thereof "December 31, 1998".

(2) Section 1712(a)(1)(D) of such title is amended by striking out "December 31, 1995" and inserting in lieu thereof "December 31, 1998".

(b) CONTRACT AUTHORITY FOR ALCOHOL AND DRUG ABUSE CARE.—Subsection (e) of section 1720A of such title is amended by striking out "December 31, 1995" and inserting in lieu thereof "December 31, 1997".

(c) NURSING HOME CARE ALTERNATIVES.—(1) Section 1720C(a) of such title is amended by striking out "September 30, 1995" and inserting in lieu thereof "December 31, 1997".

(2) The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to Congress, not later than March 31, 1997, a report on the medical efficacy and cost effectiveness, and disadvantages and advantages, associated with the use by the Secretary of noninstitutional alternatives to nursing home care.

(d) HEALTH SCHOLARSHIPS PROGRAM.—(1) Section 7618 of such title is amended by striking out "December 31, 1995" and inserting in lieu thereof "December 31, 1997".

(2)(A) The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to Congress, not later than March 31, 1997, a report setting forth the results of a study evaluating the operation of the health professional scholarship program under subchapter II of chapter 76 of title 38,

United States Code. The study shall evaluate the efficacy of the program with respect to recruitment and retention of health care personnel for the Department of Veterans Affairs and shall compare the costs and benefits of the program with the costs and benefits of alternative methods of ensuring adequate recruitment and retention of such personnel.

(B) The Secretary shall carry out the study under this paragraph through a private contractor. The report under subparagraph (A) shall include the report of the contractor and the comments, if any, of the Secretary on that report.

(e) ENHANCED-USE LEASES OF REAL PROPERTY.—(1) Section 8169 of such title is amended by striking out "December 31, 1995" and inserting in lieu thereof "December 31, 1997".

(2) The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to Congress, not later than March 31, 1997, a report evaluating the operation of the program under subchapter V of chapter 81 of title 38, United States Code.

(f) COMMUNITY-BASED RESIDENTIAL CARE FOR HOMELESS CHRONICALLY MENTALLY ILL VETERANS.—Section 115(d) of the Veterans' Benefits and Services Act of 1988 (Public Law 100-322; 38 U.S.C. 1712 note) is amended by striking out "September 30, 1995" and inserting in lieu thereof "December 31, 1997".

(g) DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM OF COMPENSATED WORK THERAPY AND THERAPEUTIC TRANSITIONAL HOUSING.—Section 7 of Public Law 102-54 (38 U.S.C. 1718 note) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking out "During fiscal years 1991 through 1995, the Secretary" and inserting in lieu thereof "The Secretary"; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

"(m) SUNSET.—The authority for the demonstration program under this section expires on December 31, 1997."

(h) HOMELESS VETERANS PILOT PROGRAM.—The Homeless Veterans Comprehensive Service Programs Act of 1992 (Public Law 102-590) is amended as follows:

(1) Section 2(a) (38 U.S.C. 7721 note) is amended by striking out "September 30, 1995" and inserting in lieu thereof "December 31, 1998".

(2) Section 3(a) (38 U.S.C. 7721 note) is amended by striking out "during fiscal years 1993, 1994, and 1995."

(3) Section 12 (38 U.S.C. 7721 note) is amended by striking out "each of the fiscal years 1993, 1994, and 1995" and inserting in lieu thereof "each fiscal year through 1998".

SEC. 2. REPORTS.

(a) REPORT ON CONSOLIDATION OF CERTAIN PROGRAMS.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to Congress, not later than March 1, 1997, a report on the advantages and disadvantages of consolidating into one program the following three programs:

(1) The alcohol and drug abuse contract care program under section 1720A of title 38, United States Code.

(2) The program to provide community-based residential care to homeless chronically mentally ill veterans under section 115 of the Veterans' Benefits and Services Act of 1988 (38 U.S.C. 1712 note).

(3) The demonstration program under section 7 of Public Law 102-54 (38 U.S.C. 1718 note).

(b) REPORT ON SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE CONCERNING HEALTH CONSEQUENCES OF MILITARY SERVICE IN PERSIAN GULF WAR.—(1) The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall, in consultation with the National Academy of Sciences and with officials of other appropriate Federal departments and agencies, review the scientific evidence, and assess the strength of such evidence, concerning association between military service in the Southwest Asia

theater of operations during the Persian Gulf War and any disease that may be associated with such service.

(2) The Secretary shall, not later than March 1, 1998, submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the House of Representatives a report on the findings of the review and assessment under paragraph (1).

SEC. 3. REPEAL OF AUTHORITY TO MAKE GRANTS TO VETERANS MEMORIAL MEDICAL CENTER IN THE PHILIPPINES.

(a) REPEAL.—Section 1732 of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking out subsection (b);

(2) by redesignating subsection (c) as subsection (b) and striking out "or grant" both places it appears in that subsection; and

(3) by redesignating subsection (d) as subsection (c) and striking out "and to make grants" in that subsection.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENTS.—(1) The heading of such section is amended by striking out "and grants".

(2) The item relating to such section in the table of sections at the beginning of chapter 17 of such title is amended by striking out "and grants".

SEC. 4. DISPLAY OF POW/MIA FLAG AT DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICAL CENTERS.

(a) DAILY DISPLAY OF FLAG.—Subsection (a) of section 1084 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Years 1992 and 1993 (Public Law 102-190; 36 U.S.C. 189 note) is amended—

(1) by striking out "and" at the end of paragraph (1);

(2) by striking out the period at the end of paragraph (2) and inserting in lieu thereof "and"; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

"(3) on, or on the grounds of, each Department of Veterans Affairs medical center (except as provided in subsection (e)), on every day on which the flag of the United States is displayed."

(b) EXCEPTION FOR CERTAIN DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICAL CENTERS.—Such section is further amended—

(1) by redesignating subsection (e) as subsection (f); and

(2) by inserting after subsection (d) the following new subsection (e):

"(e) SPECIAL RULE FOR DISPLAY AT DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICAL CENTERS.—(1) Upon a determination by the director of a Department of Veterans Affairs medical center that the daily display of the POW/MIA flag at that medical center may be detrimental to the treatment of patients at that center, the provisions of subsection (a)(3) shall be inapplicable with respect to that medical center.

"(2) Whenever the director of a Department of Veterans Affairs medical center makes a determination described in paragraph (1), that officer shall submit a report on such determination, including the basis for the determination, to the Under Secretary for Health of the Department of Veterans Affairs."

(c) PROCUREMENT AND DISTRIBUTION OF FLAGS.—(1) Subsection (c) of such section is amended by striking out "Within 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator" and inserting in lieu thereof "The Administrator".

(2) The Administrator of General Services shall carry out subsection (c) of section 1084 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Years 1992 and 1993 (Public Law 102-190; 36 U.S.C. 189 note) with respect to the procurement and distribution of POW/MIA flags for the purposes of paragraph (3) of subsection (a) of such section (as added by subsection (a) of this section) within 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.