

They are: The Black Revolutionary War Patriots Memorial for 1998, 500,000 silver dollars, the Dolley Madison coin for the benefit of Montpelier in 1999, 500,000 silver dollars, and the George Washington coin to benefit Mount Vernon also in 1999, 100,000 gold \$5 pieces.

Among its other virtues, this program will introduce a younger and more diverse population to the fascinating hobby of coin collecting. This bill will also protect the taxpayer from the abuses common to many earlier coin programs and still benefit a number of worthy causes.

I urge its immediate adoption.

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

There was no objection.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

WILDFIRE SUPPRESSION AIRCRAFT TRANSFER ACT OF 1996

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table the Senate bill (S. 2078) to authorize the sale of excess Department of Defense aircraft to facilitate the suppression of wildfire, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the Senate bill.

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

Mrs. SCHROEDER. Mr. Speaker, reserving the right to object, I wanted to thank them for bringing this up. I know the gentleman from New Mexico [Mr. RICHARDSON] has worked terribly hard on this. For those of us who live in the West, where forest fires are so eminent, this is essential, because it gets us the airplanes we need to fight those wildfires. So I thank the gentleman from New York, and we thank the Congress for getting this here. Hopefully we will not have any wildfires. If we do, we had better be ready for them. I thank the gentleman very much, for the gentleman from New Mexico.

Mr. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in strong support of the Wildfire Suppression Aircraft Transfer Act of 1996, a bipartisan bill that I introduced in the House and Senator BINGAMAN introduced in the Senate.

This bill authorizes the Department of Defense to sell excess military aircraft to private contractors that provide fire fighting services to the Federal Government.

The powerful wildfires that spread throughout the West this past year have highlighted the need for an improved, modernized and expanded fleet of airtankers to help the U.S. Forest Service and the Department of Interior to fight wildfires.

The current fleet of World War II and Korean War vintage aircraft needs to be replaced with modern, turbine powered aircraft that are more efficient and safe.

The only reliable source of these aircraft is excess military aircraft available from the Department of Defense that can be converted to deliver fire retardant.

This legislation would provide the authority to the Secretary of Defense to sell appropriate aircraft to qualified airtanker operators solely for use in fighting wildfires.

In New Mexico, many communities were threatened by wildfires this past summer including the community of Lama. The wildfires were burning on very steep slopes, with high fuel loads, strong wind gusts and unseasonably hot and dry weather.

For this reason, the firefighters need as much assistance as possible. By upgrading our airtanker fleets, we will have a better chance of protecting and saving our lives, property, and forests.

Because of the nearly 150,000 acres of forest and grasslands that were burned when wildfires ravaged New Mexico, and the many more wildfires that burned throughout the West this past year, it is essential that we give firefighters the necessary tools that they need. This bill provides the necessary equipment to assist firefighters.

I want to thank Senator BINGAMAN for all his hard work on this legislation, and I also want to thank the Members on both sides of the aisle who worked to pass this important piece of legislation.

Mrs. SCHROEDER. I withdraw my reservation of objection.

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

There was no objection.

The Clerk read the Senate bill, as follows:

S. 2078

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

SECTION. 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Wildfire Suppression Aircraft Transfer Act of 1996".

SEC. 2. AUTHORITY TO SELL AIRCRAFT AND PARTS FOR WILDFIRE SUPPRESSION PURPOSES.

(a) AUTHORITY.—(1) Notwithstanding section 202 of the Federal Property and Administrative Services Act of 1949 (40 U.S.C. 483) and subject to subsections (b) and (c), the Secretary of Defense may, during the period beginning on October 1, 1996, and ending on September 30, 2000, sell the aircraft and aircraft parts referred to in paragraph (2) to persons or entities that contract with the Federal Government for the delivery of fire retardant by air in order to suppress wildfire.

(2) Paragraph (1) applies to aircraft and aircraft parts of the Department of Defense that are determined by the Secretary to be—

(A) excess to the needs of the Department; and

(B) acceptable for commercial sale.

(b) CONDITIONS OF SALE.—Aircraft and aircraft parts sold under subsection (a)—

(1) may be used only for the provision of airtanker services for wildfire suppression purposes; and

(2) may not be flown or otherwise removed from the United States unless dispatched by the National Interagency Fire Center in support of an international agreement to assist in wildfire suppression efforts or for other purposes jointly approved by the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Agriculture in writing in advance.

(c) CERTIFICATION OF PERSONS AND ENTITIES.—The Secretary of Defense may sell aircraft and aircraft parts to a person or entity under subsection (a) only if the Secretary of Agriculture certifies to the Secretary of De-

fense, in writing, before the sale that the person or entity is capable of meeting the terms and conditions of a contract to deliver fire retardant by air.

(d) REGULATIONS.—(1) As soon as practicable after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense shall, in consultation with the Secretary of Agriculture and the Administrator of General Services, prescribe regulations relating to the sale of aircraft and aircraft parts under this section.

(2) The regulations shall—

(A) ensure that the sale of the aircraft and aircraft parts is made at fair market value (as determined by the Secretary of Defense) and, to the extent practicable, on a competitive basis;

(B) require a certification by the purchaser that the aircraft and aircraft parts will be used only in accordance with the conditions set forth in subsection (b);

(C) establish appropriate means of verifying and enforcing the use of the aircraft and aircraft parts by the purchaser and other end users in accordance with the conditions set forth in subsections (b) and (e); and

(D) ensure, to the maximum extent practicable, that the Secretary consults with the Administrator of General Services and with the heads of appropriate departments and agencies of the Federal Government regarding alternative requirements for such aircraft and aircraft parts under this section.

(e) ADDITIONAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—The Secretary of Defense may require such other terms and conditions in connection with each sale of aircraft and aircraft parts under this section as the Secretary considers appropriate for such sale. Such terms and conditions shall meet the requirements of the regulations prescribed under subsection (d).

(f) REPORT.—Not later than March 31, 2000, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate and the Committee on National Security of the House of Representatives a report on the Secretary's exercise of authority under this section. The report shall set forth—

(1) the number and type of aircraft sold under the authority, and the terms and conditions under which the aircraft were sold;

(2) the persons or entities to which the aircraft were sold; and

(3) an accounting of the current use of the aircraft sold.

(g) CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section may be construed as affecting the authority of the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration under any other provision of law.

The Senate bill was ordered to be read a third time, was read the third time, and passed, and a motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

MARINE MINERAL RESOURCES RESEARCH ACT OF 1996

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table the Senate bill (S. 1194) to promote the research, identification, assessment, and exploration of marine mineral resources, and for other purposes, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the Senate bill.

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

There was no objection.

The Clerk read the Senate bill, as follows:

S. 1194

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Marine Mineral Resources Research Act of 1996".

SEC. 2. RESEARCH PROGRAM.

The Mining and Minerals Policy Act of 1970 (30 U.S.C. 21a) is amended—

(1) by inserting after the first section the following:

"TITLE I—MINING POLICY";

(2) by redesignating section 2 as section 101; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

"TITLE II—MARINE MINERAL RESOURCES RESEARCH PROGRAM

"SEC. 201. DEFINITIONS.

"In this title:

"(1) The term 'contract' has the same meaning as 'procurement contract' in section 6303 of title 31, United States Code.

"(2) The term 'cooperative agreement' has the same meaning as in section 6305 of title 31, United States Code.

"(3) The term 'eligible entity' means—

"(A) a research or educational entity chartered or incorporated under Federal or State law;

"(B) an individual who is a United States citizen; or

"(C) a State or regional agency.

"(4) The term 'grant' has the same meaning as 'grant agreement' in section 6304 of title 31, United States Code.

"(5) The term 'in-kind contribution' means a noncash contribution provided by a non-Federal entity that directly benefits and is related to a specific project or program. An in-kind contribution may include real property, equipment, supplies, other expendable property, goods, and services.

"(6) The term 'marine mineral resource' means—

"(A) sand and aggregates;

"(B) placers;

"(C) phosphates;

"(D) manganese nodules;

"(E) cobalt crusts;

"(F) metal sulfides; and

"(G) other marine resources that are not—

"(i) oil and gas;

"(ii) fisheries; or

"(iii) marine mammals.

"(7) The term 'Secretary' means the Secretary of the Interior.

"SEC. 202. RESEARCH PROGRAM.

"(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish and carry out a program of research on marine mineral resources.

"(b) PROGRAM GOAL.—The goal of the program shall be to—

"(1) promote research, identification, assessment, and exploration of marine mineral resources in an environmentally responsible manner;

"(2) assist in developing domestic technologies required for efficient and environmentally sound development of marine mineral resources;

"(3) coordinate and promote the use of technologies developed with Federal assistance, and the use of available Federal assets, for research, identification, assessment, exploration, and development of marine mineral resources; and

"(4) encourage academia and industry to conduct basic and applied research, on a joint basis, through grants, cooperative agreements, or contracts with the Federal Government.

"(c) RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SECRETARY.—In carrying out the program, the Secretary shall—

"(1) promote and coordinate partnerships between industry, government, and academia to research, identify, assess, and explore marine mineral resources in an environmentally sound manner;

"(2) undertake programs to develop the basic information necessary to the long-term national interest in marine mineral resources (including seabed mapping) and to ensure that data and information are accessible and widely disseminated as needed and appropriate;

"(3) identify, and promote cooperation among agency programs that are developing, technologies developed by other Federal programs that may hold promise for facilitating undersea applications related to marine mineral resources, including technologies related to vessels and other platforms, underwater vehicles, survey and mapping systems, remote power sources, data collection and transmission systems, and various seabed research systems; and

"(4) foster communication and coordination between Federal and State agencies, universities, and private entities concerning marine mineral research on seabeds of the continental shelf, ocean basins, and arctic and cold water areas.

In carrying out these responsibilities, the Secretary shall ensure the participation of nonfederal users of technologies and data related to marine mineral resources in planning and priority setting.

"SEC. 203. GRANTS, CONTRACTS, AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS.

"(a) ASSISTANCE AND COORDINATION.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall award grants or contracts to, or enter into cooperative agreements with, eligible entities to support research for the development or utilization of—

"(A) methods, equipment, systems, and components necessary for the identification, assessment, and exploration of marine mineral resources in an environmentally responsible manner;

"(B) methods of detecting, monitoring, and predicting the presence of adverse environmental effects in the marine environment and remediating the environmental effects of marine mineral resource exploration, development, and production; and

"(C) education and training material in marine mineral research and resource management.

"(2) COST-SHARING FOR CONTRACTS OR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS.—

"(A) FEDERAL SHARE.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B)(ii), the Federal share of the cost of a contract or cooperative agreement carried out under this subsection shall not be greater than 80 percent of the total cost of the project.

"(B) NON-FEDERAL SHARE.—The remaining non-Federal share of the cost of a project carried out under this section may be—

"(i) in the form of cash or in-kind contributions, or both; and

"(ii) comprised of funds made available under other Federal programs, except that non-Federal funds shall be used to defray at least 10 percent of the total cost of the project.

"(C) CONSULTATION.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall establish, after consultation with other Federal agencies, terms and conditions under which Federal funding will be provided under this subsection that are consistent with the Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures referred to in section 101(d)(12) of the Uruguay Round Agreement Act (19 U.S.C. 3511(d)(12)).

"(b) COMPETITIVE REVIEW.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—An entity shall not be eligible to receive a grant or contract, or par-

ticipate in a cooperative agreement, under subsection (a) unless—

"(A) the entity submits a proposal to the Secretary at such time, in such manner, and accompanied by such information as the Secretary may reasonably require; and

"(B) the proposal has been evaluated by a competitive review panel under paragraph (3).

"(2) COMPETITIVE REVIEW PANELS.—

"(A) COMPOSITION.—A competitive review panel shall be chaired by the Secretary or by the Secretary's designee and shall be composed of members who meet the following criteria:

"(i) APPOINTMENT.—The members shall be appointed by the Secretary.

"(ii) EXPERIENCE.—Not less than 50 percent of the members shall represent or be employed by private marine resource companies that are involved in exploration of the marine environment or development of marine mineral resources.

"(iii) INTEREST.—None of the members may have an interest in a grant, contract, or cooperative agreement being evaluated by the panel.

"(B) NO COMPENSATION.—A review panel member who is not otherwise a Federal employee shall receive no compensation for performing duties under this section, except that, while engaged in the performance of duties away from the home or regular place of business of the member, the member may be allowed travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, in the same manner as a person employed intermittently in the Government service under section 5703 of title 5, United States Code.

"(3) EVALUATION.—A competitive review panel shall base an evaluation of a proposal on criteria developed by the Secretary that shall include—

"(A) the merits of the proposal;

"(B) the research methodology and costs of the proposal;

"(C) the capability of the entity submitting the proposal and any other participating entity to perform the proposed work and provide in-kind contributions;

"(D) the amount of matching funds provided by the entity submitting the proposal or provided by other Federal, State, or private entities;

"(E) the extent of collaboration with other Federal, State, or private entities;

"(F) in the case of a noncommercial entity, the existence of a cooperative agreement with a commercial entity that provides for collaboration in the proposed research;

"(G) whether the proposal promotes responsible environmental stewardship; and

"(H) such other factors as the Secretary considers appropriate.

"(c) LIMITATIONS.—

"(1) ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.—Not more than 10 percent of the amount made available to carry out this section during a fiscal year may be used by the Secretary for expenses associated with administration of the program authorized by this section.

"(2) CONSTRUCTION COSTS.—None of the funds made available under this section may be used for the construction of a new building or the acquisition, expansion, remodeling, or alteration of an existing building (including site grading and improvement and architect fees).

"(d) REPORTS.—An eligible entity that receives a grant or contract or enters into a cooperative agreement under this section shall submit an annual progress report and a final technical report to the Secretary that—

"(1) describes project activities, implications of the project, the significance of the project to marine mineral research, identification, assessment, and exploration, and

potential commercial and economic benefits and effects of the project; and

"(2) in the case of an annual progress report, includes a project plan for the subsequent year.

"SEC. 204. MARINE MINERAL RESEARCH CENTERS.

"(a) IN GENERAL.—No later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this section, the Secretary shall designate 3 centers for marine mineral research and related activities.

"(b) CONCENTRATION.—One center shall concentrate primarily on research in the continental shelf regions of the United States, 1 center shall concentrate primarily on research in deep seabed and near-shore environments of islands, and 1 center shall concentrate primarily on research in arctic and cold water regions.

"(c) CRITERIA.—In designating a center under this section, the Secretary shall give priority to a university that—

"(1) administers a federally funded center for marine minerals research;

"(2) matriculates students for advanced degrees in marine geological sciences, non-energy natural resources, and related fields of science and engineering;

"(3) is a United States university with established programs and facilities that primarily focus on marine mineral resources;

"(4) has engaged in collaboration and co-operation with industry, governmental agencies, and other universities in the field of marine mineral resources;

"(5) has demonstrated significant engineering, development, and design experience in two or more of the following areas;

"(A) seabed exploration systems;

"(B) marine mining systems; and

"(C) marine mineral processing systems; and

"(6) has been designated by the Secretary as a State Mining and Mineral Resources Research Institute.

"(d) CENTER ACTIVITIES.—A center shall—

"(1) provide technical assistance to the Secretary concerning marine mineral resources;

"(2) advise the Secretary on pertinent international activities in marine mineral resources development;

"(3) engage in research, training, and education transfer associated with the characterization and utilization of marine mineral resources; and

"(4) promote the efficient identification, assessment, exploration, and management of marine mineral resources in an environmentally sound manner.

"(e) ALLOCATION OF FUNDS.—In distributing funds to the centers designated under subsection (a), the Secretary shall, to the extent practicable, allocate an equal amount to each center.

"(f) LIMITATIONS.—

"(1) ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.—Not more than 5 percent of the amount made available to carry out this section during a fiscal year may be used by the Secretary for expenses associated with administration of the program authorized by this section.

"(2) CONSTRUCTION COSTS.—None of the funds made available under this section may be used for the construction of a new building or the acquisition, expansion, remodeling, or alteration of an existing building (including site grading and improvement and architect fees).

"SEC. 205. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

"There is authorized to be appropriated such sums as are necessary to carry out this title."

The Senate bill was ordered to be read a third time, was read the third time, and passed, and a motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

IRRIGATION PROJECT CONTRACT EXTENSION ACT OF 1996

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table the Senate bill (S. 1649) to extend contracts between the Bureau of Reclamation and irrigation districts in Kansas and Nebraska, and for other purposes, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the Senate bill.

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

There was no objection.

The Clerk read the Senate bill, as follows:

S. 1649

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Irrigation Project Contract Extension Act of 1996".

SEC. 2. EXTENSION OF CONTRACTS.

The Secretary of the Interior shall extend the water service contracts for the following projects, entered into by the Secretary of the Interior under subsection (e) of section 9 of the Reclamation Project Act of 1939 (43 U.S.C. 485h) and section 9(c) of the Act of December 22, 1944 (58 Stat. 891, chapter 665), for a period of 4 additional years after the dates on which each of the contracts, respectively, would expire but for this section:

(1) The Bostwick Unit (Kansas portion), Missouri River Basin Project, consisting of the project constructed and operated under the Act of December 22, 1944 (58 Stat. 887, chapter 665), as a component of the Pick-Sloan Missouri Basin Program, situated in Republic County, Jewell County, and Cloud County, Kansas.

(2) The Bostwick Unit (Nebraska portion), Missouri River Basin Project, consisting of the project constructed and operated under the Act of December 22, 1944 (58 Stat. 887, chapter 665), as a component of the Pick-Sloan Missouri Basin Program, situated in Harlan County, Franklin County, Webster County, and Nuckolls County, Nebraska.

(3) The Farwell Unit, Missouri River Basin Project, consisting of the project constructed and operated under the Act of December 22, 1944 (58 Stat. 887, chapter 665), and the Act of August 3, 1956 (70 Stat. 975, chapter 923), situated in Howard County, Sherman County, and Valley County, Nebraska.

(4) The Frenchman-Cambridge Unit, Missouri River Basin Project, consisting of the project constructed and operated under the Act of December 22, 1944 (58 Stat. 887, chapter 665) as a component of the Pick-Sloan Missouri Basin Program, situated in Chase County, Frontier County, Hitchcock County, Furnas County, Red Willow County, and Harlan County, Nebraska.

(5) The Frenchman Valley Unit, Missouri River Basin Project, consisting of the project constructed and operated under the Act of December 22, 1944 (58 Stat. 887, chapter 665), as a component of the Pick-Sloan Missouri Basin Program, situated in Hayes County and Hitchcock County, Nebraska.

(6) The Kirwin Unit, Missouri River Basin Project, consisting of the project constructed and operated under the Act of December 22, 1944 (58 Stat. 887, chapter 665), and the Flood Control Act of 1946 (60 Stat. 641, chapter 596), as a component of the Pick-Sloan Missouri Basin Program, situated in Phillips County, Smith County, and Osborne County, Kansas.

(7) The Sargent Unit, Missouri River Basin Project, consisting of the project constructed and operated under the Act of December 22, 1944 (58 Stat. 887, chapter 665), and the Flood Control Act of 1946 (60 Stat. 641, chapter 596), situated in Blaine County, Custer County, and Valley County, Nebraska.

(8) The Webster Unit, Missouri River Basin Project, consisting of the project constructed and operated under the Act of December 22, 1944 (58 Stat. 887, chapter 665), and the Flood Control Act of 1946 (60 Stat. 641, chapter 596), as a component of the Pick-Sloan Missouri Basin Program, situated in Rooks County and Osborne County, Kansas.

The Senate bill was ordered to be read a third time, was read the third time, and passed, and a motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS TO PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY AND WORK OPPORTUNITY RECONCILIATION ACT OF 1996

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table the Senate bill (S. 2183) to make technical corrections to the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the Senate bill.

Mr. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of S. 2183.

This bill would allow States, like New Mexico, that have a growing number of people who qualify for food stamps or are unemployed access to the contingency fund monies that were included in the recently enacted welfare reform bill.

This is merely a technical correction which is necessary for many States which will not be able to reform welfare programs until their State legislatures meet again next year, but as of October 1 are operating under limited block grants funding.

In New Mexico, our population is growing at such a rapid pace that continuing our current welfare program under the block grant system will lead to a funding shortfall.

Inadequate block grant funding would cause States like New Mexico to make across-the-board cuts in welfare payments to families in need.

This legislation would allow States like New Mexico to tap into the welfare contingency fund and avoid financial hardships during the transition to a new welfare program.

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

There was no objection.

The Clerk read the Senate bill, as follows:

S. 2183

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

SECTION 1. TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS TO THE PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY AND WORK OPPORTUNITY RECONCILIATION ACT OF 1996.

(a) CLARIFICATION OF LIMITATION ON CERTAIN FEDERAL OBLIGATIONS FOR 1997.—Section 116(b)(1)(B)(i)(II) of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 is amended—