

what I think is a major improvement in the bill that had previously passed on the House side. The Senate has taken a good idea and made it surprisingly and pleasingly better than we started with.

There is one reservation that I have about the way we are doing this. I wanted to express that without objecting to the unanimous-consent request. That is, the disappointment that I am sure that all of our Members will feel at not having had the opportunity, because of this process, to vote unanimously in support of this resolution, to send another resounding signal to all Americans that this kind of conduct, church burnings, is not to be tolerated in our country, and this process is depriving us of having the opportunity to be able to cast a recorded vote.

But I understand the reason why. The reason is that these two gentlemen, the chairman of the committee, the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. HYDE], and the ranking member, understand that this is important to get this legislation passed and to the President immediately, and we are about to go home for a break, and we need to move this legislation along.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. WATT of North Carolina. I yield to the gentleman from Michigan.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I want to associate myself entirely with the remarks of the gentleman from North Carolina [Mr. WATT] and let him know that my sentiments are his.

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. WATT of North Carolina. I yield to the gentleman from Illinois.

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, I agree with both gentlemen. It would be desirable, but we do have other considerations. I think the expedition with which we pass this sends that same message. It was a unanimous vote in both Chambers, and that speaks loudly, as well as the fact that we are here today to get it passed.

Mr. WATT of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I withdraw my reservation of objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WHITE). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Illinois?

There was no objection.

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

There was no objection.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 1972

Mr. LUTHER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that my name be withdrawn as a cosponsor of H.R. 1972.

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

There was no objection.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA WATER AND SEWER AUTHORITY ACT OF 1996

Mr. DAVIS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to call up the bill (H.R. 3663) to amend the District of Columbia Self-Government and Governmental Reorganization Act to permit the Council of the District of Columbia to authorize the issuance of revenue bonds with respect to water and sewer facilities, and for other purposes, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

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

There was no objection.

The Clerk read the bill, as follows:

H.R. 3663

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 "District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority Act of 1996".

SEC. 2. PERMITTING ISSUANCE OF REVENUE BONDS FOR WASTEWATER TREATMENT ACTIVITIES.

(a) AUTHORITY TO ISSUE BONDS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The first sentence of section 490(a)(1) of the District of Columbia Self-Government and Governmental Reorganization Act (sec. 47-334(a)(1), D.C. Code) is amended—

(A) by striking "and industrial" and inserting "industrial"; and

(B) by striking the period at the end and inserting the following: ", and water and sewer facilities (as defined in paragraph (5)).".

(2) WATER AND SEWER FACILITIES DEFINED.—Section 490(a) of such Act (sec. 47-334(a), D.C. Code) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

"(5) In paragraph (1), the term 'water and sewer facilities' means facilities for the obtaining, treatment, storage, and distribution of water, the collection, storage, treatment, and transportation of wastewater, storm drainage, and the disposal of liquids and solids resulting from treatment.".

(b) USE OF REVENUES TO MAKE PAYMENTS ON BONDS.—The second sentence of section 490(a)(3) of such Act (sec. 47-334(a)(3), D.C. Code) is amended by inserting after "property" each place it appears in subparagraphs (A) and (B) the following: "(including water and sewer enterprise fund revenues, assets, or other property in the case of bonds, notes, or obligations issued with respect to water and sewer facilities)".

(c) PERMITTING DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY TO ISSUE REVENUE BONDS TO WATER AND SEWER AUTHORITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 490 of such Act (sec. 47-334, D.C. Code) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

"(h)(1) The Council may delegate to the District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority established pursuant to the Water and Sewer Authority Establishment and Department of Public Works Reorganization Act of 1996 the authority of the Council under subsection (a) to issue revenue bonds, notes, and other obligations to borrow money to finance or assist in the financing or refinancing of undertakings in the area of utilities facilities, pollution control facilities, and water and sewer facilities (as defined in subsection (a)(5)). The Authority may exercise authority delegated to it by the Council as described in the first sentence

of this paragraph (whether such delegation is made before or after the date of the enactment of this subsection) only in accordance with this subsection.

"(2) Revenue bonds, notes, and other obligations issued by the District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority under a delegation of authority described in paragraph (1) shall be issued by resolution of the Authority, and any such resolution shall not be considered to be an act of the Council.

"(3) The provisions of subsections (a) through (e) shall apply with respect to the District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority, the General Manager of the Authority, and to revenue bonds, notes, and other obligations issued by the Authority under a delegation of authority described in paragraph (1) in the same manner as such provisions apply with respect to the Council, to the Mayor, and to revenue bonds, notes, and other obligations issued by the Council under subsection (a)(1) (without regard to whether or not the Council has authorized the application of such provisions to the Authority or the General Manager).

"(4) The fourth sentence of section 446 shall not apply to—

"(A) any amount (including the amount of any accrued interest or premium) obligated or expended from the proceeds of the sale of any revenue bond, note, or other obligation issued pursuant to this subsection;

"(B) any amount obligated or expended for the payment of the principal of, interest on, or any premium for any revenue bond, note, or other obligation issued pursuant to this subsection;

"(C) any amount obligated or expended to secure any revenue bond, note, or other obligation issued pursuant to this subsection; or

"(D) any amount obligated or expended for repair, maintenance, and capital improvements to facilities financed pursuant to this subsection.".

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The fourth sentence of section 446 of such Act (sec. 47-304, D.C. Code) is amended by striking "(f) and (g)(3)" and inserting "(f), (g)(3), and (h)(4)".

SEC. 3. TREATMENT OF REVENUES AND OBLIGATIONS.

(a) EXCLUSION OF REVENUES FOR PURPOSES OF CAP ON AGGREGATE DISTRICT DEBT.—Paragraphs (1) and (3)(A) of section 603(b) of the District of Columbia Self-Government and Governmental Reorganization Act (sec. 47-313(b), D.C. Code) are each amended by inserting after "revenue bonds," the following: "any revenues, charges, or fees dedicated for the purposes of water and sewer facilities described in section 490(a) (including fees or revenues directed to servicing or securing revenue bonds issued for such purposes)".

(b) EXCLUSION OF OBLIGATIONS RELATING TO DEBT SERVICING PAYMENTS ON CERTAIN GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 603(b)(2) of such Act (sec. 47-313(b)(2), D.C. Code) is amended—

(A) by striking "and obligations" and inserting "obligations"; and

(B) by inserting after "establishment," the following: ", and obligations incurred pursuant to general obligation bonds of the District of Columbia issued prior to October 1, 1996, for the financing of Department of Public Works, Water and Sewer Utility Administration capital projects.".

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 603(b)(3)(B) of such Act (sec. 47-313(b)(3)(B), D.C. Code) is amended by inserting after "bonds" the following: "(less the allocable portion of principal and interest to be paid during the year on general obligation bonds of the District of Columbia issued prior to October 1, 1996, for the financing of Department of Public Works, Water and Sewer Utility Administration capital projects)".

SEC. 4. TREATMENT OF BUDGET OF WATER AND SEWER AUTHORITY.

(a) PREPARATION OF INDEPENDENT BUDGET.—Subpart 1 of part D of title IV of the District of Columbia Self-Government and Governmental Reorganization Act is amended by inserting after section 445 the following new section:

"WATER AND SEWER AUTHORITY BUDGET

"SEC. 445A. The District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority established pursuant to the Water and Sewer Authority Establishment and Department of Public Works Reorganization Act of 1996 shall prepare and annually submit to the Mayor, for inclusion in the annual budget, annual estimates of the expenditures and appropriations necessary for the operation of the Authority for the year. All such estimates shall be forwarded by the Mayor to the Council for its action pursuant to sections 446 and 603(c), without revision but subject to his recommendations. Notwithstanding any other provision of this Act, the Council may comment or make recommendations concerning such annual estimates, but shall have no authority under this Act to revise such estimates."

(b) EXEMPTION FROM REDUCTIONS OF BUDGETS OF INDEPENDENT AGENCIES.—Section 453(c) of such Act (sec. 47-304.1(c), D.C. Code) is amended—

(1) by striking "courts or the Council, or to" and inserting "courts, the Council,"; and

(2) by striking the period at the end and inserting the following: ", or the District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority established pursuant to the Water and Sewer Authority Establishment and Department of Public Works Reorganization Act of 1996."

(c) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 442(b) of such Act (sec. 47-301(b), D.C. Code) is amended—

(1) by striking "and the Commission" and inserting "the Commission"; and

(2) by striking the period at the end and inserting the following: ", and the District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority."

(d) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents of subpart 1 of part D of title IV of the District of Columbia Self-Government and Governmental Reorganization Act is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 445 the following new item:

"Sec. 445A. Water and Sewer Authority budget."

SEC. 5. CLARIFICATION OF COMPENSATION OF CURRENT EMPLOYEES OF DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS.

The first sentence of section 205(b)(2) of such Act (sec. 43-1675(b)(2), D.C. Code) is amended by striking "duties)" and inserting "duties, and except as may otherwise be provided under the personnel system developed pursuant to subsection (a)(4) or a collective bargaining agreement entered into after the date of the enactment of this Act)".

AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE
OFFERED BY MR. DAVIS

Mr. DAVIS. Mr. Speaker, I offer an amendment in the nature of a substitute.

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment in the nature of a substitute offered by Mr. DAVIS:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority Act of 1996".

SEC. 2. PERMITTING ISSUANCE OF REVENUE BONDS FOR WASTEWATER TREATMENT ACTIVITIES.

(a) AUTHORITY TO ISSUE BONDS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The first sentence of section 490(a)(1) of the District of Columbia

Self-Government and Governmental Reorganization Act (sec. 47-334(a)(1), D.C. Code) is amended—

(A) by striking "and industrial" and inserting "industrial"; and

(B) by striking the period at the end and inserting the following: ", and water and sewer facilities (as defined in paragraph (5))."

(2) WATER AND SEWER FACILITIES DEFINED.—Section 490(a) of such Act (sec. 47-334(a), D.C. Code) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

"(5) In paragraph (1), the term 'water and sewer facilities' means facilities for the obtaining, treatment, storage, and distribution of water, the collection, storage, treatment, and transportation of wastewater, storm drainage, and the disposal of liquids and solids resulting from treatment."

(b) USE OF REVENUES TO MAKE PAYMENTS ON BONDS.—The second sentence of section 490(a)(3) of such Act (sec. 47-334(a)(3), D.C. Code) is amended by inserting after "property" each place it appears in subparagraphs (A) and (B) the following: "(including water and sewer enterprise fund revenues, assets, or other property in the case of bonds, notes, or obligations issued with respect to water and sewer facilities)".

(c) PERMITTING DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY TO ISSUE REVENUE BONDS TO WATER AND SEWER AUTHORITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 490 of such Act (sec. 47-334, D.C. Code) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

"(h)(1) The Council may delegate to the District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority established pursuant to the Water and Sewer Authority Establishment and Department of Public Works Reorganization Act of 1996 the authority of the Council under subsection (a) to issue revenue bonds, notes, and other obligations to borrow money to finance or assist in the financing or refinancing of undertakings in the area of utilities facilities, pollution control facilities, and water and sewer facilities (as defined in subsection (a)(5)). The Authority may exercise authority delegated to it by the Council as described in the first sentence of this paragraph (whether such delegation is made before or after the date of the enactment of this subsection) only in accordance with this subsection.

"(2) Revenue bonds, notes, and other obligations issued by the District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority under a delegation of authority described in paragraph (1) shall be issued by resolution of the Authority, and any such resolution shall not be considered to be an act of the Council.

"(3) The fourth sentence of section 446 shall not apply to—

"(A) any amount (including the amount of any accrued interest or premium) obligated or expended from the proceeds of the sale of any revenue bond, note, or other obligation issued pursuant to this subsection;

"(B) any amount obligated or expended for the payment of the principal of, interest on, or any premium for any revenue bond, note, or other obligation issued pursuant to this subsection;

"(C) any amount obligated or expended to secure any revenue bond, note, or other obligation issued pursuant to this subsection; or

"(D) any amount obligated or expended for repair, maintenance, and capital improvements to facilities financed pursuant to this subsection."

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The fourth sentence of section 446 of such Act (sec. 47-304, D.C. Code) is amended by striking "(f) and (g)(3)" and inserting "(f), (g)(3), and (h)(3)".

SEC. 3. TREATMENT OF REVENUES AND OBLIGATIONS.

(a) EXCLUSION OF REVENUES FOR PURPOSES OF CAP ON AGGREGATE DISTRICT DEBT.—Paragraphs (1) and (3)(A) of section 603(b) of the District of Columbia Self-Government and Governmental Reorganization Act (sec. 47-313(b), D.C. Code) are each amended by inserting after "revenue bonds," the following: "any revenues, charges, or fees dedicated for the purposes of water and sewer facilities described in section 490(a) (including fees or revenues directed to servicing or securing revenue bonds issued for such purposes)."

(b) EXCLUSION OF OBLIGATIONS RELATING TO DEBT SERVICING PAYMENTS ON CERTAIN GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 603(b)(2) of such Act (sec. 47-313(b)(2), D.C. Code) is amended—

(A) by striking "and obligations" and inserting "obligations"; and

(B) by inserting after "establishment," the following: "and obligations incurred pursuant to general obligation bonds of the District of Columbia issued prior to October 1, 1996, for the financing of Department of Public Works, Water and Sewer Utility Administration capital projects."

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 603(b)(3)(B) of such Act (sec. 47-313(b)(3)(B), D.C. Code) is amended by inserting after "bonds" the following: "(less the allocable portion of principal and interest to be paid during the year on general obligation bonds of the District of Columbia issued prior to October 1, 1996, for the financing of Department of Public Works, Water and Sewer Utility Administration capital projects)".

SEC. 4. TREATMENT OF BUDGET OF WATER AND SEWER AUTHORITY.

(a) PREPARATION OF INDEPENDENT BUDGET.—Subpart 1 of part D of title IV of the District of Columbia Self-Government and Governmental Reorganization Act is amended by inserting after section 445 the following new section:

"WATER AND SEWER AUTHORITY BUDGET

"SEC. 445A. The District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority established pursuant to the Water and Sewer Authority Establishment and Department of Public Works Reorganization Act of 1996 shall prepare and annually submit to the Mayor, for inclusion in the annual budget, annual estimates of the expenditures and appropriations necessary for the operation of the Authority for the year. All such estimates shall be forwarded by the Mayor to the Council for its action pursuant to sections 446 and 603(c), without revision but subject to his recommendations. Notwithstanding any other provision of this Act, the Council may comment or make recommendations concerning such annual estimates, but shall have no authority under this Act to revise such estimates."

(b) EXEMPTION FROM REDUCTIONS OF BUDGETS OF INDEPENDENT AGENCIES.—Section 453(c) of such Act (sec. 47-304.1(c), D.C. Code) is amended—

(1) by striking "courts or the Council, or to" and inserting "courts, the Council,"; and

(2) by striking the period at the end and inserting the following: ", or the District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority established pursuant to the Water and Sewer Authority Establishment and Department of Public Works Reorganization Act of 1996."

(c) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 442(b) of such Act (sec. 47-301(b), D.C. Code) is amended—

(1) by striking "and the Commission" and inserting "the Commission"; and

(2) by striking the period at the end and inserting the following: ", and the District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority."

(d) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents of subpart 1 of part D of title IV of

the District of Columbia Self-Government and Governmental Reorganization Act is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 445 the following new item:

"Sec. 445A. Water and Sewer Authority budget."

SEC. 5. CLARIFICATION OF COMPENSATION OF CURRENT EMPLOYEES OF DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS.

The first sentence of section 205(b)(2) of the Water and Sewer Authority Establishment and Department of Public Works Reorganization Act of 1996 (sec. 43-1675(b)(2), D.C. Code) is amended by striking "duties)" and inserting "duties, and except as may otherwise be provided under the personnel system developed pursuant to subsection (a)(4) or a collective bargaining agreement entered into after the date of the enactment of this Act)".

Mr. DAVIS (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the amendment in the nature of a substitute be considered as read and printed in the RECORD.

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

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Virginia [Mr. DAVIS] is recognized for 1 hour.

(Mr. DAVIS asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

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

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 3663 is a completely noncontroversial measure which addresses major ongoing problems at the Blue Plains wastewater treatment facility and with the water and sewer pipes in the District of Columbia. The bill was bipartisan support. It was cosponsored by all of the members of the subcommittee on the District of Columbia and the regional delegation. It was reported out of both the subcommittee on the District of Columbia and the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight with unanimous voice votes.

H.R. 3663 changes the home rule charter so that the new water and sewer authority may issue revenue bonds and make other changes necessary to ensure both the independence of new authority and its financial responsibility. The newly created water and sewer authority is good not only for the residents of the city, but for everyone who lives in the metropolitan region. For the first time, the suburban jurisdictions will have representation on the governing board for Blue Plains.

Currently, the Blue Plains facility is caught up in the District's financial problems. This has led the Environmental Protection Agency to become involved in a resolution of the problem. The EPA supports both the District legislation and H.R. 3663, because they are the best immediate solution to the operational problems at Blue Plains.

The amendment in the nature of a substitute which I am offering is a purely technical correction of H.R. 3663, which in no way alters the substance or purpose of the bill. I have chosen to proceed along this path to avoid the confusion of making numerous minor corrections to H.R. 3663.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia [Ms. NORTON], the ranking minority member of the subcommittee.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding time to me. I want to associate myself entirely with the gentleman's remarks. This is a regional matter. All of the regional partners agree. It is before this body only because a charter change in the District of Columbia law requires the action of this body. The matter has enormous environmental implications. We want to move quickly, because we want to avoid environmental damage to the city and to the region. I appreciate the work of the gentleman in moving this matter forward to the floor.

Mr. DAVIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Maryland [Mr. WYNN].

Mr. WYNN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding time to me.

Mr. Speaker, let me begin by expressing my compliments to the chairman of the Subcommittee on the District of Columbia of the Committee on Economic and Educational Opportunities. He has done an outstanding job in bringing this bill to the floor and bringing together the various parties who are affected.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be a cosponsor of this important legislation concerning the Blue Plains wastewater treatment plant and the establishment of the District of Columbia water and sewer authority with full bonding authority. People do not often talk about sewage until it is backed up, but a regional water and sewer authority that represents the interests of all of the affected jurisdictions is critical so that the Blue Plains facility can make much needed capital improvements and repairs.

Currently the facility does not have the ability to borrow money to meet its capital needs for repairs and maintenance as a result of the District's credit rating. It is imperative that the necessary repairs and expansion of Blue Plains begin. A few months ago the Environmental Protection Agency expressed its concern that a breakdown of old and inadequate equipment could release untreated sewage, contaminating the Potomac River. This would be detrimental to the health and environment of all of us who live in the Washington metropolitan region.

I have been particularly concerned about these developments because Blue Plains currently handles 94 percent of the wastewater flows from Montgomery County and 54 percent of the wastewater flows from Prince Georges County, which are both in my congressional district. Prince Georges and Montgomery Counties contribute about \$346 million in capital and operating costs, and we are certainly concerned about the advancement of this facility.

I have been especially pleased with the cooperation between the District and the suburban jurisdictions in re-

solving many of the conflicts relating to the water and sewer authority, and I believe this is a great example of regional cooperation. It is extremely important that we resolve these difficult issues so we can benefit all of the residents of the metropolitan area.

I would also like to conclude by complimenting the delegate from the District of Columbia [Ms. NORTON] for her leadership in helping us resolve these issues. I am pleased to support this legislation.

Mr. DAVIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from Maryland [Mrs. MORELLA].

Mrs. MORELLA. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding time to me.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 3663, the District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority Act of 1996. I especially want to thank and praise the chairman of the D.C. Subcommittee, TOM DAVIS, for his hard work in crafting a bill which has the support of the D.C. Council and all of the local governments in the jurisdictions that surround the District of Columbia. I am an original cosponsor of this legislation, along with the Members of the Washington regional delegation.

H.R. 3663 would allow the newly-formed Water and Sewer Authority to issue revenue bonds. The bill would give the authority the independence that it needs to govern the Blue Plains wastewater treatment plant in a manner that will address the common concerns of the area jurisdictions. Under this bill, the suburban jurisdictions will have representation on the governing board for Blue Plains.

The effective operation of the Blue Plains is critical to my constituents in Montgomery County. Indeed, the efficient operation of Blue Plains is of great importance to the citizens of the District of Columbia, Prince Georges County, and northern Virginia. We all have a significant stake in this facility.

Montgomery County and Prince Georges County together account for more than 39 percent of the sewage that is processed at Blue Plains. Montgomery County is almost totally dependent on Blue Plains, with 95 percent of its sewage flowing to the D.C. plant. The county also provides its proportionate share of funding for the operations of the plant.

We are all interested in making sure that Blue Plains operates in an environmentally-healthy manner. We all want clean water to drink, and we all want to ensure the preservation of the Potomac River and the Chesapeake Bay. The District and the suburban jurisdictions have a shared interest in working together to make the Blue Plains wastewater treatment plant an effective facility. H.R. 3663 will take us one step closer toward our goal.

Again, I commend Congressman DAVIS and the members of the subcommittee for crafting this non-controversial and important legislation.

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

Mr. Speaker, this has taken a lot of work on behalf of a lot of people. I thank the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia [Ms. NORTON] for her help in helping bring the city to the table; Mike Rogers, the Mayor, and the entire council, for being flexible on this issue; to Wayne Curry, the chief executive of Prince Georges County; Doug Duncan, the county executive in Montgomery County; Cathy Hanley, the supervisor and the chairman at Fairfax County. I think all worked together with the regional congressional delegation to bring this about and save Congress a lot of time on this bill, and also do what is right for the region. I appreciate their efforts.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Chairman DAVIS and delegate HOLMES-NORTON for their continued leadership and hard work on this bill which will provide the newly created District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority with the ability to issue bonds. Since this new authority will oversee operations at the Blue Plains Water Treatment Facility, it is important that it have the necessary power to deal with issues of concern at the plant.

The citizens living in the Washington metropolitan region remain concerned about operations and management problems at the Blue Plains and the environmental and safety impact of the problems Blue Plains has been experiencing. At a time when we are substantially improving the region's water quality, it is important that we preserve our fragile environment and protect human health.

The ability of this new independent authority to function effectively will go a long way in helping to alleviate some of these concerns. Granting bonding ability will enable the authority to collect its own revenues. This will move us a step closer to ensuring protection of human life and the environment while providing for better operations, proper equipment, financial stability, and sufficient staffing levels. It will enable Blue Plains to manage its business affairs outside the domain of the District's tenuous budgetary affairs. I believe residents living in the surrounding jurisdictions will take comfort in knowing that.

The establishment of the authority is a good step in the right direction. However, one additional step is critical. The authority must be given the power to raise capital to operate and make much needed improvements at the Blue Plains plant.

I would be remiss if I did not express my satisfaction with the cooperative efforts of the suburban jurisdictions and the District. It would have been very difficult to bring this legislation to the floor without their collaboration and support. Again, I want to thank Chairman DAVIS for working with Members in the region to develop a bill which we can all support, and I urge swift adoption of this legislation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the amendment in the nature of a substitute offered by the gentleman from Virginia [Mr. DAVIS].

The amendment in the nature of a substitute was agreed to.

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

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. DAVIS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 3663.

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

There was no objection.

□ 1300

DISAPPROVAL OF MOST-FAVORED-NATION TREATMENT FOR CHINA

Mr. ARCHER. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 463, I call up the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 182) disapproving the extension of nondiscriminatory treatment—most-favored-nation treatment—to the products of the People's Republic of China, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the joint resolution.

The text of House Joint Resolution 182 is as follows:

H.J. RES. 182

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the Congress does not approve the extension of the authority contained in section 402(c) of the Trade Act of 1974 recommended by the President to the Congress on May 31, 1996, with respect to the People's Republic of China.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). Pursuant to House Resolution 463, the gentleman from Texas [Mr. ARCHER] and the gentleman from California [Mr. STARK] will each be recognized for 1 hour.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas [Mr. ARCHER].

Mr. ARCHER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to yield half of my time to the gentleman from Florida [Mr. GIBBONS] and that he be permitted to control that time.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to yield 30 minutes of my time to the gentleman from Kentucky [Mr. BUNNING] and that he be permitted to control that time.

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

There was no objection.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ARCHER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on House Joint Resolution 182.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I speak today in strong opposition to House Joint Resolution 182, which would disapprove the extension of most-favored-nation status, or more accurately, normal trade relations to the People's Republic of China. On June 18, the Committee on Ways and Means reported this resolution adversely by an overwhelming bipartisan vote of 31 to 6.

Mr. Speaker, all of us in this Chamber share a common goal of fostering freedom, democracy, and human rights in China. We of course have deep concerns about China's human rights record, which demonstrates that serious abuses and strong-arm tactics occur all too often. Yet, steady improvements over the decade in the daily lives of the Chinese people is also clearly in evidence.

Mr. Speaker, I am opposed to this resolution because it would have the effect of severing completely our trading relations with China. Such a step would be counterproductive to fostering the growth of freedom and democracy in that nation and would extinguish our ability to improve the human rights situation there.

We have proof that the commercial opportunities set in motion by MFN trade status have given Chinese workers and firms a strong stake in the free market reforms occurring in China and allow our companies to lead by example in spreading our values and ideals throughout the country.

We have no proof that ending this relationship would somehow force China to improve human rights in that country. We have isolated China before, and it did not work. The conditions were worse. Revoking MFN will be an empty gesture and could return us to that cold environment.

In addition, United States commercial involvement with China is critical to our economic objectives. China, whose economy is now the third largest in the world, continues to embark on massive infrastructure programs, spending billions of dollars annually in sectors in which we lead: High technology, aerospace, petrochemical, and telecommunication. With per capita income doubling every 6 or 7 years, the Chinese economy is expanding at an outstanding pace and has an insatiable appetite for goods.

Our participation in that huge market translates directly into U.S. jobs. Our trade relationships with the Chinese have created 200,000 high-paying jobs in the United States, with another 400,000 United States jobs indirectly supported in transportation, production, and distribution fields.

Finally, our interests concerning national security are at stake in this debate. Our presence in China puts us in the best position to influence the Chinese Government concerning sensitive issues in the region, including North Korea, weapons proliferation, and military expansion in the South China Sea.