

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, I strongly support H.R. 1975, the Federal Oil and Gas Royalty Simplification and Fairness Act. H.R. 1975 would streamline our Federal royalty collection system by improving the management of royalties from Federal and outer continental shelf oil and gas leases.

Currently, about \$4.2 billion is collected annually by the Federal Government in mineral receipts—our Nation's third largest revenue source. However, reform of our Nation's royalty collection system has been needed for some time. H.R. 1975 achieves the goals set out by the administration, the States, and industry to provide simplicity and fairness in the partnership between the Federal Government and the leaseholders of Federal lands.

Specifically, this legislation would establish a clear statute of limitations on royalty collection, expand existing delegation to States provisions, and set time limits on administrative appeal decisions. This legislation also provides marginal well relief by reforming royalty collections for low-production wells—an issue of great importance to my home State of Texas.

At a time when we continue to see increasing reliance on oil imports, this legislation provides the necessary relief to enhance domestic production in both an economically efficient and environmentally sound way. In addition, H.R. 1975 would help Congress in its efforts to balance the budget by providing an additional \$51 million in royalties over the next 7 years.

H.R. 1975 is supported by the administration, a bipartisan delegation of Members from Congress as well as 14 of our Nation's Governors who represent most of our Federal onshore production. It is also supported by the Interstate Oil and Gas Compact Commission and industry trade associations representing our Nation's Federal lessees. I urge my colleagues to support royalty simplification and fairness by voting in favor of H.R. 1975.

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

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time.

I include for the RECORD a letter from the White House addressed to me and signed by the Chief of Staff, Mr. Leon Panetta, in support of the bill:

THE WHITE HOUSE,
Washington, DC, May 30, 1996.

Hon. NEIL ABERCROMBIE,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. ABERCROMBIE: I am writing to inform you of the Administration's position regarding the pending Oil and Gas Royalty Simplification and Fairness legislation (S. 1014). Let me assure you that the Administration remains committed to ensuring the efficient management of Federal lands and finding new ways for the States to work cooperatively and creatively with the Federal Government. The President shares your hope that an agreement can be reached on the State delegation issue.

In an effort to resolve this issue, Administration representatives, working with the staff of the Senate Energy Committee, were

successful in reaching an agreement on language that would expand the list of delegable royalty management authorities, without reducing the Secretary of the Interior's responsibility with respect to the management of Federal lands. That language was included in S. 1014, which was reported out of the Senate Energy Committee on May 1st. The Administration supports S. 1014 as reported out of committee, but will seek a minor technical amendment. The Administration believes this bill's State delegation language is acceptable, unlike the language included in H.R. 1975, the House Resources Committee bill on Royalty Simplification.

The Administration will continue to work with Congress as the legislative process moves forward, and stands ready to work in support of the language included in the Senate Energy Committee bill. I appreciate your interest and support in this important legislation.

Sincerely,

LEON E. PANETTA,
Chief of Staff.

□ 1630

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

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

Mr. Speaker, in closing I would like to first thank the gentleman from Hawaii [Mr. ABERCROMBIE], my good friend. We worked through this bill over the last year and had many occasions to go back and forth, but in the end I think we ended up with a good piece of legislation which is supported by most everyone here, and I certainly am appreciative of the time and effort that both him and his staff have put into this, and I thank him and look forward to other legislation in the future; and also to the gentleman from California [Mr. MILLER], the ranking member of the subcommittee, for all of his, and the overall committee, for all his help.

Mr. Speaker, this bill, in closing, will raise money for the Feds and the States. It certainly has bipartisan support in the House, the Senate and 14 Governors. It has the administration support from the White House; the Secretary of Interior, Bruce Babbitt. It enacts clear and equitable reform, gives more power to the States. It establishes a certain statute of limitation period.

It is a good bill, and I urge its passage.

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H.R. 1975. This ill-named royalty fairness bill is yet another example of corporate welfare for well-heeled oil and gas producers operating on public lands.

Just 2 months ago, press reports reveals that 10 oil companies may have underpaid royalties and interest to the Federal Government by as much as \$856 million on land in California they lease from the Federal Government to drill for oil.

What has the Republican-controlled Congress proposed in response to this royalty rip-off?

First, the Republican majority in the House voted to repeal the gas tax, a move that most economists agree the oil companies will quickly pocket for themselves. Consumers are unlikely to actually see any of this cut reflected

in lower prices at the pump, as the Republicans rejected all Democratic efforts to assure the savings would actually be rebated to consumers.

And now today, with this bill, we will be providing the big oil and gas companies with yet another windfall. H.R. 1975 will:

Result in more than \$200 million being paid out to oil and gas companies over the next 20 years by requiring the taxpayers to pay interest payments to oil companies who—through their own stupidity, mismanagement, or incompetent accounting—have overpaid royalties to the Federal Government; and

Establish a 7-year statute of limitations that will undermine the Federal Government's ability to collect moneys owed it by huge oil and gas companies.

I think it's time we stopped providing Federal freebies to deadbeat drillers. We should defeat this bill. It is bad energy policy and bad fiscal policy. Thank you, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GUTKNECHT). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California [Mr. CALVERT] that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1975, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 1975, the bill just passed.

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

There was no objection.

MINING AND MINERAL RESOURCES INSTITUTES ACT

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent for the immediate consideration in the House of the bill (H.R. 3249) to authorize appropriations for a mining institute to develop domestic technological capabilities for the recovery of minerals from the Nation's seabed, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

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

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Mr. Speaker, reserving the right to object, and I will not object, I would like to have time to speak under the reservation.

Mr. Speaker, under my reservation, I yield to the gentleman from Mississippi [Mr. WICKER].

Mr. WICKER. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague and friend from Hawaii, Mr. ABERCROMBIE, for yielding me this time, and I shall not take much time, but I am pleased to speak in support of

H.R. 3249 and to thank the gentleman for his leadership in working with me on this legislation which will continue a valuable marine minerals resource program.

Since its inception in 1988 this program has had as its primary goal the environmentally responsible exploration and development of mineral resource found within our Nation's exclusive economic zone. For a relatively small input of Federal money a strong relationship has been forged between Federal, academic, and industry teams to address problems in marine resources and the environment.

I ask my colleagues to join me in supporting the reauthorization of this exceptional program. I thank the leadership of the committee in this regard.

Today, I am pleased to speak in support of H.R. 3249, legislation to continue a valuable, marine minerals resource program. Since its inception in 1988, this program has had as its primary goal the environmentally responsible exploration and development of mineral resources found within our Nation's Exclusive Economic Zone [EEZ].

This region covers more area than the United States proper and contains a resource base estimated in the trillions of dollars. By successfully merging the skills of academia and the talents of industry, this program is working to place the United States well above its international competitors in underwater technology development. At the same time, this program invests in the future by providing graduate students with firsthand training in marine mineral development.

At present, the United States is in danger of being surpassed by other nations that are aggressively pursuing the development of environmentally friendly ocean mining technology. Japan, the United Kingdom, France, and China, in particular, have devoted considerable time and money toward developing such technologies and promoting industry support. This program directs successful applied research efforts with numerous concrete accomplishments. To meet future challenges, researchers are working to develop surveying and sampling systems for use in locating important mineral deposits. The systems can be used for locating sand resources for coastline stabilization and beach replenishment. In addition, they are essential in assessing and monitoring pollutants in river and oceanic sediments. Researchers are also working to develop an acoustical filter system to control dredging turbidity and to process industry waste.

For a relatively small input of Federal money, a strong relationship has been forged between Federal, academic, and industry teams to address problems in marine resources and the environment. I ask my colleagues to join me in supporting the reauthorization of this exceptional program.

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Mr. Speaker, continuing under my reservation of objection, I would like to say that I am also pleased to rise in strong support of H.R. 3249, the Mining and Mineral Resources Institutes Act.

This legislation, as indicated, was drafted and introduced in the true spir-

it of bipartisanship by the gentleman from Mississippi [Mr. WICKER] and myself. We have had the extensive cooperation and support again of the gentleman from California [Mr. CALVERT], our able chair, and of the chairman of the full committee, the gentleman from Alaska [Mr. YOUNG], for which I am very appreciative.

H.R. 3249 would extend authorization for the Mining Institute to promote environmentally responsible mining technology development for the recovery of the minerals from our Nation's seabed. This type of technology, Mr. Speaker, is critical to the future of mining in the United States, and I am very pleased that this is recognized, again on a bipartisan basis, and am very thankful for the individual encouragement from the chairman of the full committee and the gentleman from California [Mr. CALVERT].

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in strong support of H.R. 3249, the Mining and Mineral Resources Institutes Act. This is legislation that was drafted and introduced in the true spirit of bipartisanship by the gentleman from Mississippi [Mr. WICKER] and myself.

H.R. 3249 would extend authorization for a mining institute to promote environmentally responsible technology development for the recovery of minerals from the Nation's seabed. This type of technology is critical to the future of mining in the United States.

H.R. 3249 is not a new Government program. Previously, the marine mining program was carried out under the Mineral Institutes Program within the Bureau of Mines. Last year the decision was made to terminate the Bureau of Mines. Yet, worthwhile functions of this agency still deserve and need support. One such example is in the Marine Mineral Technology Center of the Mineral Institutes Program. The executive branch, recognizing the value of this program, transferred this program to the Minerals Management Service.

The Marine Mining Technology Center program is a unique cooperative program involving leading universities with expertise in applied problems in marine resources and the marine environment. The program is singular because for a relatively small sum of Federal seed money to State institutions and small research organizations, we have seen a prodigious amount of practical research and development accomplished. Additionally, as a byproduct, a number of high-quality graduate students have gained practical hands-on experience. The center's program of research, technology development, and education is multidisciplinary and international in scope.

Currently, the marine mining program is carried out by the Continental Shelf Division, located at the University of Mississippi, and the Oceans Basins Division at the University of Hawaii. The University of Hawaii program has been assisted by matching funds from the State of Hawaii because of its critical input to State cooperative development programs, as well as university research and education. Practical aspects of the program have included major inputs to an environmental impact statement on cobalt crusts in the exclusive economic zone [EEZ] of the Hawaiian and Johnston Islands, State programs on sand for the preservation of Hawaii's beaches and coastal environment, and the cleanup of mili-

tary ordinance from the offshore areas of Kaho'olawe Island, recently returned to the native Hawaiian people by the Navy.

This program merits continued Federal support. I am hopeful that we will see this legislation proceed expeditiously through the Senate so that President Clinton can sign it into law this year.

In that light, Mr. Speaker, I withdraw my reservation of objection.

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

There was no objection.

The Clerk read the bill, as follows:

H.R. 3249

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

SECTION 1. SEABED MINERALS.

(a) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Section 2(a) of Public Law 98-409 (30 U.S.C. 1222(a)) is amended by adding the following at the end thereof: "There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary not more than \$1,200,000 for each of the fiscal years after fiscal year 1996 to be made available by the Secretary to an institute experienced in investigating the shallow and deep seabed as a source for nonfuel minerals to be used by the institute to assist in developing domestic technological capabilities required for the location of, and the efficient and environmentally sound recovery of, minerals (other than oil and gas) from the nation's shallow and deep seabed."

(b) SHORT TITLE.—Section 11 of Public Law 98-409 (30 U.S.C. 1201 note) is amended to read as follows:

"SEC. 11. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Mining and Mineral Resources Institutes Act."

COMMITTEE AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute.

The Clerk read as follows:

Committee amendment in the nature of a substitute:

SECTION 1. SEABED MINERALS.

(A) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Section 2(a) of the Mining and Mineral Resources Research Institute Act of 1984 (30 U.S.C. 1222(a)) is amended by adding the following at the end thereof:

"There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary not more than \$1,800,000 for each of the fiscal years after fiscal year 1996 to be made available by the Secretary to an institute or institutes experienced in investigating the continental shelf regions of the United States, the deep seabed and near shore environments of islands, and the Arctic and cold water regions as a source for nonfuel minerals. Such funds are to be used by the institute or institutes to assist in developing domestic technological capabilities required for the location of, and the efficient and environmentally sound recovery of, minerals (other than oil and gas) from the Nation's shallow and deep seabed."

(b) SHORT TITLE.—Section 11 of such Act (30 U.S.C. 1201 note) is amended to read as follows:

"SEC. 11. SHORT TITLE

"This Act may be cited as the 'Mining and Mineral Resources Institutes Act'."

Mr. CALVERT. (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the committee 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 California?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute.

The committee 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.

The title of the bill was amended so as to read: "A bill to authorize appropriations for a mining institute or institutes to develop domestic technological capabilities for the recovery of minerals from the Nation's seabed, and for other purposes."

MOLLIE BEATTIE WILDERNESS AREA ACT

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table the Senate bill (S. 1899) entitled the "Mollie Beattie Wilderness Area Act," 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 Alaska?

Mr. STUDDS. Mr. Speaker, reserving the right to object, and I shall of course not object, and I would be pleased to yield to the gentleman from Alaska [Mr. YOUNG].

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased the House today will consider S. 1899. This bill honors the dedicated service of the late Mollie Beattie, former Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. This bill designates an 8-million-acre wilderness area in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge as the Mollie Beattie Wilderness Area. That is in my State, it is an area that is just above my home.

I feel fortunate to have been one of the few people who had the opportunity to work with Mollie on both a personal and professional basis. While she left this world much too soon, she truly achieved a lifetime worth of accomplishments.

Her dedication to upgrading the Fish and Wildlife Service resulted in a much more efficient and responsible agency. Her rational approach to her job led to many bipartisan accomplishments. She was able to bring all sides of an issue to the table in order to reach common-sense agreements. Because of this, she was respected by all of those who knew and worked with her.

While Mollie and I often differed on legislative issues, we were able to work closely together because she was a person of the utmost integrity and professionalism. I respected the fact that when she took a position on an issue it was because she truly believed it was the right thing to do. She was a

straight shooter who earned the respect of all of us in Congress.

Mollie was the one person directly responsible for upgrading the Fish and Wildlife Service. She instilled a public service attitude among her employees and brought a more compassionate approach to her agency because she personally believed that the needs of people were important in the administration of Federal regulations.

Mollie is also to be commended for the positive approach she brought to Government. She was the least adversarial and least confrontational Director I have ever worked with during my 24 years in Congress. Because of this, she was able to accomplish a lot of bipartisan goals when others would have failed.

I believe her legacy will be one of the most unwavering commitments to preserve and protect the animals, birds, and fish of our Nation. Her compassionate devotion to this cause will not be forgotten.

Mr. Speaker, may I suggest one thing? She did go to Alaska, she visited Alaska, worked with Alaskans. She did know the area which I am speaking of.

It is difficult for me to have this area, but no better person could be nominated to have the name the Mollie Beattie Wilderness Area in the Arctic Wildlife Range. I am very acquainted with the area. I myself have traveled the area, trapped the area, hunted the area, mined in the area, worked in the area, and she did know the beauty and grandeur of the area, so at this time I am very pleased to say that this is a good piece of legislation.

Mr. STUDDS. Further reserving the right to object, Mr. Speaker, today we pause briefly from our business of passing legislation and debating the issues of the day to honor the memory of a person who reminds us why we all came here in the first place. Mollie Beattie did not come to Washington for love of politics or power. She would have much rather been tending her bees and flowers in the peace and quiet of her rural Vermont home. Rather, she came because she had a message and a mission, and Washington, DC, was where she had to go to get the job done.

Mollie assumed the directorship of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service a little over 3 years ago at a time when many of the fundamental missions of that agency were under fire. Never comfortable in the harsh glare of the limelight, she nevertheless conducted herself with dignity and grace even in the most difficult situations, and worked determinedly for what she believed was right.

The controversy surrounding endangered species, wetlands, and other conservation issues continues, but Mollie never lapsed into cynicism or partisanship. To her, the conservation of fish and wildlife and their habitat was not a policy decision, it was not a political stick with which to thrash opponents, it was simply a moral imperative. "I

believe there's only one conflict," she told an interviewer, "and that's between the short-term and the long-term thinking. In the long term, the economy and the environment are the same thing."

Firm but not rigid, morally grounded but never self-righteous, and astute without being cunning, Mollie in her short and productive life had a lot to teach us about how to live our own lives. She always thought in the long term and her death is our loss in the long term.

It is fitting that the bill before us today would rename a mountain wilderness after Mollie. Their untamed nature and quiet strength are reflective of those qualities that we will miss most in Mollie. Long after we are gone, these mountains will stand as a tribute to Mollie Beattie. Long after her untimely passing, her indomitable spirit and quiet commitment will infuse and invigorate wildlife conservation. And for Mollie, that will be the greatest tribute of all.

Mr. Speaker, she loved this Earth and its creatures. She was utterly without pretense, and unlike so many of us who come to this city, she never once confused herself with the monuments, and as my colleagues can see, she took the already unspeakably mellow gentleman from Alaska and mellowed him even further.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. STUDDS. I yield to the gentleman from Alaska.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I have worked with many people in my life, and one thing about Mollie Beattie, she and I had our differences at one of our hearings, and she came to my office the day after the hearing and apologized to me for not having all her information correct and saying, in fact, that will never happen again, Congressman. And I have always respected her from that moment on, and we had this working relationship. The only thing I can suggest is it is just unknown in this town for many, many years. I just wish that other Federal agency heads that are appointed would understand one thing: This is a legislative branch and executive branch, and the ability to achieve goals is what we should be seeking. I cannot say that for everyone else that works in the Department of the Interior, but I could say it for her, and I said it prior to her demise, in fact, while she was still in office I spoke to her on occasion in my State, which was not too popular, I know, with this administration. But the truth of the matter, she always was there in a straightforward position, presented her view as she saw it without being arrogant or without being abrasive and was always being honest, and to me that meant a great deal.

Mr. STUDDS. Further reserving the right to object, I yield to the gentleman from New Mexico [Mr. RICHARDSON].

Mr. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the two very gracious