

that is going through some very hard times. Jobs are important everywhere, we all know that, but especially in Keeseville, whose unemployment is nearly 18 percent. The Prescott Mill project would permit the village to attract more businesses, provide 35 temporary jobs during construction and 75 permanent jobs. There is extensive support in the village of Keeseville for this particular project.

There is a need to act on H.R. 848 in a timely manner, since the construction deadline expired last February.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that Members support H.R. 848 for the people in Keeseville, NY.

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

Mr. HALL of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Mr. HALL of Texas asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HALL of Texas. Mr. Speaker, as the gentleman from Colorado has pointed out, H.R. 848 would authorize FERC to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of the 800-kilowatt AuSable project to be located in New York.

Mr. Speaker, FERC of course has the authority to extend the initial deadline but for no longer than 2 years. If additional time is needed, Congress can enact legislation to extend that deadline.

I think I should also point out that it is not without warranted reason that these hydroelectric projects are in need of license extensions. In the case of the project in New York, it is very difficult to find a sponsor to secure financing until it has a power sales contract in hand. Generally a licensee cannot secure a contract until it has been granted a license. These circumstances make it critical for a construction license to be granted.

There is no one opposed to it. It is an easy bill with no objection from FERC. I strongly urge my colleagues to join me in voting "yes" on H.R. 848.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Colorado, Mr. DAN SCHAEFER, that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 848.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. DAN SCHAEFER of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous material on H.R. 848, the bill just passed.

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

There was no objection.

EXTENDING DEADLINE FOR BEAR CREEK HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT IN WASHINGTON

Mr. DAN SCHAEFER of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1184) to extend the deadline under the Federal Power Act for the construction of the Bear Creek hydroelectric project in the State of Washington, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 1184

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

SECTION 1. EXTENSION OF DEADLINE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding the time period specified in section 13 of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 806) that would otherwise apply to Federal Energy Regulatory Commission project numbered 10371, the Commission may, upon the request of the project licensee, in accordance with the good faith, due diligence, and public interest requirements of that section and the Commission's procedures under that section, extend the time period during which the licensee is required to commence construction of the project for not more than 3 consecutive 2-year periods.

(b) APPLICABILITY.—The extension under subsection (a) shall take effect for the project upon the expiration of the extension, issued by the Commission under section 13 of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 806), of the period required for commencement of construction of the project.

(c) REINSTATEMENT OF EXPIRED LICENSE.—If the license for the project referred to in subsection (a) has expired prior to the date of enactment of this Act, the Commission shall reinstate the license effective as of the date of its expiration and extend the time required for commencement of construction of the project as provided in subsection (a) for not more than 3 consecutive 2-year periods, the first of which shall commence on the date of such expiration.

SEC. 2. REENACTMENT OF SENTENCE IN SECTION 6.

Section 6 of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 799) is amended by adding the following sentence (deleted by section 108(a) of the General Accounting Office Act of 1996 (Public Law 104-316)) at the end thereof: "Licenses may be revoked only for the reasons and in the manner prescribed under the provisions of this Act, and may be altered or surrendered only upon mutual agreement between the licensee and the Commission after thirty days' public notice."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Colorado, Mr. DAN SCHAEFER and the gentleman from Texas, Mr. HALL each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Colorado, Mr. DAN SCHAEFER.

Mr. DAN SCHAEFER of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 5 minutes.

(Mr. DAN SCHAEFER of Colorado asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DAN SCHAEFER of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 1184, as amended, au-

thorizes the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of the Bear Creek hydroelectric project in the State of Washington.

The reason for this legislation is the same as with other hydroelectric license extension bills. The onset of intense competition in the electric industry is driving utilities to lower their costs and avoid making long-term commitments. As hydroelectric projects are typically financed through long-term power sales contracts, it has been difficult for many project developers to secure financing to construct licensed projects.

There is a need to act on this legislation in a very timely manner, since the construction deadline expired on December 9, 1997. I should note that H.R. 1184 does not ease the environmental requirements of the license but merely extends the construction deadline.

H.R. 1184, as amended, also would restore a sentence in the Federal Power Act that was erroneously deleted by the General Accounting Office Act of 1996. In the last Congress, both the National Defense Authorization Act and the General Accounting Office Act provided for the deletion of the last sentence of section 6 of the Federal Power Act. The intent of both laws was to strike a requirement that the FERC would file all issued hydropower licenses with the General Accounting Office.

However, since the National Defense Authorization Act was enacted first, the General Accounting Office Act erroneously deleted the next-to-last sentence of section 6 of the Federal Power Act which addressed the authority of FERC to revoke hydropower licenses. H.R. 1184 would restore this sentence to the Federal Power Act.

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission has no objection to this particular legislation and I urge the support of 1184, as amended.

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

Mr. HALL of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Mr. HALL of Texas asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HALL of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1184, introduced by my colleague, the gentleman from Washington [Mr. METCALF]. The bill allows the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to extend the deadline under the Federal Power Act for the construction of the Bear Creek hydroelectric project in Washington State.

I have had the pleasure of working with the gentleman from Washington, a noted author and a very respected Member of this Congress. I have sat in on many financial meetings with him and have the highest regard for him. He has done a good job on H.R. 1184. It allows FERC simply to extend the commencement of construction for the

project for not more than three consecutive 2-year periods.

This extension bill faces no opposition. In keeping with the practice of granting license extensions, H.R. 1184 is a noncontroversial, easy yes vote, and I strongly urge my colleagues to vote in favor of H.R. 1184.

Mr. Speaker, finally, I wish to thank the gentleman from Colorado, and I certainly want to thank the gentleman from Washington for bringing this important legislation to the floor.

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

Mr. DAN SCHAEFER of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Washington [Mr. METCALF].

Mr. METCALF. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the chairman, the gentleman from Virginia, Mr. BLILEY, and the subcommittee chairman, the gentleman from Colorado, Mr. DAN SCHAEFER, for considering the next two bills, H.R. 1184 and H.R. 1217, and I appreciate their willingness to work with me on renewing these projects. These are important projects to my district.

The project is located in Skagit County and will result in no new or increased budget authority or tax expenditures or revenues. This facility has operated from 1906 to 1969 when it ceased operation. FERC issued a construction license in 1993 which will expire December 10, 1997. This bill will extend the deadline for the commencement of construction for three, 2-year periods. Such an extension is common on projects where construction has been delayed due to factors outside of the licensee's control. For example, to date, construction has not commenced because of a lack of a power purchase agreement to support project construction financing. As a result of destabilization of the electricity industry and spot prices and, therefore, a market condition such that no power sales contract can be executed.

The legislation provides for up to three consecutive, 2-year extensions, instead of a 6-year extension, to assure that the licensee must continue to meet the section 13 requirement that it prosecute each 2-year extension. If FERC determines the licensee is not acting in good faith, it is expected that FERC will refuse to grant a request for an extension for an additional 2-year extension.

This project has received no challenges and has been determined environmentally sound and nonthreatening by all applicable local, State, and Federal agencies. The Bear Creek facility is located entirely on private property.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Colorado, Mr. DAN SCHAEFER, that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1184, 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. DAN SCHAEFER of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous material on H.R. 1184, the bill just passed.

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

There was no objection.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 1559

Mrs. LINDA SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I request my name be removed as cosponsor of H.R. 1559.

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

There was no objection.

EXTENDING DEADLINE FOR HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT IN WASHINGTON STATE

Mr. DAN SCHAEFER of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1217) to extend the deadline under the Federal Power Act for the construction of a hydroelectric project located in the State of Washington, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 1217

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

SECTION 1. EXTENSION OF DEADLINE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding the time period specified in section 13 of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 806) that would otherwise apply to Federal Energy Regulatory Commission project numbered 10359, the Commission shall, at the request of the project licensee, extend the time period during which the licensee is required to complete construction of the project to May 4, 2004.

(b) REPORTS.—The licensee for the project described in subsection (a) shall file with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, on December 31 of each year until construction of the project is completed, a report on the status of the project.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Colorado, Mr. DAN SCHAEFER, and the gentleman from Texas, Mr. HALL, each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Colorado, Mr. DAN SCHAEFER.

Mr. DAN SCHAEFER of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 5 minutes.

(Mr. DAN SCHAEFER of Colorado asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

□ 1230

Mr. DAN SCHAEFER of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 1217 would direct the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to extend the deadline for the completion of construction of the Youngs Creek hydroelectric project in the State of Washington. The commencement of construction of this

project was initiated in a timely manner, and the project developer expended about 25 percent of total project cost, which is \$5.3 million. However, the developer has been unable to secure financing to complete project construction due to uncertainties in the electric industry.

H.R. 1217 extends the deadline for the completion of construction until May 4, 2004. As is the case with others, the extension under the bill does not change or alter the environmental requirements in any way. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission has no objection to this legislation. I would urge support of H.R. 1217.

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

Mr. HALL of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Mr. Hall of Texas asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HALL of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1217, which, like the previous bill, was introduced by the gentleman from Washington [Mr. METCALF], my good friend. This bill is exactly like the previous non-controversial hydroelectric project extension, but it is very important to the gentleman from Washington [Mr. METCALF] and is important to his district and his State.

As proven in the past, congressional extension legislation has been non-controversial and without opposition from FERC. This practice holds true with H.R. 1217. These are easy yes votes, and I strongly urge my colleagues to join in supporting the gentleman from Washington [Mr. METCALF] in H.R. 1217.

Mr. DAN SCHAEFER of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I would also like to congratulate the gentleman from Washington [Mr. METCALF] for his excellent work on these last two bills. I know it is very, very important to the State of Washington, his district.

Mr. METCALF. Mr. Speaker, the project is located in Snohomish County and will result in no new or increased budget authority or tax expenditures or revenues. This facility has 25 percent of the total cost—\$5 million—already invested in construction, and this legislation will extend the time to complete construction for an additional 6 years from May 4, 1998, to May 4, 2004. Two of those years will be consumed by actual construction needed to complete the project.

This legislation will assure that the site is preserved for final construction. This is especially important because construction has already begun although a power sales agreement was not obtained. There is precedent for FERC to grant commencement extensions when construction has been delayed due to market conditions that are such that no power sales contract can be executed. For example, to date, construction has commenced although has been halted because of a lack of a power purchase agreement to support project construction financing. As a result of destabilization of the electricity industry and spot prices