

from Wyoming, the chairlady of our subcommittee, that has taken the initiative and leadership in passing unanimously by our Committee on Resources this very important piece of legislation. I thank my good friends from Puerto Rico and our Democrat ranking member of the subcommittee for bringing to the attention of the Members what I consider to be a little oversight in the fact that the National Geological Mapping Reauthorization Act did not include the insular areas.

I am very happy that the gentlewoman from Wyoming has taken the initiative, with my good friend from Puerto Rico, to see that the proper amendments are made to change this reauthorization act.

Mr. Speaker, I am also happy to see my good friend from Nevada. Who could be a better expert than a person who is knowledgeable about geological issues, a geologist himself, my good friend, the gentlewoman from Nevada [Mr. GIBBONS]. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to consider his expertise and the importance of this piece of legislation, and I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 709.

Ms. CHRISTIAN-GREEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 709, the National Geological Mapping Reauthorization Act of 1997 and urge my colleagues to support its passage.

I want to begin by commending my colleague, the Gentlewoman from Wyoming, chair of the Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources, the Honorable BARBARA CUBIN for her leadership in guiding H.R. 709 through the subcommittee, as well as, the full Resources Committee and on to the floor of the House today.

I also want to commend the gentleman from Puerto Rico, the ranking member of the Energy and Mineral Resources Subcommittee, the Honorable CARLOS ROMERO-BARCELÓ for his leadership on this bill as well.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 709 would reauthorize the National Geological Mapping Act of 1992 through the year 2000. It would also amend the act to designate that 20 percent of the total amount appropriated be allocated to the State component of the program. During the markup of H.R. 709 in the subcommittee, my colleague, Mr. ROMERO offered an amendment to correct an apparent oversight and make the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, and my district of the Virgin Islands eligible to participate in the State mapping component of the bill. I then offered an amendment to my colleague's amendment to make the District of Columbia and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands also eligible for participation in H.R. 709's program components.

I want to thank my friend, Mr. ROMERO for offering his amendment on the behalf of those of us from the U.S. non-State areas. To often we are overlooked or ignored making actions such as his amendment necessary. I also want to thank Mr. ROMERO and Chairman CUBIN for accepting my amendment to H.R. 709 as well.

H.R. 709 is a worthwhile piece of legislation, Mr. Speaker and I urge my colleagues to support its enactment.

Mrs. CUBIN. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mrs. CUBIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume to state that I certainly appreciate the help of the ranking minority member in adding the other additions to the bill that were originally left out. I, too, feel it was more of an oversight, that it is very important and certainly does improve the quality of the bill.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. CUBIN. 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. 709, as amended.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GOODLATTE). Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Wyoming?

There was no objection.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Wyoming [Mrs. CUBIN] that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 709, 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.

CONCERNING URGENT NEED TO IMPROVE LIVING STANDARDS OF SOUTH ASIANS LIVING IN THE GANGES AND BRAHMAPUTRA RIVER BASIN

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 16) concerning the urgent need to improve the living standards of those South Asians living in the Ganges and the Brahmaputra River Basin, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 16

Whereas some 400,000,000 people live in Bangladesh, northern India, and Nepal near the Ganges and Brahmaputra Rivers and their tributaries;

Whereas these people comprise the largest concentration of poor people in the world;

Whereas this region lacks the resources, especially the infrastructure, that can pull its residents out of poverty;

Whereas almost every year flooding by the Ganges and Brahmaputra Rivers produces death and destruction, sometimes on a vast scale;

Whereas during the dry seasons, water supplies do not meet the needs of the region's people, especially farmers;

Whereas despite these problems, the region has great potential for development;

Whereas Bangladesh, India, and Nepal have recognized for many years that the water resources of the region, if properly managed, could contribute greatly to the welfare of millions of people in the region;

Whereas the Governments of Bangladesh and India signed a 30-year agreement on December 12, 1996, for the purpose of sharing the water of the Ganges River; and

Whereas in 1996 the Governments of India and Nepal signed and ratified a treaty enabling the joint development of the water resources of the Mahakali River: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That the Congress—

(1) congratulates the Governments of Bangladesh and India for their recent agreement on sharing the water of the Ganges River;

(2) congratulates the Governments of India and Nepal on their treaty enabling the joint development of the water resources of the Mahakali River;

(3) respectfully offers its encouragement for the three governments to continue their cooperation which can do much to relieve the poverty of those people living the Ganges and Brahmaputra River Basin; and

(4) urges international financial institutions, such as the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank, and the international community to offer whatever advice, encouragement, and assistance is appropriate to help in this effort.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York [Mr. GILMAN] and the gentleman from Alabama [Mr. HILLIARD] each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York [Mr. GILMAN].

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

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

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I want to commend the chairman and ranking minority member of the Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific for crafting House Concurrent Resolution 16, a concurrent resolution concerning the urgent need to improve the living standards of those South Asians living in the Ganges and the Brahmaputra River Basin.

Bangladesh, India, and Nepal all depend on the Ganges and the Brahmaputra Rivers for their vital irrigation needs. The recent signing of the 30-year water sharing treaty between India and Bangladesh and the ratification of the India-Nepal water resources treaty are both historic agreements that will enable the people in these lands to better plan and utilize their precious resources.

Bangladesh's recent Presidential election gives new hope to the fragile democracy there, and the water sharing agreement will help to put it on more solid ground. We commend them for their efforts.

Mr. Speaker, I support the resolution, and I urge my colleagues to vote for it.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Nebraska [Mr. BEREUTER], the distinguished chairman of the Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific.

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

House Concurrent Resolution 16 does concern the need to improve the living standards of those South Asians living in the Ganges and the Brahmaputra River Basin.

This bipartisan resolution was introduced on February 6, 1997 by this Member and cosponsored by the distinguished gentleman from New York, the chairman of the Committee on International Relations, Mr. GILMAN; the ranking Democrat on the Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific, the gentleman from California, Mr. BERMAN; the distinguished gentleman from New York, Mr. ACKERMAN; and the distinguished gentleman from California, Mr. ROYCE.

Other Members have subsequently cosponsored this resolution. This Member commends the help and cooperation these Members have demonstrated in moving forward on this important issue.

The Committee on International Relations unanimously approved this resolution last Thursday and asked it be placed on the suspension calendar this week. The resolution expresses the sense of the House of Representatives that there is an urgent need to improve the lives of those people of the Bangladesh, India and Nepal countries who live near the Ganges and Brahmaputra Rivers and their tributaries.

This river basin has the greatest concentration of poor people in the world, greater than any area in Africa, for example. The region has great potential, but, regrettably, it is beset by natural disasters, including flooding during the monsoon seasons, droughts during the dry seasons, and occasional cyclones.

Members will recall, perhaps, that during the last Congress this Member and the distinguished ranking member, the gentleman from California, Mr. BERMAN, introduced House Concurrent Resolution 213, which expressed the hope that the countries of that region would work together to relieve the poverty of the region's residents, focusing primarily on the need to address the critical problems of flooding and drought. That resolution was favorably reported by the Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific just before the end of the 104th Congress.

This Member is pleased to say that since that action, Bangladesh and India have signed a 30-year agreement on sharing the waters of the Ganges River. India and Nepal also have ratified a treaty that will permit their joint development of the Mahakali River water resources. These developments are very welcome.

House Concurrent Resolution 16, therefore, congratulates the governments of Bangladesh, India, and Nepal for these achievements and respectfully encourages them to continue their cooperation, which could do much to relieve the poverty of those people living in the Ganges and Brahmaputra River Basins.

This resolution also urges the world community, including the international financial institutions such as the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank, to provide whatever assistance is appropriate in this effort.

Mr. Speaker, the Department of State has informed this Member that

the agreement between Bangladesh and India on sharing the Ganges River water was signed on December 12, 1996, not January 13, 1997, as specified in House Concurrent Resolution 16. Therefore, the date has been changed to December 12, 1996.

This Member urges his colleagues to vote for House Concurrent Resolution 16.

□ 1530

Mr. HILLIARD. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and I rise in strong support of this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the gentleman from Nebraska for bringing this resolution before this body. The problem of equitable water sharing among the countries of South Asia has long plagued the region, and in many cases prevented the people of the region from enjoying anything beyond a bare minimum standard of living. In the past few months, however, India, Bangladesh, and Nepal have reached several water sharing and development agreements that will greatly contribute to the well-being of hundreds of millions of their citizens. This enlightened diplomacy should be encouraged generally, and really it is the whole purpose of this resolution.

I thank the gentleman for leading the fight in this fashion on this resolution, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. PALLONE].

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to address my colleagues on this. I do support the resolution.

I want to commend also the gentleman from Nebraska [Mr. BEREUTER], the chairman of the Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific, the sponsor of the resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I recently visited India, and I had the opportunity to meet with Prime Minister Gowda at the time. In citing the achievements of his multiparty coalition government, the Prime Minister mentioned with great pride the agreement that India signed last December with Bangladesh to share the water resources of one of the world's great rivers, the Ganges. While some critics have questioned whether such a broad coalition with so many diverse parties can govern effectively, the Prime Minister demonstrated that strong leadership can be brought to bear on an issue that literally affects the lives of hundreds of millions of people, and the agreement is a tribute to the leadership of both nations.

Also last year, as was noted, the Governments of India and Nepal signed and ratified a treaty enabling the joint development of the water resources of the Mahakali River, again a tribute to cooperation between neighbors in a part of the world that has often been more marked by conflict.

Mr. Speaker, the Ganges and the Brahmaputra River Basin comprises an

area less than one-fifth the size of the United States but with twice as many people. Millions of people who reside in this area suffer from poverty and the effects of environment degradation. Yet, the area has great potential in terms of irrigation, fisheries, hydro-power generation, and navigation.

The agreements we celebrate today with this concurrent resolution begin the process of allowing that potential to be realized for the benefit of all the people in the region, but the people of these nations need some help and technical assistance. That is why it is important for us to encourage the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, and the international community in general to provide the necessary support and encouragement, as this resolution does.

Mr. Speaker, I wanted to say as chairman of the bipartisan Congressional Caucus on India and Indian-Americans, I have tried to lobby our colleagues here as well as the administration to make America's relations with India a higher priority. India this year celebrates the 50th anniversary of its independence. It is a democracy, and the country has for the past 5 years been pursuing a historic policy of economic reform. This is the second most populous nation on Earth and it offers huge potential for trade and investment. I am convinced that the current Government of India is committed to this path, as are the Indian people.

Mr. Speaker, too often the relations between these two democracies, the United States and India, are marred by misunderstandings or simply by benign neglect. That is why it is important to send positive signals whenever possible. The resolution that we debate today will send just such a positive signal that the United States recognizes the efforts of the South Asian nations to foster greater regional cooperation and that we support these efforts. We hope these efforts will be the beginning of greater cooperation in South Asia and will serve as a model for other developing regions to better utilize their resources for the benefits of all their people.

I want to congratulate again the gentleman from Nebraska [Mr. BEREUTER] and the others that have cosponsored this resolution.

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

Mr. HILLIARD. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from American Samoa [Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA]. (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to support this resolution which congratulates the Governments of India, Bangladesh, and Nepal for their diplomacy and cooperation on water treaties that will improve the lives of over 400 million people that live near the Ganges and the Brahmaputra River Basins.

I would commend the gentleman from Nebraska [Mr. BEREUTER], the

chairman of the House International Relations Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific, for introducing this legislation. I further would like to commend the gentleman from New York [Mr. GILMAN], the full committee chairman; the gentleman from California [Mr. BERMAN], the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific; and the gentleman from New York [Mr. ACKERMAN], and the gentleman from California [Mr. ROYCE] for their support of this measure as original cosponsors.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution supports the efforts of the Governments of India, Bangladesh, and Nepal over the past year to cooperate in sharing the waters of the Ganges River, as well as the joint development of the resources of the Mahakali River. Their efforts in negotiating treaties will help in the future to control water resources in the region, reducing flooding during rains, and providing water during droughts. Through this admirable cooperation by these Governments, it is projected that deaths and property destruction will be substantially reduced for the region's 400 million residents.

Mr. Speaker, the resolution further urges international financial institutions and the world community to assist the Governments of India, Bangladesh, and Nepal in this worthy endeavor.

I strongly endorse this measure that supports progress to improve the lives of close to half a billion people in South Asia, and certainly would like to commend the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. HAMILTON], the senior ranking member of our Committee on International Relations, for his full support of this legislation.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GOODLATTE). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York [Mr. GILMAN] that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, House Concurrent Resolution 16, as amended.

The question was taken.

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 5 of rule I and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

VACATING ORDERING OF YEAS AND NAYS ON HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 32, GRANTING CONSENT TO CERTAIN AMENDMENTS ENACTED BY HAWAIIAN LEGISLATURE TO HAWAIIAN HOMES COMMISSION ACT OF 1920

Ms. SANCHEZ. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the House vacate the ordering of the yeas and nays on House Joint Resolution 32.

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

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the Chair will put the question de novo when proceedings resume at 5 p.m.

There was no objection.

SENSE OF HOUSE CONCERNING TREATY OF MUTUAL COOPERATION AND SECURITY BETWEEN UNITED STATES AND JAPAN

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 68) stating the sense of the House of Representatives that the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security Between the United States of America and Japan is essential for furthering the security interests of the United States, Japan, and the nations of the Asia-Pacific region, and that the people of Okinawa deserve recognition for their contributions toward ensuring the treaty's implementation, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 68

Whereas the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security Between the United States of America and Japan is critical to the security interests of the United States, Japan, and the countries of the Asia-Pacific region;

Whereas the security relationship between the United States and Japan is the foundation for the security strategy of the United States in the Asia-Pacific region;

Whereas strong bilateral security ties between the two countries provide a key stabilizing influence in an uncertain post-cold war world;

Whereas this bilateral security relationship makes it possible for the United States and Japan to preserve their interests in the Asia-Pacific region;

Whereas forward-deployed forces of the United States are welcomed by allies of the United States in the region because such forces are critical for maintaining stability in East Asia;

Whereas regional stability has undergirded East Asia's economic growth and prosperity;

Whereas the recognition by allies of the United States of the importance of United States armed forces for security in the Asia-Pacific region confers on the United States irreplaceable good will and diplomatic influence in that region;

Whereas Japan's host nation support is a key element in the ability of the United States to maintain forward-deployed forces in that country;

Whereas the Governments of the United States and Japan, in the Special Action Committee on Okinawa Final Report issued by the United States-Japan Security Consultative Committee established by the two countries, made commitments to reducing the burdens of United States armed forces on the people of Japan, especially the people of Okinawa;

Whereas such commitments must maintain the operational capability and readiness of United States forces; and

Whereas gaining the understanding and support of the people of Japan, especially the people of Okinawa, in fulfilling these commitments is crucial to the effective implementation of the Treaty: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the House of Representatives that—

(1) the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security Between the United States of America and Japan remains vital to the security interests of the United States and Japan, as well as the countries of the Asia-Pacific region; and

(2) the people of Japan, especially the people of Okinawa, deserve special recognition and gratitude for their contributions toward ensuring the Treaty's implementation and regional peace and stability.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Nebraska [Mr. BEREUTER] and the gentleman from Alabama [Mr. HILLIARD] each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Nebraska [Mr. BEREUTER].

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

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

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, this Member rises in strong support of House Resolution 68. This Member commends the distinguished gentleman from Indiana [Mr. HAMILTON] for raising this issue and bringing us this legislation. This Member would note that our good friend from Indiana has consistently been a voice in support of United States security interests, and the gentleman's resolution regarding the United States-Japan security agreement and the people of Okinawa is no exception. He is to be congratulated for his initiative. This Member is pleased, together with the distinguished gentleman from California [Mr. BERMAN], to be an original cosponsor of H. Res. 68.

Mr. Speaker, the United States-Japan alliance is the cornerstone of United States security strategy for the Asia-Pacific region and serves as the anchor for the United States military presence in the region. Not only do United States forward based forces in Japan contribute to Japanese security, but these assets are absolutely essential for any contingency on the Korean Peninsula. Our bases on the Japanese mainland and on Okinawa enable us to protect and advance our interests throughout the Pacific. In addition, elements of these forward-based forces were among the first to arrive in the Persian Gulf during Operation Desert Shield.

There is no question that American forces in Japan contribute to a sense of regional stability. This Member has often commented that all the nations of Asia, with the possible exception of North Korea, welcome the presence of United States forces and want us to remain in the region. Indeed, the commitment of the Clinton administration to keep 100,000 troops in Asia has become an important issue psychologically with the countries of the region, who look constantly for reassurance that the United States military will remain in the region.

This Member would also note that the Government of Japan pays the