

living structure, thousands, perhaps millions, of individual coral animals are dying, and others are taking their place on the reef at any one time.

The problem now is that human activities have shifted that balance, and coral reefs are dying off at an alarming rate worldwide. Coral is very sensitive to water pollution, sedimentation, damage from boat groundings, or even simple physical contact by divers. These largely inadvertent injuries are a significant cause of the well-documented decline of coral reefs worldwide. Coral reefs are, in a sense, the canary in the coal mine of the ocean.

A great deal of injury is also being inflicted on coral reefs, mainly in Southeast Asia and the Indo-Pacific through largely illegal fishing techniques. Cyanide and other elements, such as dishwashing liquids, are being used to stun fish for capture for the aquarium trade and for the live food fish trade.

The demand for live food fish, fueled by increasing affluence in Asia, has resulted in widespread depletion of stocks of the preferred species. As a result, the live-capture boats are moving into even more remote and thus more pristine reefs. Most of the aquarium fish captured by these techniques end up in hobby tanks in the United States, I am sorry to say. Most of the live food fish end up on plates in the homes and restaurants of Southeast Asia.

More damaging than the depletion of coral reef fisheries, these chemicals kill nearby coral, and divers scrambling to get fish out of the nooks and crannies of the reef often cause substantial physical damage to the reef. In fact, research has shown that cyanide kills reef-building corals at concentrations many thousands of times less than that used by live-capture divers. While depletion of certain fish species threatens the ecological balance of the reef by removing key predators and grazers, the destruction of the reef building corals themselves tears at the very fabric of the ecosystem.

Although the State Department, NOAA, the Department of the Interior and other agencies are working through the international coral reef initiative to identify and reduce threats to coral reefs, they need our help. Thus, this resolution before us today.

These kinds of unsustainable fishing practices would not be occurring if powerful market forces were not at work. The U.S. and Asian consumer demands for reef fish is, in part, driving its destruction of coral reefs. Yet, how many aquarium hobbyists would purchase a wild-caught reef fish if they truly understood that in doing so they were contributing to the destruction of the reef environment that they sought to reproduce in their tank?

Furthermore, if affordable alternatives to wild-caught fish were available, would the educated consumer not choose them? This has worked very well in the exotic bird trade, and we

can do the same for reef aquarium species and specimens.

Many of the countries where the reefs are being destroyed, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, and others, have laws on the books that protect the reefs, but there is little money for enforcement, and the more lucrative the market, the more people are willing to risk the penalties in any case.

So the keys are information and education. Only by identifying these destructive practices and consumer demands that drive them can we begin to eliminate or modify them, and only through the development of sustainable coral reef fisheries can reefs be saved.

This concurrent resolution before us today, Madam Speaker, No. 8, brings the global plight of coral reefs before Congress. It is intended to raise the level of awareness of policymakers and asks us to do more.

The scientific and environmental communities have declared 1997 the International Year of the Reef. We cannot stop ships from running aground on reefs, and we may not be able to stop global warming at this stage, but what better time for us to pay attention to the many problems plaguing coral reefs and seek practical solutions to those threats that we can address? If we do not do something soon, there may not be any reefs left to save.

With these thoughts in mind, Madam Speaker, and again thanking the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. SAXTON] for his leadership on this issue, I urge the House to adopt the resolution.

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

Mr. SAXTON. Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the ranking member, the gentleman from Hawaii, for his great cooperation and his leadership in helping to bring this coral reef bill to the floor today.

Madam 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 New Jersey [Mr. SAXTON] that the House suspend the rules and concur in the Senate amendments to House Concurrent Resolution 8.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SAXTON. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the Senate amendments to House Concurrent Resolution 8.

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

There was no objection.

DEVILS BACKBONE WILDERNESS BOUNDARY ADJUSTMENT

Mr. BLUNT. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1779) to make a minor adjustment in the exterior boundary of the Devils Backbone Wilderness in the Mark Twain National Forest, MO, to exclude a small parcel of land containing improvements.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 1779

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

SECTION 1. BOUNDARY ADJUSTMENT, DEVILS BACKBONE WILDERNESS, MARK TWAIN NATIONAL FOREST, MISSOURI.

The boundary of the Devils Backbone Wilderness established by section 201(d) of Public Law 96-560 (16 U.S.C. 1132 note) in the Mark Twain National Forest, Missouri, is hereby modified to exclude from the area encompassed by the Devils Backbone Wilderness a parcel of real property consisting of approximately two acres in Ozark County, Missouri, and containing a garage, well, mailbox, driveway, and other improvements, as depicted on a map entitled "Devils Backbone Wilderness Boundary Modification", dated June 1996. The map shall be retained with other Forest Service maps and legal descriptions regarding the Devils Backbone Wilderness and shall be made available for public inspection as provided in section 202 of Public Law 96-560 (94 Stat. 3274).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Missouri [Mr. BLUNT], and the gentleman from Texas [Mr. STENHOLM], each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Missouri [Mr. BLUNT].

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

Madam Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to support H.R. 1779. This bill makes a minor adjustment in the boundary of the Devils Backbone Wilderness in the Mark Twain National Forest in the Seventh District in Missouri.

Don and Laverne McFarland of Pottersville, MO, purchased their home in 1979. At the time they purchased their home they relied on a neighbor who had been part of the original surveying team to help establish where their outside boundary was and where the boundary of the wilderness area was.

As it turned out, a later survey proved that his recollections from the 1930's were not accurate. That later survey left part of their improvements, a well, their garage, and their driveway, inside the boundary of wilderness land.

□ 1445

The McFarlands are now in their seventies. They would like to retire and sell their property and move closer to their children and grandchildren. It is

very difficult for them to do without this issue being settled. So I hope my colleagues will join me today in passing this resolution that will clarify this problem.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1779. It is exactly as the gentleman from Missouri [Mr. BLUNT] has explained it. I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. EMERSON). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Missouri [Mr. BLUNT] that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1779.

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. BLUNT. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 1779, the bill just passed.

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

There was no objection.

REAUTHORIZING THE DAIRY INDEMNITY PROGRAM

Mr. POMBO. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1789) to reauthorize the dairy indemnity program.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 1789

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

SECTION 1. EXTENSION OF DAIRY INDEMNITY PROGRAM.

(a) EXTENSION.—Section 3 of Public Law 90-484 (7 U.S.C. 4501) is amended by striking "1995" and inserting "2002".

(b) TREATMENT OF EXISTING CLAIMS.—Section 2 of Public Law 90-484 (7 U.S.C. 450k) is amended by adding at the end the following new sentence: "Funds appropriated pursuant to this section for fiscal year 1998 to carry out this Act may also be used to pay valid claims arising under this Act during fiscal year 1997 to the extent that such claims are not fully paid using fiscal year 1997 funds."

(c) ALTERNATIVE FINANCING OPTIONS.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Agriculture shall submit to Congress a report identifying and evaluating alternative methods to finance the dairy indemnity program established under the first section of Public Law 90-484 (7 U.S.C. 450j).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California [Mr. POMBO] and the gentleman from Texas [Mr. STENHOLM] each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California [Mr. POMBO].

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

Today, Madam Speaker, we are considering H.R. 1789, the reauthorization of the dairy indemnity program. H.R. 1789 was introduced by the ranking member of the Committee on Agriculture, the gentleman from Texas [Mr. CHARLIE STENHOLM], and I am glad to be an original cosponsor.

In the overall scheme of things, the dairy indemnity program is a modest undertaking which reimburses dairymen when they are directed to remove their products from the market because of harmful residues occurring through no fault of the producer or the processors. Although this may be a small program, it can be vitally important to some of America's dairymen facing possible bankruptcy.

Since 1964, the dairy indemnity program was routinely reauthorized without much notice or attention. Unfortunately, it seems that after the smoke cleared from deliberations of the last farm bill, this program had been overlooked, since no action was taken to reauthorize it.

The recent rise in aflatoxin contamination in several States, however, has refocused attention on the need for this program. Therefore, H.R. 1789, which itself spends no money, would simply provide the authorization for this important program, which has quietly helped dairymen in trouble for over 20 years. At a time when our dairy industry is facing major challenges and restructuring, I would hope that we could continue to authorize and support this as a fair and equitable program.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to pass this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 1789, and I want to thank committee chairman, the gentleman from Oregon [Mr. SMITH], and Chairman POMBO, and the ranking member, the gentleman from Minnesota [Mr. PETERSON] of the Subcommittee on Livestock, Dairy, and Poultry for joining me in sponsoring and supporting this legislation. I am also grateful to the Secretary of Agriculture, Mr. Glickman, for his support of the bill.

Madam Speaker, H.R. 1789 authorizes appropriations for the dairy indemnity program through fiscal year 2002. Madam Speaker, on June 26, 1997, the subcommittee held a hearing on this bill and received testimony from the Department of Agriculture in support of the program and its objectives. The subcommittee also heard testimony from Mr. Calvin Buchanan, a constituent of mine who spoke on behalf of As-

sociated Milk Producers. Mr. Buchanan is a lifelong dairy farmer, and he and his wife, Virginia, milk 500 cows in Decatur, TX.

During the hearing, Mr. Buchanan testified about the importance of the dairy indemnity program to a producer whose milk is ruined by contaminated feed. I quote:

The Dairy Indemnity Program has been a small element of total agricultural policy over the years. It has, however, been the difference between many dairy farm families being able to continue in business and being forced to liquidate. . . .

Not only do producers lose income from the market, they lose the value of the contaminated feed and often incur additional costs to clean up the problem. Given the current economic situation, there just is not room in the operation to absorb these costs.

Madam Speaker, at the time Mr. Buchanan testified, milk prices were very low, and the economic challenges facing every dairy producer in this Nation were enormous. Since that time conditions have improved only slightly, and dairy producers in Texas and many other parts of the Nation are constantly being forced to shut down their operations. Madam Speaker, passage of H.R. 1789 will be a small but important step which will help to preserve certainty of payment for dairy producers, and a safe and stable milk supply for consumers.

Madam Speaker, during fiscal year 1997 there were insufficient funds available to meet claims filed under the program. Appropriations and carryover funds provided \$257,000 for the program, but that amount was depleted in February. There still are pending and unpaid applications for fiscal year 1997 funds in Georgia, Illinois, Louisiana, Mississippi, Montana, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Texas in the amount of \$230,635.

I am grateful that the House and Senate have agreed to provide sufficient appropriations to meet these unpaid claims. Even in good times, a dairy farmer faces difficulties resulting from revenue lost because contaminated milk is withdrawn from the market. Many of my colleagues are well aware that now is a particularly bad time for a producer to remain unpaid for his or her milk. Passage of H.R. 1789 will help provide financial security for our Nation's hard working dairy farmers. I urge all of my colleagues to support the passage of this bill.

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

Mr. POMBO. Madam 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 California [Mr. POMBO] that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1789.

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.