

It is only fitting that we name the facility for this fine public servant. I urge all of my colleagues to support this legislation.

MONGAUP VISITORS CENTER H.R.
20 AND UPPER DELAWARE CAC,
H.R. 54

HON. BENJAMIN A. GILMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 6, 1999

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to introduce two bills—one to authorize the Mongaup Visitor's Center, H.R. 20 and the other to extend the Upper Delaware Citizen's Advisory Counsel, H.R. 54.

Mr. Speaker, as you may know, in 1978, along with our good friend and colleague, Congressman JOE MCDADE, I introduced Federal legislation establishing the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River as a component of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System.

The property proposed as the location of the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River's primary visitor facility—the Mongaup Visitor Center—is owned by the State of New York's Department of Environmental Conservation. The property was acquired by the State in 1986 as part of a much larger purchase of a 10,000-acre tract intended to provide habitat for a population of wintering bald eagles. New York State legislation authorizing Federal development of the property as a visitor center by means of a long-term lease was passed in 1993. A legislative support data package was prepared in 1994 for Federal legislation authorizing development of the site, to appropriate funds for development and to increase the Upper Delaware's operational base to provide for year-round operation.

The site for the Mongaup Visitor Center contains abundant natural and cultural resources and this proposal will identify and develop strategies to protect the Mongaup area's natural resources, including: wintering bald eagles; upland forest; hemlock and laurel gorges and steep slopes; riverline and flood plain forest, and a mile or river front with natural sand beaches. The possible presence of prehistoric elements will also be evaluated.

The visitor center will benefit the community in many respects. It will serve as an educational asset, a local museum, a classroom, and meeting place. Bordered by the Delaware River, the Mongaup River, and New York State highway route 97 in the town of Deerpark in Orange County, New York—it is the only center of its kind within an hour's drive from New York City. Both the proposed visitor center Mongaup site and the Upper Delaware valley have enormous unrealized potential to provide both the local and visiting public with an exceptional experience.

I am also introducing a bill, H.R. 54, that will extend the Upper Delaware Citizens Advisory Council for another ten years. The Upper Delaware CAC provides an excellent forum for citizens of the Upper Delaware to have an opportunity to impact and interact with the National Park Service and Department of the Interior.

Accordingly, I urge my colleagues to help pass these two measures which will benefit the State of New York on economic, environmental and educational levels.

H.R. 20

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 "Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River Mongaup Visitor Center Act of 1999".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

The Congress finds the following:

(1) The Secretary of the Interior approved a management plan for the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River, as required by section 704 of Public Law 95-625 (16 U.S.C. 1274 note), on September 29, 1987.

(2) The river management plan called for the development of a primary visitor contact facility located at the southern end of the river corridor.

(3) The river management plan determined that the visitor center would be built and operated by the National Park Service.

(4) The Act that designated the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River and the approved river management plan limits the Secretary of the Interior's authority to acquire land within the boundary of the river corridor.

(5) The State of New York authorized on June 21, 1993, a 99-year lease between the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and the National Park Service for the construction and operation of a visitor center by the Federal Government on State-owned land in the Town of Deerpark, Orange County, New York, in the vicinity of Mongaup, which is the preferred site for the visitor center.

SEC. 3. AUTHORIZATION OF VISITOR CENTER FOR UPPER DELAWARE SCENIC AND RECREATIONAL RIVER.

For the purpose of constructing and operating a visitor center for the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River and subject to the availability of appropriations, the Secretary of the Interior may—

(1) enter into a lease with the State of New York, for a term of 99 years, for State-owned land within the boundaries of the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River located at an area known as Mongaup near the confluence of the Mongaup and Upper Delaware Rivers in the State of New York; and

(2) construct and operate such a visitor center on land leased under paragraph (2).

H.R. 54

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

SECTION 1. EXTENSION OF AUTHORIZATION FOR UPPER DELAWARE CITIZENS ADVISORY COUNCIL.

The last sentence of paragraph (1) of section 704(f) of the National Parks and Recreation Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 1274 note) is amended by striking "20" and inserting "30".

VOLUNTARY SCHOOL PRAYER

HON. JO ANN EMERSON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 6, 1999

Mrs. EMERSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce a constitutional amendment to ensure that students can choose to pray in school. Regrettably, the notion of the separation of church and state has been widely misrepresented in recent years, and the government has strayed far from the vision of America as established by the Founding Fathers.

Our Founding Fathers had the foresight and wisdom to understand that a government can-

not secure the freedom of religion if at the same time it favors one religion over another through official actions. Their philosophy was one of even-handed treatment of the different faiths practiced in America, a philosophy that was at the very core of what their new nation was to be about. Somehow, this philosophy is often interpreted today to mean that religion has no place at all in public life, no matter what its form. President Reagan summarized the situation well when he remarked, "The First Amendment of the Constitution was not written to protect the people of this country from religious values; it was written to protect religious values from government tyranny." And this is what voluntary school prayer is about, making sure that prayer, regardless of its denomination, is protected.

There can be little doubt that no student should be forced to pray in a certain fashion or be forced to pray at all. At the same time, a student should not be prohibited from praying, just because he/she is attending a public school. This straightforward principle is lost on the liberal courts and high-minded bureaucrats who have systematically eroded the right to voluntary school prayer, and it is now necessary to correct the situation through a constitutional amendment. I urge my colleagues to support my amendment and make a strong statement in support of the freedom of religion.

CRUISES TO NOWHERE ACT 1999

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 6, 1999

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing legislation regarding so-called "cruises to nowhere." "Cruises to nowhere" are gambling cruises, ships where a destination, created for the sole purpose of allowing passengers to gamble on the high seas on board a floating casino. The cruises depart from a certain state, sail three miles into international waters for gambling, and then return to the same state. States receive no revenue from the cruises, but must absorb the social costs associated with the gambling traffic through their state.

Mr. Speaker, my legislation is about the fundamental principle that states should be able to determine on their own if they want gambling cruises in their state. My colleagues should be aware that on October 16, 1998, a federal district court ruled in the state of South Carolina that federal law preempts certain state laws prohibiting "cruises to nowhere," and are therefore unenforceable. (Casino Ventures v. Robert M. Stewart, et al. C/A No. 2:98-1923-18, October 1998) The federal law cited by the court is a poorly worded 1992 amendment to the Johnson Act buried a bill designating the "Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary" (P.L. 102-251). Congress did not intend for the 1992 amendment to supercede states' rights, and we should act to restore state sovereignty with regard high-stakes, unpoliced and unregulated casino gambling around the country.

Almost every state has a law making it illegal to possess gambling equipment (e.g., slot machines). Thus it should be patently illegal for a day-trip gambling boat to dock in a state

with statutes that clearly prohibit such operations, and it was illegal prior to enactment of the 1992 Johnson Act amendment.

In the meantime, casino "cruises to nowhere" have started operating out of Florida, Georgia, New York, Massachusetts, and South Carolina. Most recently, "cruises to nowhere" are planning to dock in Virginia and begin operations out of Virginia Beach. Unless Congress acts soon, almost all other states bordering the Atlantic Ocean, Pacific Ocean, or Gulf of Mexico could expect gambling ships to be docking very soon.

The legislation I am introducing today would make it clear that no preexisting state gambling law is weakened, preempted, or superseded by the 1992 Johnson Act amendment. My legislation will restore state sovereignty with regard to "cruises to nowhere." (It will give states the right to debate, vote and ultimately decide for themselves if they want this type of gambling). If states do choose to permit "cruises to nowhere," they can enact appropriate legislation, but will not be forced to by the federal government.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to join me in this fundamental issues of restoring states' rights. In particular, I urge members from coastal states to take a look at this issue and join me as a cosponsor.

H.R. —

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 "Cruises-to-Nowhere Act of 1999".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

The Congress finds and declares the following:

(1) Gambling cruises-to-nowhere are voyages in which a vessel departs a State, sails 3 miles into international waters for the primary purpose of offering gambling beyond the jurisdiction of Federal and State laws prohibiting that activity, and returns to the same State.

(2) Legal authorities have ruled that existing State laws cannot stop the operation of gambling cruises-to-nowhere, on the basis that the Congress preempted such State laws by the enactment of an obscure amendment buried in a 1992 law entitled "An Act to provide for the designation of the Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary" (Public Law 102-251).

(3) Gambling cruises-to-nowhere offer high-stakes, untaxed, unpoliced, and unregulated casino gambling.

(4) Accordingly, it is necessary to make absolutely clear that gambling cruises-to-nowhere enjoy no special exception from the operation of existing or future State laws and that relevant Federal law is not intended to preempt, supersede, or weaken the authority of States to apply their own laws to gambling cruises-to-nowhere.

SEC. 3. STATE AUTHORITY OVER CRUISES-TO-NOWHERE.

Section 5 of the Act of January 2, 1951, entitled "An Act to prohibit transportation of gambling devices in interstate and foreign commerce" (15 U.S.C. 1175; popularly known as the Johnson Act), is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)(2)(A), by striking "enacted"; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

"(d) NO PREEMPTION OF STATE LAWS.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to preempt the law of any State or possession of the United States."

THE STAND-BY-YOUR-AD ACT

HON. DAVID E. PRICE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 6, 1999

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I don't know if the 1998 campaign season marked a new low in political advertising or not. It is difficult to measure degrees of the bottom of the barrel or the volume of mud spread across the air. I know for a fact that the 1998 campaign season was more of the mess that results when intelligent discourse gives way to attack and counterattack.

Last year, the House of Representatives took an arduous and promising step toward cleaning up our Nation's political campaigns. We passed the Shays-Meehan campaign reform bill, which had been amended to include a version of the Stand-by-Your-Ad proposal that Representative STEPHEN HORN and I introduced in 1997. Unfortunately, the leadership of the Senate lacked the political will to see campaign reform through to a conclusion. I hope that 1999 will prove a more fruitful year for campaign reform.

In that light, Representative HORN and I are once again introducing the Stand-by-Your-Ad proposal. Our legislation would require candidates to appear full-screen in television ads and thus take responsibility for them. Candidates would be required to provide comparable disclosure, boldly and clearly, in both radio and print ads. These enhanced disclosure requirements would also apply to party independent committees.

It is too easy for candidates to attack one another on television without the voter knowing who is behind the dirt. Candidates can obscure their identities with postage stamp size disclaimers. We need to make effective the requirement that candidates say who they are and take responsibility for their ads' content. This is an important step toward strengthening the accountability of candidates and campaigns. Campaign reform is not just about money; it is also about improving the quality and responsibility of debate. The bipartisan bill Mr. HORN and I recommend to the House would start us down that path, not by regulating the content of ads but by requiring candidates to assume responsibility for them.

Our Stand-by-Your-Ad legislation has its origins in the North Carolina General Assembly where it has been championed by Lt. Governor Dennis Wicker and was approved last session by the Senate but not the House.

Stand by Your Ad is compatible with and complementary to the full range of campaign reform proposals that will be considered by the 106th Congress, from Shays-Meehan to the disclosure-only bills. By approving this proposal, the Congress can strengthen disclosure so as to make sponsorship more clear and to require an assumption of personal responsibility in a way likely to discourage the most irresponsible and distorted attacks. We invite our colleagues to join us as cosponsors of this legislation.

PREVENTING GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWNS

HON. GEORGE W. GEKAS

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 6, 1999

Mr. GEKAS. Mr. Speaker, today I introduced the Government Shutdown Prevention Act, legislation designed to maintain government operations that would otherwise be halted due to an impasse in budget negotiations between Congress and the President. I first introduced this legislation in 1989, and since then the need for it has become even more apparent. Joining me as original cosponsors are Representatives ROHRBACHER, WYNN, COX, ISTOOK, PITTS, EHLERS, DAVIS (VA), and HAYWORTH.

Since I entered Congress, there have been 8 government shutdowns, costing American taxpayer millions of dollars and diminishing his confidence in elected officials. The estimated cost of the 21-day shutdown of the 104th Congress was \$44 million per day! During the first shutdown in the 104th Congress, 800,000 federal employees were "furloughed". Budget negotiations between Congress and the President should be about the American people, not a battleground for public relations.

This bill accomplishes a very simple function: to keep funding at levels allowing appropriators to complete their work while keeping the government operating. This bill essentially works as an automatic continuing resolution, providing for funding at the previous year's levels so the government can continue to operate, even through an impasse in budget negotiations. The legislation protects Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security by guaranteeing that they remain at their current funding levels.

As Members of Congress, we are duty-bound by the Constitution to forge a budget for the American people. At times our ideological disagreements have led to heartaches for our constituents. I propose, through this legislation, that we provide an environment whereupon we can work together and negotiate in good faith, and strive to reach a compromise that will be good for the people we serve.

We need to restore the public's faith in its leaders by showing that we have learned from our mistakes. Enactment of this legislation will send a clear message to the American people that we will no longer allow them to be pawns in budget disputes.

INTRODUCTION OF THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING OPPORTUNITY ACT OF 1999

HON. NANCY L. JOHNSON

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 6, 1999

Mrs. JOHNSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing legislation to increase the cap on state authority to allocate Low Income Housing Tax Credits to \$1.75 per capita and index the cap to inflation. The current cap of \$1.25 per capita has not been adjusted since the program was created in 1986. Since that time, population growth has totaled about 5 percent.

Although building costs rise each year, as does the affordable housing needs of the nation, the federal government's most important