

earned dollars into the BART system for almost four decades.

As a very large number of our commuters know, getting to and around Silicon Valley, more often than not, is a very difficult problem. This year, state and regional planners have begun deciding on the next generation of rail and road improvements for the region to address the traffic congestion problems. Furthermore, it is clear from the Governor's transportation plan and proposed budget that BART to San Jose is going to receive certain consideration. However, that does not mean that Antioch and Livermore citizens, who have made significant financial investments into the BART system, should be overlooked. Moreover, any new communities who seek BART service must first buy into the system.

During the next few months, I will be working closely with the Governor as well as state and Bay Area planners on a regional transit plan. One thing is certain: in order to successfully build any and all of these very expensive extensions, we must unite as a region and accept one common regional transit plan. As the only Bay Area Member of Congress on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, I know that regional unity is the necessary key in securing the federal and state transportation funds we need to build these important transit projects. When we are competing for scarce federal dollars with other urban centers, we cannot afford to waste our time and resources arguing among each other.

Mr. Speaker, I am confident that any regional plan will incorporate the history of BART with the equity of its stakeholders. I look forward to working with my colleagues on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee as well as our Bay Area planners to develop the next generation of transit and road projects to meet the ever-growing needs of our region.

COMMON SENSE FOR THE TRIANGLE

HON. DAVID E. PRICE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 27, 2000

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend to my colleagues the following article that appeared in the July 16, 2000, Raleigh News & Observer. Mack Paul, Chief of Staff to North Carolina Lieutenant Governor Dennis Wicker, wrote it. Mr. Paul has been active in local planning and transportation issues over the years as a civic leader, focusing on enhancing the Research Triangle area's quality of life and economic growth. The regionalism issue Mr. Paul addresses is one that will continue to gain importance and deserves the thoughtful attention of the Congress and the nation.

[From the News & Observer, July 16, 2000]

COMMON SENSE FOR THE TRIANGLE

(By Mack Paul)

RALEIGH.—Spurred in part by intense media attention, the public dialogue on growth in the Triangle has progressed markedly over the last two years. Many now see that gridlock, Code Orange days and dwindling open space bear a direct relation to the low density, auto-dependent pattern of development known as sprawl. The "Smart

Growth" principles adopted last year by the Triangle Smart Growth Coalition and Greater Triangle Regional Council embody this recognition.

The next step remains much more problematic: what strategies do we pursue to achieve smarter growth?

Public transportation, downtown revitalization, open space protection, affordable housing and traditional neighborhood development top the list of preferred policy prescriptions. Elected officials say that it is time to act. But we're not acting—at least not with haste. Municipalities still see little to gain within their local context from enacting Smart Growth policies.

We're confronted with the classic game theory known as "the tragedy of the common." In this scenario, herders must share a common meadow. But no herder can limit grazing by anyone else's flock. If a herder limits his own use of the common meadow, he alone loses. Yet unlimited grazing destroys the common resource on which the livelihood of all depends. Therefore, the herders are seemingly doomed to self-defeating opportunism.

In the Triangle, the common meadow represents all those resources that comprise our economic health and quality of life, including our open space, air quality, infrastructure, schools, jobs and housing. As each municipality grapples with how best to utilize these resources in the face of a rapidly growing herd, it confronts the reality that no matter how wise its policies, it has no control over the other herders.

In the tragedy of the common, mutual cooperation represents the only way for the herders to survive long-term. Similarly, mutual cooperation at the regional level—regionalism—offers the best way for the Triangle to ensure long-term prosperity.

Regionalism offers a framework for maximizing our use of common resources in two ways. First, it encourages the coordination of resource systems that cross jurisdictions. For example, a regional transit system cannot succeed unless station-area planning in all of the affected municipalities supports it.

Second and more important, regionalism helps to mitigate disparate impacts that arise from competition for economic growth. If one area captures most of the new jobs but offers little affordable housing, it increases traffic and sprawl in neighboring municipalities. If outlying rural areas attract all of the new development, they can contribute to the decline of a central city, worsen air quality and significantly reduce the amount of open space.

As shown by the tragedy of the common, regionalism poses a real challenge because it requires a shift in thinking. Individuals must see that their personal interests are better served by cooperating with those with whom they compete for a precious resource. It builds over time. With each success comes trust and a desire for bolder action. Experience from other areas provides three important lessons about regionalism.

First, regionalism cannot succeed without a strong civic life. Those regional efforts that have succeeded all enjoy active and ongoing participation by businesses and citizens through a variety of civic organizations. The Triangle Smart Growth Coalition, Greater Triangle Regional Council, Regional Transportation Alliance and Triangle Community Coalition offer examples of emerging regional civic groups. These types of organizations provide our best opportunity for building the strong relationships necessary for regional cooperation.

Second, regionalism cannot succeed without a regional framework for decision-making. Areas that have been successful at pursuing Smart Growth strategies have some

form of regional authority. The tragedy of the common demonstrates the difficulty in relying on the voluntary actions of one's neighbors. Regional models vary widely—from purely advisory as in Denver to more authoritative as in Atlanta and Minneapolis. Any framework we adopt should reflect and be an extension of the Triangle's civic life.

Third, regionalism cannot succeed without some encouragement from the state. Areas that have adopted effective regional frameworks have benefited from state laws supporting such action. A new law permitting the Triangle's two Metropolitan Planning Organizations to combine would facilitate regional transportation planning.

Next year, the Smart Growth Commission will consider making other recommendations, including financial incentives, to encourage regionalism. The Triangle's leadership should help shape and push for this legislation.

Ultimately, the Triangle cannot fulfill its promise as a "world class region" without regionalism. We will remain a collection of dissonant localities simply exploiting the economic principle that specialized industries tend to cluster together. Once our quality of life wanes, those industries will cluster elsewhere.

Regionalism can ensure that does not happen by showing us where self-interest is self-defeating and by offering a forum for mutual cooperation. It offers the best hope for seeing that our herd continues to prosper.

A BILL TO ENSURE THAT INCOME AVERAGING FOR FARMERS NOT INCREASE A FARMER'S LIABILITY FOR THE ALTERNATIVE MINIMUM TAX

HON. WALLY HERGER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 27, 2000

Mr. HERGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Farmer Tax Fairness Act, along with my Ways and Means Committee colleagues, Representatives THURMAN, HAYWORTH, DUNN, TANNER, CAMP, MCCRERY, ENGLISH, and FOLEY. This legislation will help ensure that farmers have access to tax benefits rightfully owed them.

As those of us from agricultural areas understand, farmers' income often fluctuates from year to year based on unforeseen weather or market conditions. Income averaging allows farmers to ride out these unpredictable circumstances by spreading out their income over a period of years. Last year, we acted in a bipartisan manner to make income averaging a permanent provision of the tax code. Unfortunately, since that time, we have learned that, due to interaction with another tax code provision, the Alternative Minimum Tax (AMT), many of our nation's farmers have been unfairly denied the benefits of this important accounting tool.

Our legislation directly addresses the concerns being raised by farmers using income averaging. Under the Farmer Tax Fairness Act, if a farmer's AMT liability is greater than taxes due under the income averaging calculation, that farmer would disregard the AMT and pay taxes according to the averaging calculation. As such, farmers will be able to take full advantage of income averaging as intended by Congress.

This provision is a reasonable measure designed to ensure farmers are treated fairly

when it comes time to file their taxes. I urge my colleague to join me in promoting greater tax fairness for our nation's farmers.

HONORING JOEL PETT FOR HIS
2000 PULITZER PRIZE IN EDITORIAL CARTOONING

HON. ERNIE FLETCHER

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 27, 2000

Mr. FLETCHER. Mr. Speaker, It is my honor to recognize today the outstanding achievement of Joel Pett for being awarded the 2000 Pulitzer Prize in Editorial Cartooning.

Since 1984, Joel has served in the capacity of Editorial Cartoonist with the Lexington Herald Leader and has produced cartoons on local and national government. Since that day in 1984—Pett's outstanding and talented work has appeared in many newspapers and magazines around America. This is why it is not surprising that he was recognized with such a prestigious national award.

With keen wit and acute perception, he has been able to highlight subtle perspectives that demand a more careful examination by the public. By presenting difficult topics in a comical way, Joel Pett is able to touch upon the core issues within the daily life of politics and government.

His distinction as the recipient of the 2000 Pulitzer Prize for Editorial Cartooning is one that highlights his creativity, inventiveness and intellect. Joel is a talented professional journalist who is dedicated to his work that he presents to readers throughout the year. I know that the Lexington Herald Leader, Lexington community and Commonwealth, of Kentucky are all proud of his outstanding achievement.

It is a pleasure to recognize Joel Pett, on the House floor today, for his superior work in political cartoons that has earned him the 2000 Pulitzer Prize in Editorial Cartooning.

MORATORIUM NEEDED ON FEDERAL LAND EXCHANGES UNTIL SYSTEM IS FIXED

HON. GEORGE MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 27, 2000

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, land exchanges between private parties and the federal government have long been a source of contention in Congress and in local communities. Exchanges are supposed to provide the federal government a valuable tool to acquire lands with high public interest values, such as enhanced recreational opportunities or wildlife habitat, and to dispose of lands with less or limited public value.

According to a new General Accounting Office study that I commissioned, however, the Bureau of Land Management and the U.S. Forest Service have wasted hundreds of millions of dollars swapping valuable public land for private land of questionable value, and the Bureau may even be breaking the law. In response to this report, I have called on Interior Secretary Babbitt and Agriculture Secretary Glickman to immediately suspend all land ex-

changes until the exchange programs can be fixed.

The GAO report was prominently covered earlier this month by NBC Nightly News, CBS Radio, the Washington Post, and other media outlets across country. Subsequently, my call for a moratorium on exchanges has received strong support from newspapers, organizations and individuals from across the country as well.

I commend to my colleagues three of the newspaper editorials that have appeared so far endorsing the call for the moratorium. I hope that my colleagues will review the GAO report and the call for a moratorium and will support such a move. The public is being taken advantage in these deals and their wallet and the environment are paying the price. "Let's Make a Land Deal," The Washington Post, July 15, 2000; "Public Land Deals Better Not Cheat The Public," The Bozeman (MT) Chronicle, July 20, 2000; "Land Exchange Programs Troubled, But Well Worth Fixing", Minneapolis (MN) Star Tribune, July 24, 2000.

[From the Washington Post, July 15, 2000]

LET'S MAKE A LAND DEAL

It seems like a simple idea: If the federal government owns some land it doesn't necessarily care to keep, and a private landowner has some land the government wants, and the two are roughly equal in value, then make a trade. The Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management have had the authority to make those kinds of deals for years, with the idea that the exchanges would help the agencies consolidate federal lands and acquire important resources. But the transactions are often far from simple and, according to a General Accounting Office report released this week, the land-exchange program has shortchanged taxpayers by millions of dollars by undervaluing federal land or overvaluing private land in some of its deals.

The GAO said there are so many inherent difficulties in the land-exchange process that Congress should consider giving up the program altogether, opting for more straightforward sales and purchases. The Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management reacted sharply to the report, contending that GAO looked at too few transactions to justify its broad recommendation and that many of the cases it cited are old and have already been addressed. They say significant reforms are already underway.

Properly handled, land exchanges give the two agencies resources (public lands suitable for exchange) that they can use to acquire valuable and useful lands, including habitat for endangered species. If they lose that resource and wind up having to compete for funds for every proposed purchase, the likelihood is that their ability to obtain important land or consolidate holdings will be curtailed.

But it is important to be sure that those purposes are being served by the land swaps and that the public's interest is protected, both in terms of what land is being traded away and what value is being obtained for it. Rep. George Miller (D-Calif.), who requested the GAO report, has called for a moratorium on land exchanges until each agency "demonstrates that it can insure all exchanges are in the public interest and of equal value, as required by law." That's a challenge they ought to be able to meet.

[From the Bozeman Chronicle, July 20, 2000]

PUBLIC LAND DEALS BETTER NOT CHEAT THE PUBLIC

(By Chronicle Editor)

Intelligent, well-meaning people can disagree over what's the appropriate amount of

land for the federal government to own. But when the government strikes a deal to buy, sell or trade land, there should be no disagreement on the necessity of making certain the public is getting a fair deal.

That apparently has not been the case.

A recent General Accounting Office audit found that the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management have lost millions of dollars from land exchanges by either buying too high or selling too low. This is a serious indictment of public land stewardship that should not be taken lightly.

Exchanges have become an important part of Western public lands policy as land managers seek to consolidate fragmented holdings, increase wildlife winter range and improve access.

All of these are important public benefits. But it is a serious breach of the public trust if land deals aimed at accomplishing those ends cheat the taxpayers out of land values that are rightfully theirs.

Several major land exchanges have involved Gallatin National Forest in recent years and have accomplished some important land management goals. The problem arises when negotiations and appraisals involved in these land deals are kept secret. Public land managers argue they must be kept secret because revealing proprietary business information from private parties involved in the negotiations could kill the deal.

But if the GAO report is correct in its dismal assessment of the outcome of many of these deals, maybe we'd all be better off if the deals were killed.

Public land managers need to find ways to conduct these negotiations in the open where all can see. If the lands involved are of sufficient value to arouse private parties' interest, then conditioning a trade on open negotiations and publicly revealed land appraisals will not kill deals.

Public negotiations allow anyone with an interest to step forward and point out aspects of the proposed trades that might be overlooked by agency officials. Open negotiations only invite more complete information about factors contributing to land value and reveal the public's priorities for managing these lands.

Public land managers need to remind themselves occasionally that the land they manage is not theirs; it belongs to the citizens of the United States, and those citizens are entitled to a say in how it's done.

[From the Minneapolis [MN] Star Tribune, July 24, 2000]

LAND EXCHANGE PROGRAMS TROUBLED, BUT WELL WORTH FIXING

There are outrages aplenty in a recent congressional audit of federal land-exchange programs: Nevada acreage valued at \$763,000 was transferred by the government to private owners, who resold it the same day for \$4.6 million. A 4,300-acre Douglas fir forest in Washington state was swapped to a timber company for 30,000 clearcut acres near Seattle.

These are patently bad deals. But do they, and others documented by the General Accounting Office in its recent report, justify ending the programs?

The GAO's auditors think so. Arguing that land-swapping is inherently problematical, they urge Congress to consider abandoning the practice—perhaps replacing it with a cash-purchase system, wherein the U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management simply sell parcels they don't want and use the revenue to buy others they do.

But it's unclear how this approach would ease the key bedevilment of the exchange programs: the difficulty of establishing fair