SCIENCE COMMITTEE REPORTS RESTORATION ACT

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3904) to prevent the elimination of certain reports.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 3904

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

SECTION 1. REPORTS.

Section 3003(a)(1) of the Federal Reports Elimination and Sunset Act of 1995 (31 U.S.C. 1113 note) does not apply to any report required to be submitted under any of the following provisions of law:

(1) Section 801(b) and (c) of the Department of Energy Organization Act (42 U.S.C. 7321(b) and (c)).

(2) Section 603 of the National Science and Technology Policy, Organization, and Priorities Act of 1976 (42 U.S.C. 6683).

(3) Section 822(b) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Years 1992 and 1993 (42 U.S.C. 6687).

(4) Section 7(a) of the Marine Resources and Engineering Development Act of 1966 (33 U.S.C. 1106(a)).

(5) Section 206 of the National Aeronautics and Space Act of 1958 (42 U.S.C. 2476).

(6) Section 404 of the Communications Satellite Act of 1962 (47 U.S.C. 744).

(7) Section 205(a)(1) of the National Critical Materials Act of 1984 (30 U.S.C. 1804(a)(1)).

(8) Section 17(c)(2) of the Stevenson-Wydler Technology Innovation Act of 1980 (15 U.S.C. 3711a(c)(2)).

(9) Section 10(h) of the National Institute of Standards and Technology Act (15 U.S.C. 278(h)).

(10) Section 212(f)(3) of the National Institute of Standards and Technology Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1989 (15 U.S.C. 3704b(f)(3)).

(11) Section 11(g)(2) of the Stevenson-Wydler Technology Innovation Act of 1980 (15 U.S.C. 3710(g)(2)).

(12) Section 5(d)(9) of the National Climate Program Act (15 U.S.C. 2904(d)(9)).

(13) Section 7 of the National Climate Program Act (15 U.S.C. 2906).

(14) Section 703 of the Weather Service Modernization Act (15 U.S.C. 313 note).

(15) Section 118(d)(2) of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1268(d)(2)).

(16) Section 304(d) of the Federal Aviation Administration Research, Engineering, and Development Authorization Act of 1992 (49 U.S.C. 47508 note).

(17) Section 2367(c) of title 10, United States Code.

(18) Section 303(c)(7) of the Federal Property and Administrative Services Act of 1949 (41 U.S.C. 253(c)(7)).

(19) Section 102(e)(7) of the Global Change Research Act of 1990 (15 U.S.C. 2932(e)(7)).

(20) Section 5(b)(1)(C) and (D) of the Earthquake Hazards Reduction Act of 1977 (42 U.S.C. 7704(b)(1)(C) and (D)).

(21) Section 11(e)(6) of the Stevenson-Wydler Technology Innovation Act of 1980 (15 U.S.C. 3710(e)(6)).

(22) Section 2304(c)(7) of title 10, United States Code, but only to the extent of its application to the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

(23) Section 4(j)(1) of the National Science Foundation Act of 1950 (42 U.S.C. 1863(j)(1)).

(24) Section 36(f) of the Science and Engineering Equal Opportunities Act (42 U.S.C. 1885c(f)).

(25) Section 37 of the Science and Engineering Equal Opportunities Act (42 U.S.C. 1885d).

(26) Section 108 of the National Science Foundation Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1986 (42 U.S.C. 1886).

(27) Section 101(a)(3) of the High-Performance Computing Act of 1991 (15 U.S.C. 5511(a)(3)).

(28) Section 3(a)(7) and (f) of the National Science Foundation Act of 1950 (42 U.S.C. 1862(a)(7) and (f)).

(29) Section 7(a) of the National Science Foundation Authorization Act, 1977 (42 U.S.C. 1873 note).

(30) Section 16 of the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974 (15 U.S.C. 2215).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. COSTELLO) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. 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. 3904.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, the Federal Reports and Elimination and Sunset Act of 1995 calls for the sunset of all periodic reports submitted to Congress by the executive branch. Congress has extended the sunset date of these reports until May of this year.

The committee on science highlighted nearly 100 reports relevant to its jurisdiction from the thousands scheduled for sunset. Out of that group, 30 were considered to be important to the committee's oversight responsibilities and have been incorporated into H.R. 3904. These reports serve a useful purpose within the agency themselves as a part of their internal review and evaluation process. The agency reports exempted under H.R. 3904 originate from NASA, the National Science Foundation, NOAA and others.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 3904 is a bipartisan effort of the Committee on Science to maintain a fundamental oversight tool. I urge its adoption.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from Wisconsin has accurately described the bill. We support it. It was passed by a bipartisan effort. We support the bill.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3904.

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.

CONCURRING IN SENATE AMENDMENTS TO H.R. 1753, METHANE HYDRATE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT ACT OF 2000

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 453) providing for the consideration of the bill H.R. 1753 and the Senate amendments thereto.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 453

Resolved, That, upon the adoption of this resolution, the House shall be considered to have taken from the Speaker's table the bill H.R. 1753 together with the Senate amendments thereto, and to have (1) concurred in the amendment of the Senate to the title, and (2) concurred in the amendment of the Senate to the text with an amendment as follows: In lieu of the matter proposed to be inserted by the Senate amendment, insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Methane Hydrate Research and Development Act of 2000''.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) CONTRACT.—The term ''contract'' means a procurement contract within the meaning of section 6303 of title 31, United States Code.

(2) COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT.—The term ''cooperative agreement'' means a cooperative agreement within the meaning of section 6305 of title 31, United States Code.

(3) DIRECTOR.—The term ''Director'' means the Director of the National Science Foundation.

(4) GRANT.—The term ''grant'' means a grant awarded under a grant agreement, within the meaning of section 6304 of title 31, United States Code.

(5) INDUSTRIAL ENTERPRISE.—The term ''industrial enterprise'' means a private, nongovernmental enterprise that has an expertise or capability that relates to methane hydrate research and development.

(6) INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—The term ''institution of higher education'' means an institution of higher education, within the meaning of section 102(a) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1002(a)).

(7) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of Energy, acting through the Assistant Secretary for Fossil Energy.

(8) SECRETARY OF COMMERCE.—The term ''Secretary of Commerce'' means the Secretary of Commerce, acting through the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

(9) SECRETARY OF DEFENSE.—The term ''Secretary of Defense'' means the Secretary of Defense, acting through the Secretary of the Navy.

(10) SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.—The term ''Secretary of the Interior'' means the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Director of the United States Geological Survey and the Director of the Minerals Management Service.

SEC. 3. METHANE HYDRATE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—

(1) COMMENCEMENT OF PROGRAM.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of

this Act, the Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of Commerce, the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of the Interior, and the Director, shall commence a program of methane hydrate research and development in accordance with this section.

(2) DESIGNATIONS.—The Secretary, the Secretary of Commerce, the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of the Interior, and the Director shall designate individuals to carry out this section.

(3) COORDINATION.—The individual designated by the Secretary shall coordinate all activities within the Department of Energy relating to methane hydrate research and development.

(4) MEETINGS.—The individuals designated under paragraph (2) shall meet not later than 270 days after the date of enactment of this Act and not less frequently than every 120 days thereafter to—

(A) review the progress of the program under paragraph (1); and

(B) make recommendations on future activities to occur subsequent to the meeting.

(b) GRANTS, CONTRACTS, COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS, INTERAGENCY FUNDS TRANSFER AGREEMENTS, AND FIELD WORK PROPOSALS.—

(1) ASSISTANCE AND COORDINATION.—In carrying out the program of methane hydrate research and development authorized by this section, the Secretary may award grants or contracts to, or enter into cooperative agreements with, institutions of higher education and industrial enterprises to—

(A) conduct basic and applied research to identify, explore, assess, and develop methane hydrate as a source of energy;

(B) assist in developing technologies required for efficient and environmentally sound development of methane hydrate resources;

(C) undertake research programs to provide safe means of transport and storage of methane produced from methane hydrates;

(D) promote education and training in methane hydrate resource research and resource development;

(E) conduct basic and applied research to assess and mitigate the environmental impacts of hydrate degassing (including both natural degassing and degassing associated with commercial development);

(F) develop technologies to reduce the risks of drilling through methane hydrates; and

(G) conduct exploratory drilling in support of the activities authorized by this paragraph.

(2) COMPETITIVE MERIT-BASED REVIEW.—Funds made available under paragraph (1) shall be made available based on a competitive merit-based process.

(c) CONSULTATION.—The Secretary shall establish an advisory panel consisting of experts from industrial enterprises, institutions of higher education, and Federal agencies to—

(1) advise the Secretary on potential applications of methane hydrate;

(2) assist in developing recommendations and priorities for the methane hydrate research and development program carried out under subsection (a)(1); and

(3) not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, and at such later dates as the panel considers advisable, submit to Congress a report on the anticipated impact on global climate change from—

(A) methane hydrate formation;

(B) methane hydrate degassing (including natural degassing and degassing associated with commercial development); and

(C) the consumption of natural gas produced from methane hydrates.

Not more than twenty-five percent of the individuals serving on the advisory panel shall be Federal employees.

(d) LIMITATIONS.—

(1) ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.—Not more than 5 percent of the amount made available to carry out this section for a fiscal year may be used by the Secretary for expenses associated with the administration of the program carried out under subsection (a)(1).

(2) CONSTRUCTION COSTS.—None of the funds made available to carry out this section may be used for the construction of a new building or the acquisition, expansion, remodeling, or alteration of an existing building (including site grading and improvement and architect fees).

(e) RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SECRETARY.—In carrying out subsection (b)(1), the Secretary shall—

(1) facilitate and develop partnerships among government, industrial enterprises, and institutions of higher education to research, identify, assess, and explore methane hydrate resources;

(2) undertake programs to develop basic information necessary for promoting long-term interest in methane hydrate resources as an energy source;

(3) ensure that the data and information developed through the program are accessible and widely disseminated as needed and appropriate;

(4) promote cooperation among agencies that are developing technologies that may hold promise for methane hydrate resource development; and

(5) report annually to Congress on accomplishments under this section.

SEC. 4. AMENDMENTS TO THE MINING AND MINERALS POLICY ACT OF 1970.

Section 201 of the Mining and Minerals Policy Act of 1970 (30 U.S.C. 1901) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (6)—

(A) in subparagraph (F), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(B) by redesignating subparagraph (G) as subparagraph (H); and

(C) by inserting after subparagraph (F) the following:

''(G) for purposes of this section and sections 202 through 205 only, methane hydrate; and'';

(2) by redesignating paragraph (7) as paragraph (8); and

(3) by inserting after paragraph (6) the following:

''(7) The term 'methane hydrate' means—

''(A) a methane clathrate that is in the form of a methane-water ice-like crystalline material and is stable and occurs naturally in deep-ocean and permafrost areas; and

''(B) other natural gas hydrates found in association with deep-ocean and permafrost deposits of methane hydrate.''.

SEC. 5. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

There are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary of Energy to carry out this Act—

(1) $5,000,000 for fiscal year 2001;
(2) $7,500,000 for fiscal year 2002;
(3) $11,000,000 for fiscal year 2003;
(4) $12,000,000 for fiscal year 2004; and
(5) $12,000,000 for fiscal year 2005.

Amounts authorized under this section shall remain available until expended.

SEC. 6. SUNSET.

Section 3 of this Act shall cease to be effective after the end of fiscal year 2005.

SEC. 7. NATIONAL RESEARCH COUNCIL STUDY.

The Secretary shall enter into an agreement with the National Research Council for such council to conduct a study of the progress made under the methane hydrate research and development program implemented pursuant to this Act, and to make recommendations for future methane hydrate research and development needs. The Secretary shall transmit to the Congress, not later than September 30, 2004, a report containing the findings and recommendations of the National Research Council under this section.

SEC. 8. REPORTS AND STUDIES.

The Secretary of Energy shall provide to the Committee on Science of the House of Representatives copies of any report or study that the Department of Energy prepares at the direction of any committee of the Congress.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. COSTELLO) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on this legislation.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, methane hydrates which consist of a mixture of methane and water frozen into a solid crystalline state have great energy potential and are found in many areas throughout the world. The U.S. Geological Survey's 1995 national assessment of United States oil and gas reserves estimated the value of U.S. in-place methane hydrate resources to be an astounding 320 quadrillion cubic feet of gas.

By comparison, the United States annually consumes about 33 trillion cubic feet of methane as natural gas. The world's currently known gas reserves are about 5 quadrillion cubic feet. H.R. 1753 directs the Secretary of Energy in consultation with the Secretaries of Commerce, Defense and the Interior and the director of the National Science Foundation to commence a program of methane hydrate R&D. It authorizes the Secretary of Energy $5 million for fiscal year 2001, $7.5 million for fiscal year 2002, $11 million for fiscal year 2003, and $12 million for each of fiscal years 2004 and 2005 to carry out the programs.

The bill also authorizes the Secretary of Energy to award grants or contracts to, or enter into cooperative agreements with, institutions of higher education and industrial enterprises to conduct methane hydrate R&D.

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It requires that all such awards be made available based upon a competitive merit review process. It limits administrative expenses to not more than 5 percent and prohibits any funds from being used for either the construction of the new building or alteration of an existing building, including site grading and improvement in architect fees.

It allows the Secretary of the Interior to award methane hydrate R&D

contracts and grants to and to enter into cooperative agreements with qualified entities under the Marine Mineral Resources Research Act of 1996. It sunsets the methane hydrate R&D program after the end of fiscal year 2005, and it requires the Secretary of Energy to engage the national research council to conduct a study of the progress of the program and to make recommendations for future methane hydrate R&D needs. The NRC report is to be transmitted to Congress not later than September 30, 2004.

Mr. Speaker, the House unanimously approved a similar version of H.R. 1753 last October, which the Senate amended in November. I commend this revised version of the bill which represents the bipartisan agreement with the Senate to the House for its adoption.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be here today to move one step closer to enactment of the Gas Hydrates Research and Development Act. I am happy that we have reached an agreement that everyone can support. I would like to thank the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER), the chairman of the full committee, and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HALL), the ranking member, along with the gentleman from California (Mr. CALVERT), the chairman of the subcommittee, for all of their hard work on this bill. I would also like to commend my good friend and colleague from Pennsylvania (Mr. DOYLE) for his leadership and his hard work on this bill.

Mr. Speaker, gas hydrates have the potential to provide a significant natural gas resource to this country if they can be safely and economically extracted from the ocean floor, where they are found. This legislation establishes an interagency research and development program to examine many issues associated with the extraction of gas hydrates, including the possible economic, environmental, and energy benefits.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly support this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, as the chairman of the Energy and Environment Subcommittee, I am pleased that we are considering H.R. 1753, the Methane Hydrate Research and Development Act of 2000. My friend and colleague on the subcommittee, Mr. DOYLE, introduced H.R. 1753 in May 1999, and last October 26, the House unanimously approved a similar version of the bill. The Senate amended the House-passed bill last November, and this revised version of the bill represents a bipartisan agreement with the Senate.

Mr. Speaker, I have the distinct pleasure of serving on both the House Science Committee and the Resources Committee which shared jurisdiction on this bill. I want to thank my friends on Resources for all their hard work in getting H.R. 1753 to the floor. I would especially like to thank Chairman YOUNG and Congresswoman CUBIN for their willingness to work with me and the chairman of the Science Committee on this important piece of legislation.

Methane hydrates are ice-like substances found in undersea sediments and in Arctic permafrost. These hydrates will one day provide an abundant supply of clean natural gas if science can discover practical and environmentally sound extraction methods. However, much more research is needed before we can attain that goal. H.R. 1753 brings us closer to the day when we can safely and effectively begin to use this abundant, new source of energy.

This legislation will make funds available to continue research into extracting this clean and bountiful potential source of energy. It also seeks to better coordinate the research efforts of the Department of Energy, the U.S. Geological Survey, the U.S. Navy, the Minerals Management Service, and NOAA.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation, which will help secure our energy future. I thank the Chair.

Mr. DOYLE. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that the House is considering H.R. 1753. The Methane Hydrate Research and Development Act, a five year authorization measure that will promote the research, identification, assessment, exploration and development of methane hydrate resources.

As members will recall, H.R. 1753 was previously considered on the suspension calendar and passed by the House on October 26, 1999. Under the leadership of Senator AKAKA, the bill was subsequently passed by the Senate in November of 1999. The version before us today does not differ in scope or direction, but does incorporate minor changes agreed to by all parties that have been involved in this most important energy initiative.

In my view, the need for heightened methane hydrate research has always been critical in nature. But the attention being paid to the recent increase in oil prices and cost hikes at the gas pump has served to reinforce our nation's need to become less dependent on foreign oil and to enhance the use of our domestic fuel base in a manner that meets the requirements for cleaner fuels and reduced emissions.

The potential for significant benefits to consumers, the environment, and business exist in methane hydrate research. I have previously sited the following information, but it bears repeating. It has been projected that U.S. gas consumption is expected to increase by 40% by the year 2020. Couple this with the fact that currently more than half of the present U.S. oil supply is imported and without natural gas production, our oil import volume would be much larger. But if only 1% of the methane hydrate resource could be made recoverable, the United States could more than double its domestic natural gas resource base. In short, when a new, abundant resource is found that meets a growing demand with a greater level of efficiency, consumers will not only have a greater selection of options, but more affordable costs as well.

I am particularly proud of the existing research into this area that has been done by DOE's National Energy Technology Laboratory in Pittsburgh, as well as the recognized efforts of Gerald Holder at the University of Pittsburgh. I am confident that framework, guidance, and authority embodied in The Methane Hydrates Research and Development Act will enable further examination into what could conceivably save consumers billions of dollars, make difficult national environmental decisions easier, and strengthen our Nation's energy security.

Once again, I want to extend my sincerest appreciation to Senator AKAKA, Chairman SENSENBRENNER, Representative CALVERT, and Representative COSTELLO for their efforts and support in moving forward with H.R. 1753, The Methane Hydrate Research and Development Act of 2000.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PEASE). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, House Resolution 453.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

AUTHORIZING USE OF EAST FRONT OF CAPITOL GROUNDS FOR PERFORMANCES SPONSORED BY JOHN F. KENNEDY CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 281), authorizing the use of the East Front of the Capitol Grounds for performances sponsored by the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 281

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring),

SECTION 1. AUTHORIZING USE OF EAST FRONT OF CAPITOL GROUNDS FOR PERFORMANCES SPONSORED BY KENNEDY CENTER.

In carrying out its duties under section 4 of the John F. Kennedy Center Act (20 U.S.C. 76j), the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, in cooperation with the National Park Service (in this resolution jointly referred to as the ''sponsor''), may sponsor public performances on the East Front of the Capitol Grounds at such dates and times as the Speaker of the House of Representatives and Committee on Rules and Administration of the Senate may approve jointly.

SEC. 2. TERMS AND CONDITIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Any performance authorized under section 1 shall be free of admission charge to the public and arranged not to interfere with the needs of Congress, under conditions to be prescribed by the Architect of the Capitol and the Capitol Police Board.

(b) ASSUMPTION OF LIABILITIES.—The sponsor shall assume full responsibility for all liabilities incident to all activities associated with the performance.

SEC. 3. PREPARATIONS.

(a) STRUCTURES AND EQUIPMENT.—In consultation with the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Rules and Administration of the Senate, the Architect of the Capitol shall provide upon the Capitol Grounds such stage, sound amplification devices, and other related structures