

Since 1961, Peace Corps Volunteers have strengthened the ties of friendship and understanding between the people of the United States and those of other countries. Some one hundred and seventy thousand volunteers have served in 137 countries over the past 43 years to make an impact on this world. We owe it to these Volunteers to create avenues for their concerns to be heard.

I am proud to say that as a young man, I served as a Volunteer in the Republic of El Salvador, building schools and health clinics, learning the language, and developing an enduring bond with the people, culture, and language. The experience instilled in me a profound connection to that country, and a dedication to improving international relations around the world.

Over the past 43 years, the Peace Corps has become an enduring symbol of our nation's commitment to progress, opportunity, and development at the grass-roots level in the developing world.

Mr. Speaker, the Peace Corps has been a part of my life for almost forty years. I have served as a Volunteer, I have supported important Peace Corps legislation and today I rise in support of the Health, Safety, and Security of Peace Corps Volunteers Act of 2004.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of our time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MURPHY). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4060.

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.

MOUNT RAINIER NATIONAL PARK BOUNDARY ADJUSTMENT ACT OF 2003

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 265) to provide for an adjustment of the boundaries of Mount Rainier National Park, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 265

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 "Mount Rainier National Park Boundary Adjustment Act of 2003".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

The Congress finds the following:

(1) The Carbon River watershed within Pierce County in the State of Washington has unique qualities of ecological, economic, and educational importance, including clean water, productive salmon streams, important wildlife habitat, active geologic processes, outdoor recreational opportunities, scenic beauty, educational opportunities, and diverse economic opportunities.

(2) Mount Rainier National Park is one of the premier attractions in the State of Washington, providing recreational, educational, and economic opportunities that will be enhanced by

the construction of new campgrounds and visitor contact facilities in the Carbon River valley outside old-growth forest habitats and above the flood plain.

(3) *Coordination of management across national forest and national park lands in this corridor will enhance the conservation of the forest ecosystem and public enjoyment of these public lands.*

(4) *Protection and development of historic and recreational facilities in the Carbon River valley, such as trails and visitor centers, can be facilitated by the National Park Service.*

SEC. 3. MOUNT RAINIER NATIONAL PARK BOUNDARY ADJUSTMENT.

(a) *BOUNDARY ADJUSTMENT.—The boundary of Mount Rainier National Park is modified to include the area within the boundary generally depicted on the map entitled "Mount Rainier National Park, Carbon River Boundary Adjustment", numbered 105/92,002B, and dated June 2003. The Secretary of the Interior shall keep the map on file in the appropriate offices of the National Park Service.*

(b) *LAND ACQUISITION.—The Secretary of the Interior may acquire, only with the consent of the owner, by donation, purchase with donated or appropriated funds, or exchange—*

(1) land or interests in land, totaling not more than 800 acres, and improvements thereon within the boundary generally depicted on the map referred to in subsection (a) for development of camping and other recreational facilities; and

(2) land or interests in land, totaling not more than one acre, and improvements thereon in the vicinity of Wilkeson, Washington, for a facility to serve visitors to public lands along the Carbon and Mowich Corridors.

(c) *ADMINISTRATION OF ACQUIRED LANDS.—Lands acquired under this section shall be administered by the Secretary of the Interior as part of Mount Rainier National Park in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.*

SEC. 4. ASSOCIATED LANDS.

The Secretary of Agriculture shall manage that portion of the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest lying adjacent to Mt. Rainier National Park, as identified on the map referred to in section 3(a), to maintain the area's natural setting in a manner consistent with its management as of June 1, 2003.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. GIBBONS) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. RODRIGUEZ) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. GIBBONS).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. 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 H.R. 265, the bill now under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 265, introduced by the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. DUNN) and amended by the Committee on Resources, would authorize the Secretary of the Interior to adjust the boundary of the Mount Rainier National Park by creating a new non-contiguous unit to the park. The new area would provide for improved camping opportunities near the northwest entrance of the park, while ensuring

continued access for the Muckleshoot Tribe to nearby U.S. Forest Service lands.

Today, the only road leading to the current popular campgrounds in the northwestern portion of the park continues to be flooded out by the Carbon River. I believe this bill represents a commonsense solution to this ongoing problem.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 265, as amended, is supported by both the majority and minority members of the committee, as well as the Muckleshoot Tribe and the National Park Service. I commend the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. DUNN) for her tireless efforts to work with all parties concerned to reach the consensus that is before us on the House floor today.

That said, Mr. Speaker, I urge adoption of this bill.

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

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

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

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Mr. Speaker, the majority has adequately explained this piece of legislation.

I would simply note that H.R. 265, as amended, represents a cooperative effort among the bill's sponsors, the Committee on Resources and the National Park Service and the Forest Service.

The bill, as amended, is a workable solution to the resource management needs in the area, and we support the adoption of this legislation by the House today.

Ms. DUNN. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 265, The Mount Rainier Boundary Adjustment Act of 2003, will allow the National Park Service to relocate a popular campground that has limited access as the result of road damage caused by years of reoccurring floods. The road to Ipsut Creek Campground in Mount Rainier National Park is now located below the level of the Carbon River in many areas. Due to frequent road washouts, it can be difficult—if not impossible—for visitors and residents to drive safely to the campground.

There have been numerous attempts to repair this road—but, unfortunately, it continues to wash out. Previous road reconstruction after flooding has cost \$750,000.

The road to the campground serves as one of the most primitive and popular entrances into Mount Rainier Park and leads to a temperate rainforest within the park as well as the beautiful Carbon Glacier.

This boundary adjustment will allow for the purchase of approximately 800 acres of private land just outside the park, allowing the campground to be moved to a more secure area and providing safe travel to the site. All of the private landowners are willing sellers, and this vital project is currently included in the National Park Service Management Plan. It has the strong support of the local residents, the Muckleshoot Indian Tribe and numerous conservation organizations.

The Congressional Budget Office released a favorable estimate for this project—stating that

this act will have no significant impact on the budgets of State, local, or tribal governments. In addition, the CBO found that annual maintenance spending at Mount Rainier will not notably increase, ensuring that the Park will not have to assume additional, costly responsibilities.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 265 has broad, bipartisan support and is a critical priority not only for ensuring safe travel to the Carbon River area of Mount Rainier Park, but for providing a permanent solution to an expensive, ongoing maintenance problem for our Park personnel.

I would like to thank Chairman RADANOVICH on the National Parks Subcommittee, as well as Chairman POMBO and Ranking Member RAHALL on the full Resources Committee for their help and support in bringing this legislation to the floor for consideration. I would also like to thank the majority and minority staff on the Resources Committee for their work.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation to help ensure safe travel in one of our Nation's most visited and well-loved National Parks.

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I have no additional speakers, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, I have no additional speakers, and I yield back the balance of my time and urge a favorable vote on this measure.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. GIBBONS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 265, 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.

REAFFIRMATION OF CERTAIN RIGHTS OF THE OSAGE TRIBE

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2912) to reaffirm the inherent sovereign rights of the Osage Tribe to determine its membership and form of government.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 2912

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

SECTION 1. REAFFIRMATION OF CERTAIN RIGHTS OF THE OSAGE TRIBE.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Congress finds as follows:

(1) The Osage Tribe is a federally recognized tribe based in Pawhuska, Oklahoma.

(2) The Osage Allotment Act of June 28, 1906 (34 Stat. 539), states that the "legal membership" of the Osage Tribe includes the persons on the January 1, 1906 roll and their children, and that each "member" on that roll is entitled to a headright share in the distribution of funds from the Osage mineral estate and an allotment of the surface lands of the Osage Reservation.

(3) Today only Osage Indians who have a headright share in the mineral estate are "members" of the Osage Tribe.

(4) Adult Osage Indians without a headright interest cannot vote in Osage government elections and are not eligible to

seek elective office in the Osage Tribe as a matter of Federal law.

(5) A principal goal of Federal Indian policy is to promote tribal self-sufficiency and strong tribal government.

(b) REAFFIRMATION OF CERTAIN RIGHTS OF THE OSAGE TRIBE.—

(1) MEMBERSHIP.—Congress hereby clarifies that the term "legal membership" in section 1 of the Act entitled, "An Act For the division of lands and funds of the Osage Indians in Oklahoma Territory, and for other purposes", approved June 28, 1906 (34 Stat. 539), means the persons eligible for allotments of Osage Reservation lands and a pro rata share of the Osage mineral estate as provided in that Act, not membership in the Osage Tribe for all purposes. Congress hereby reaffirms the inherent sovereign right of the Osage Tribe to determine its own membership, provided that the rights of any person to Osage mineral estate shares are not diminished thereby.

(2) GOVERNMENT.—Notwithstanding section 9 of the Act entitled, "An Act For the division of lands and funds of the Osage Indians in Oklahoma Territory, and for other purposes", approved June 28, 1906 (34 Stat. 539), Congress hereby reaffirms the inherent sovereign right of the Osage Tribe to determine its own form of government.

(3) ELECTIONS AND REFERENDA.—At the request of the Osage Tribe, the Secretary of the Interior shall assist the Osage Tribe with conducting elections and referenda to implement this section.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. GIBBONS) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. RODRIGUEZ) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. GIBBONS).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. 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 H.R. 2912, the bill now under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 2912 is sponsored by the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. LUCAS). This legislation would put the Osage Tribe on the same footing as every other sovereign, federally recognized tribe in the United States in terms of defining its own membership criteria and its form of government.

The Committee on Resources ordered H.R. 2912 reported by unanimous consent, and the report was filed on May 19, 2004.

The Osage Tribe is the only federally recognized tribe for which a specific act of Congress, which was passed nearly 100 years ago, mandates terms of membership in the tribe, as well as its form of government.

Under the Osage Allotment Act of 1906, as interpreted by subsequent Federal court decisions, the only legal members of the Osage Tribe are the lineal descendants of those Osage persons living before July 1, 1907, who also possess what is called a "headright share."

A headright share, Mr. Speaker, is a share in the royalties from mineral development in the Osage reservation.

This has had the unfortunate result of excluding people who have a high degree of Osage blood from membership in the tribe. Even though the Osage tribal leaders want to allow such disenfranchised people to become members, the 1906 act precludes them from altering their tribe's membership criteria.

The reasons for how the 1906 act came about are complicated, and though Congress may have had its reasons for mandating membership rules for the Osage people, such reasons are no longer relevant today. Preventing the tribe from determining its membership and form of government is the exact opposite of promoting self-determination.

The Committee on Resources held a hearing within the Osage reservation on March 15, 2004. We received testimony from several witnesses with a high degree of Osage blood who are part of the Osage community in Oklahoma and whom many of the tribal members want to welcome into the tribe.

But because of the 1906 act, they are not eligible to be members of the tribe because they do not own a headright share in the Osage mineral estate. They are denied the basic benefit, as well as responsibilities, of tribal membership. Some are not eligible for certain services and benefits, such as Native American scholarships. They are prohibited by law from participating in certain rituals and ceremonial events, even though they may or might, in theory, have a higher degree of Osage blood than official members of the tribe.

It is past time to consider letting the Osage Tribe decide how to govern itself as it sees fit, providing that no one loses any property or other vested legal rights in the process. H.R. 2912 includes language to ensure that no one's interest in headright shares is touched. Headrights are private property, and there is no intent to affect them under this bill.

This bill received support from all the witnesses testifying at the hearing, including the representatives of the Osage Shareholders Association, which is comprised of individuals who have a vested interest in the mineral estate of the Osage reservation.

Again, Congress is overdue in addressing this unusual problem, and I urge passage of H.R. 2912.

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

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I might consume.

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

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Mr. Speaker, the honorable gentleman from Nevada (Mr. GIBBONS) has done a beautiful job of adequately explaining the legislation.