

they, of course, at that point were stationed at Fort Bragg. After a year of rigorous training, General Lee and his men departed for England.

In 1944, General Lee suffered a heart attack that forced him to step down as the commanding officer of the 101st Airborne Division, just as that division was making its final preparations for the invasion in Normandy, of which the General had been a major planner with General Eisenhower and others. As a tribute to their former commander, each of the men, as my colleagues heard this evening, of the 101st Airborne Division yelled "Bill Lee" as they jumped from the plane into the dark into combat.

The men of the 101st who had been under General Lee's command have since been immortalized in a best-selling book by the historian Stephen Ambrose and in the miniseries Band of Brothers. They were an elite rifle company that parachuted into France on D-Day, that fought in the Battle of the Bulge. They captured Hitler's Eagle's Nest, and they were also a unit that suffered 150 percent casualties and whose lives have become legendary. One could say how could a company, how could a division suffer 150 percent casualties? Easy. As one was lost, others joined the group.

Mr. Speaker, as the Nation pauses this year to honor the World War II veterans and to mark the 60th anniversary of D-Day, it is appropriate that we honor General Lee, a Dunn, North Carolina, native and the father of the United States Airborne. This General from a small town was a big-time leader. He represented the can-do attitudes and the patriotism embodied by the people of Dunn and Harnett County in North Carolina and America.

Today, in Dunn, there is a museum of his homeplace. The effort to turn that home into a museum was led by a member of his staff, Hoover Adams, who was a captain who served under General Lee. That museum is now open to the public and had a lot of memorabilia from World War II and other Airborne divisions around the world.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation and today to honor a true American hero, General William Carey Lee.

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

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I would urge all Members to support H.R. 4556, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. MILLER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4556.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

TROPICAL FOREST CONSERVATION ACT REAUTHORIZATION

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4654) to reauthorize the Tropical Forest Conservation Act of 1998 through fiscal year 2007, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 4654

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

SECTION 1. REDUCTION OF DEBT UNDER THE FOREIGN ASSISTANCE ACT OF 1961 AND TITLE I OF THE AGRICULTURAL TRADE DEVELOPMENT AND ASSISTANCE ACT OF 1954.

Section 806(d) of the Tropical Forest Conservation Act of 1998 (22 U.S.C. 2431d(d)) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraphs:

"(4) \$20,000,000 for fiscal year 2005.

"(5) \$25,000,000 for fiscal year 2006.

"(6) \$30,000,000 for fiscal year 2007."

SEC. 2. USE OF FUNDS TO CONDUCT PROGRAM AUDITS AND EVALUATIONS.

Section 806 of the Tropical Forest Conservation Act of 1998 (22 U.S.C. 2431d) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

"(e) USE OF FUNDS TO CONDUCT PROGRAM AUDITS AND EVALUATIONS.—Of the amounts made available to carry out this part for a fiscal year, \$200,000 is authorized to be made available to carry out audits and evaluations of programs under this part, including personnel costs associated with such audits and evaluations."

SEC. 3. AUTHORITY TO ALLOW FOR PAYMENTS OF INTEREST AND PRINCIPAL IN LOCAL CURRENCIES.

(a) AUTHORITY UNDER THE FOREIGN ASSISTANCE ACT OF 1961.—Section 806(c) of the Tropical Forest Conservation Act of 1998 (22 U.S.C. 2431d(c)) is amended—

(1) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking "The following" and inserting "(1) The following";

(2) by redesignating paragraphs (1) and (2) as subparagraphs (A) and (B), respectively; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

"(2) In addition to the application of the provisions relating to repayment of principal under section 705 of this Act to the reduction of debt under subsection (a)(1) (in accordance with paragraph (1)(A) of this subsection), repayment of principal on a new obligation established under subsection (b) may be made in the local currency of the beneficiary country and deposited in the Tropical Forest Fund of the country in the same manner as the provisions relating to payment of interest on new obligations under section 706 of this Act."

(b) AUTHORITY UNDER TITLE I OF THE AGRICULTURAL TRADE DEVELOPMENT AND ASSISTANCE ACT OF 1954.—Section 807(c) of the Tropical Forest Conservation Act of 1998 (22 U.S.C. 2431e(c)) is amended—

(1) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking "The following" and inserting "(1) The following";

(2) by redesignating paragraphs (1) and (2) as subparagraphs (A) and (B), respectively; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

"(2) In addition to the application of the provisions relating to repayment of principal under section 605 of the Agricultural Trade Development and Assistance Act of 1954 to the reduction of debt under subsection (a)(1) (in accordance with paragraph (1)(A) of this subsection), repayment of principal on a new obligation established under subsection (b) may be made in the local currency of the beneficiary country and deposited in the Tropical Forest Fund of the country in the same manner as the provisions relating to payment of interest on new obligations under section 606 of such Act."

(c) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 810(a) of the Tropical Forest Conservation Act of 1998 (22 U.S.C. 2431h(a)) is amended by inserting "and principal" after "interest".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) and the gentlewoman from Minnesota (Ms. MCCOLLUM) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN).

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. 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. 4654, the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

This bill reauthorizes the Tropical Forest Conservation Act of 1998, TFCA, through fiscal year 2007. The current authorization for this important program expires at the end of fiscal year 2004. H.R. 4654 authorizes appropriations for debt reduction for eligible countries through fiscal year 2007 at \$20 million in fiscal year 2005, the President's budget request; at \$25 million in fiscal year 2006; and \$30 million in fiscal year 2007.

The bill adds a new section to the underlying statute which authorizes the use of funds for audits and evaluations of this program. In addition, the bill allows for TFCA debt reduction agreements to redirect reduced principal payments for forest conservation activities. Current law allows only the redirection of reduced interest payment into forest conservation funds.

Ensuring fiscal and programmatic accountability requires the ability to contract for independent audits. While it is the intent of H.R. 4654 to maximize the amount of funds going to new TFCA agreements, a modest authorization level is provided as a good management procedure to ensure that some audits be undertaken each year.

□ 1500

The \$200,000 authorized by the bill to be made available to carry out audits and evaluations of programs is not intended as a limit on expenditures for these important functions.

The bill would allow principal on debt incurred before January 1, 1998, to be eligible for treatment under the straight debt reduction option. Currently, only interest can be treated. The benefit of also treating principal in this matter is that the U.S. Government can generate more funds for forest conservation.

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

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and I rise in strong support of this legislation.

This legislation continues a vitally important environmental initiative started in the Clinton administration. With the extension of this program, millions of acres of endangered tropical forests around the world will be saved, and the biological diversity of our world will be further preserved.

I would first like to recognize the efforts of the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN), who worked closely with our former colleague and former chair of the Committee on International Relations, the Honorable Lee Hamilton, in crafting this innovative measure in 1998.

Mr. Speaker, the Tropical Forest Conservation Act has become one of the most effective foreign policy tools designed to encourage developing nations to protect and preserve tropical forests. Already the U.S. has entered into bilateral agreements with seven countries: Bangladesh, Belize, El Salvador, Panama, Peru, the Philippines, and Colombia.

This innovative program has been a tremendous success. It has given the people of developing countries the opportunity to protect and invest in their local ecosystems, thus preserving our global environment while at the same time paying down interest on debt owed to the United States.

The current bilateral agreements under the Tropical Forest Conservation Act will generate \$70 million for tropical forest preservation. The most recent agreement has produced a pledge by Colombia to invest \$10 million over 12 years to protect the nearly 11 million acres of this tropical forest.

Among the areas that will be preserved in Colombia as a result is the Tuparo National Park. This unique forest contains a rich diversity of species, including jaguars, river dolphins, and the endangered giant armadillo. This also includes a threatened crocodile, which is found only in this part of South America. This area is also being protected because it serves as a base for migrating birds from North America.

The bill before us would expand the Tropical Forest Conservation Act by allowing developing countries not only to service their debt by making payments to forest conservation funds, but also to pay down the principal on these debts. Right now, there are several debtor countries that are potentially eligible for the program but cannot

participate because of the way in which the language was originally written. This new authority in this reauthorization would remedy this situation and increase the number of countries eligible to participate in the program.

Mr. Speaker, the Tropical Forest Conservation Act is a shining example of good policy mixed with strong environmental protections. It is my hope that in the future we will be able to promote and support additional measures that balance economic stability and environmental sustainability both for these countries.

Again, I strongly support the passage of this legislation to reauthorize the Tropical Forest Conservation Act, and I urge my colleagues to do so as well.

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 6 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN), the prime sponsor and the author of this bill.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN), who is chair of the Subcommittee on the Middle East and South Asia of the Committee on International Relations. I want to thank her for her good work in the committee, and particularly her help with regard to this legislation and her willingness to be one of the original cosponsors and to help to promote this.

I also want to thank my colleague from Minnesota (Ms. MCCOLLUM). I thought that statement was eloquent, and I think she well stated what we are trying to do with this reauthorization, which is to continue a good program and also to expand it so that more countries can be eligible.

I rise today in very strong support of this legislation. It was introduced, along with my colleague and ranking member, the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), of the Committee on International Relations, by 32 of our colleagues to reauthorize this Tropical Forest Conservation Act through fiscal year 2007. This is a bipartisan and market-based conservation incentive program which helps to protect the world's most valuable tropical forests using the so-called debt-for-nature mechanisms.

H.R. 4654 was developed with the Bush administration, with the Nature Conservancy, World Wildlife Fund, Conservation International, and the Wildlife Conservation Society. The administration and these highly respected environmental organizations are to be commended for their good work on the Tropical Forest Conservation Act and on this legislation before us today.

This legislation comes out of a couple of Congresses ago, the 105th Congress, when I, along with my colleagues Lee Hamilton, mentioned earlier, and John Kasich, introduced legislation that established the Tropical Forest Conservation Act, or TFCA. It was

overwhelmingly approved by the House, the Senate, and enacted in 1998. It was then reauthorized in 2001, until the end of this current year.

The TFCA is based on the previous Bush administration's Enterprise for the Americas Initiative, also known as EAI. That initiative allowed the President to restructure debt in exchange for certain conservation efforts in Latin America. We took that basic philosophy, broadened it, we expanded on it, and we now allow protection of threatened tropical forests worldwide.

A conservative estimate is that, because of the agreements that have been signed to date, 41 million acres of tropical forests are being protected. The United States has a significant national interest in this. Tropical forests provide a wide range of benefits. They harbor 50 to 90 percent of the Earth's terrestrial biodiversity. They act as "carbon sinks," absorbing massive quantities of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, thereby reducing so-called greenhouse gases. Therefore, the quality of the air we breathe here in this country is affected by the health of these dense forests.

They also regulate rainfall on which agriculture and coastal resources depend, and they are of great importance to regional and global climate. Furthermore, tropical forests are breeding grounds for new medicines. Twenty-five percent of prescription drugs come from tropical forests. The United States National Cancer Institute has identified over 3,000 plants that they believe are active against cancer. Seventy percent of them can be found in these tropical rain forests.

Regrettably, tropical forests are rapidly disappearing. It is now estimated that 30 million acres, an area larger than the State of Pennsylvania, or my State of Ohio, are now being lost each year. The heavy debt burden of many of these countries in the tropics is a contributing factor because they have to resort to exploitation of their natural resources, particularly the extraction of timber, oil, and precious metals, to be able to generate revenue to service their external debt. At the same time, these poorer governments tend to have fewer resources available to set aside and protect tropical forests.

The TFCA, which is part of the current Bush administration's global climate change policy, addresses these economic pressures by authorizing the President to allow eligible countries to engage in debt swaps, in buybacks, and in reduction and restructuring of debt in exchange for protecting threatened tropical forests on a sustained basis. So the program gets at some of the underlying causes for the disappearing tropical forests because it gets at some of the economic reasons some of the countries must exploit this resource.

The debt-for-nature mechanism in the TFCA has proven to be an effective market-oriented means to leverage scarce funds available for international

conservation. The host country places local currency in its tropical forest fund that typically exceeds the cost to the U.S. Government of the debt reduction agreement. So we are leveraging funds.

Furthermore, because these tropical forest funds have integrity, are broadly supported within the host country, we have found that conservation organizations are interested in placing their own money in these tropical forest funds, which of course produce additional leverage of the Federal conservation dollars that we are providing.

There have been eight TFCA agreements included to date: Bangladesh, El Salvador, Belize, Peru, the Philippines, Colombia, and actually two now with Panama. \$49.3 million in Federal contributions have gone into these agreements and \$6.3 million in private contributions from these conservation NGOs under these eight agreements. Through this we have generated \$81.4 million in long-term income commitments for tropical forest conservation, so the leverage is out there and is working.

The second Panama deal actually was just signed last month. Under this agreement, the U.S. Government contributed \$6.5 million to reduce debt, and the Nature Conservancy contributed \$1.3 million in a second round of agreements now that will generate nearly \$11 million for tropical conservation over the next 12 years.

This agreement with Panama, along with the previous one, now provides over \$21 million in total funds available for conservation purposes. This is a great agreement that helps protect the biologically rich forest of Darien National Park.

Active deals are also being negotiated with Jamaica and Sri Lanka. Other countries that have expressed interest in the program and who have eligible debt include Guatemala, Ecuador, Paraguay, St. Vincent, Botswana, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, India, Indonesia, Brazil, and Kenya.

H.R. 4654 will improve and refine the Tropical Forest Conservation Act, as was discussed earlier, by better funding audits to ensure the program is operating as expected and as intended and by broadening the governments that can participate by allowing principal, not just interest, to be reduced and to be redirected into these conservation funds.

The bill does have an authorization here of \$20 million in fiscal year 2005, which is included in the President's budget request.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment, if I could, to just thank all those who have gotten us to this point and worked so hard on this reauthorization bill. I want to thank those people like Bill Millan and Steve McCormick of the Nature Conservancy; Randy Snodgrass, Melissa Moye and Estrelitta Fitzhugh of the World Wildlife Fund; Kelly Keenan Aylward with the Wildlife Conservation Society; and

Nicholas Lapham with Conservation International.

From the administration, I want to thank the Council on Environmental Quality; also Joel Kaplan and Robin Cleveland of OMB; Bill Schuerch and Katie Berg of the Treasury Department; Claudia McMurray, Stephanie Caswell and Teresa Hobgood of the State Department; Jim Hester with USAID; Scott Lampman and others.

In Congress, I want to be sure and thank Kristen Gilley and David Killon of the Committee on International Relations, minority and majority staff; and Mark Synnes of the House Legislative Counsel for helping us to draft the bill; and at CRS we got some great help from Pervaze Sheikh. For his excellent analysis of the program, I want to thank him. And, finally, I want to thank Tim Miller of my staff and Justin Louchheim, who have taken a personal interest in this and their commitment to it over the years.

Again, this is a good program, it is working well, and worthy of reauthorization. I urge all Members to support strongly this market-based approach that is working to conserve the world's most threatened tropical forest.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, the legislation before the House continues a vitally important environmental initiative begun during the Clinton Administration. The Tropical Forest Conservation Act has already resulted in the funding of programs to conserve over 40 million acres of endangered tropical forests around the globe. These preservation efforts are critical to long-term U.S. interests as the tropical forest being saved are estimated to contain 50–90 percent of the earth's terrestrial biodiversity.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to have had the opportunity to co-sponsor this reauthorization with Congressman ROB PORTMAN. Congressman PORTMAN deserves credit for having the foresight to initiate this program with the original authorization he crafted in partnership with the former chairman of the International Relations Committee, Mr. Lee Hamilton, in 1998.

Mr. Speaker, the Tropical Forest Conservation Act has been a tremendous success. It has allowed the governments of developing countries to get the benefit of improving their local ecosystem when paying down interest owed on debt to the United States. It is supported by a broad spectrum of environmental advocacy organizations led by the Nature Conservancy and the World Wildlife Fund.

This program inspires more prompt debt servicing and gives foreign governments a greater sense of responsibility for preserving the global environment.

Already the U.S. has entered into binding bilateral agreements with seven countries: Bangladesh, Belize, El Salvador, Panama, Peru, the Philippines and Colombia. These agreements will generate \$70 million for tropical forest preservation.

The most recent agreement has produced a pledge by Colombia to invest \$10 million over 12 years to protect nearly 11 million acres of its tropical forest.

Among the areas that will be preserved in Colombia as a result is the Tuparo National Park. This unique forest contains a rich diversity of species including jaguars, river dol-

phins, the endangered giant armadillo and the critically threatened Orinoco crocodile, which is found only in this part of South America. The area is also a major winter base for migrating bird species from the United States.

Mr. Speaker, the rapid disappearance of tropical forests is a threat to our national security. We need these forests to regulate the global environment. They act as critical "carbon sinks", absorbing massive quantities of carbon dioxide that otherwise would contribute to global warming. They also regulate rainfall, which is critical to maintaining sustainable agricultural production across the globe. In addition, their diverse plants provide a large percentage of life-saving medicines. Therefore, as the forests disappear, some of our opportunities to cure debilitating illnesses also vanish.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly support passage of this legislation, and urge my colleagues to do so as well.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests at this time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I also have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PENCE). The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4654.

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.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 6:30 p.m.

Accordingly (at 3 o'clock and 13 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until approximately 6:30 p.m.

□ 1830

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. KLINE) at 6 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.

REPORT ON HOUSE RESOLUTION 700, DIRECTING THE ATTORNEY GENERAL TO TRANSMIT DOCUMENTS IN THE POSSESSION OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL RELATING TO TREATMENT OF PRISONERS AND DETAINEES IN IRAQ, AFGHANISTAN, AND GUANTANAMO BAY

Mr. SENSENBRENNER, from the Committee on the Judiciary, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 108-658) on the resolution (H. Res. 700) directing the Attorney General to transmit to the House of Representatives documents in the possession of the Attorney General relating to the treatment