

Not only does UNCF support students, but also higher education institutions throughout the country. UNCF provides operating support to 38 member historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs), which help the member schools keep tuition down at a rate 54 percent lower than tuition at other comparable schools. UNCF also administers millions of dollars to help provide computers, technology integration training for faculty members and technological infrastructure support for HBCUs.

The fact that UNCF plays such a significant role in supporting our nation's HBCUs is important. HBCUs graduate far more than their share of African American professionals. While HBCUs represent just 3 percent of the nation's institutions of higher learning, they graduate nearly one-quarter of African Americans who earn undergraduate degrees. Nine of the top ten colleges that graduate the most African Americans who go on to earn Ph.Ds are HBCUs.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to have two of UNCF's member institutions in my state—Virginia Union University and Saint Paul's College. And two other HBCUs in my district that benefit from UNCF funding and programs—Hampton University and Norfolk State University.

Graduates of UNCF institutions have indeed made lasting contributions in the fields of business, health care, the arts and even politics. In fact, several of my distinguished colleagues are UNCF alumni.

In 1972, UNCF introduced its now famous slogan: "A mind is a terrible thing to waste". And through the diligent efforts of all who work with UNCF, by donating financial resources, time and in the case of many celebrities—their good name, they have made sure that the meaning of that slogan resonates across America. Most importantly, they have made sure that every student who has the desire can attend college. I commend those involved with the United Negro College Fund for their hard work and congratulate them on 60 years of service.

Mr. BURNS. 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 Georgia (Mr. BURNS) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 792.

The question was taken.

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

Ms. WOOLSEY. 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.

NATIONAL ESTUARY PROGRAM REAUTHORIZATION

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4731) to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to reauthorize the National Estuary Program.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 4731

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

SECTION 1. REAUTHORIZATION OF NATIONAL ESTUARY PROGRAM.

Section 320(i) of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1330(i)) is amended by striking "2005" and inserting "2010".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DUNCAN) and the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DUNCAN).

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume. I rise in strong support of H.R. 4731, to reauthorize the National Estuary Program. Estuaries are unique and highly productive waters that are important to the ecological and economic bases of our Nation. Fisheries, wildlife, recreation, and tourism are heavily dependent on healthy estuarine systems. Yet despite their value, most estuaries in the United States are experiencing stress from physical alteration and pollution, often resulting from development and rapid population growth in coastal areas.

In the 1980s, Congress recognized the importance of and the need to protect the natural functions of our Nation's estuaries. As a result, in 1987 Congress first authorized the National Estuary Program. Today this program, the National Estuary Program, is an ongoing nonregulatory program designed to support the collaborative, voluntary efforts of Federal, State, and local stakeholders to restore degraded estuaries. Currently all 29 estuaries in the National Estuary Program have developed and are implementing restoration plans. Under this program, \$35 million a year is authorized to allow the EPA to help these State and local restoration efforts. The program's current authorization expires in 2005. Thus, the need for this legislation.

H.R. 4731 reauthorizes the National Estuary Program at the same level of funding for an additional 5 years. The bill contains no Federal mandates and imposes no costs on State or local governments. I certainly want to congratulate the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GERLACH) and the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. TAUSCHER) on sponsoring this bill and on the great leadership they have provided on this. I urge all my colleagues to support this bill.

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

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

(Ms. NORTON asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my good friend from Tennessee (Mr. DUNCAN) for his leadership on this bill and rise in strong support of H.R. 4731, a bill to extend the authorization

of the Environmental Protection Agency's National Estuary Program. This popular program provides Federal assistance to local stakeholders to implement locally designed management plans for the protection of the Nation's estuaries.

At the same time, the program serves as a national clearinghouse for successful management approaches, technologies and ideas, providing local communities with concrete examples of what works in addressing the unique needs of estuaries. This program authorizes funding for the development and implementation of comprehensive conservation and management plans for estuaries of national significance.

A comprehensive approach to addressing estuary health is particularly important as the stressors on the health of estuaries continue to expand. EPA's most recent water quality report indicated that 50 percent of estuary waters do not meet their designated uses. Programs such as this, coupled with significant additional resources for wastewater infrastructure, may allow for water quality in estuaries to improve and ecosystems to be restored.

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I strongly support authorization for the National Estuary Program. And I urge my colleagues to vote "aye" on H.R. 4731.

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

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GERLACH), the author of this legislation.

Mr. GERLACH. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4731, a bill I introduced to reauthorize the National Estuary Program. I would like to particularly thank the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DUNCAN) for his efforts on this bill and for his work as chairman of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure's Water Resources and Environment Subcommittee.

H.R. 4731 is a simple reauthorization of a highly respected and successful National Estuary Program. A program whose authorization will expire at the end of fiscal year 2005. Like the previous authorization, the bill will authorize \$35 million annually for the program and will extend the authorization through fiscal year 2010.

Estuaries are coastal bays, harbors, sounds and lagoons, places where rivers meet the sea. Estuaries and the lands surrounding them are places of transition from land to sea and from fresh to saltwater. Up to 80 percent of the fish that we catch spend at least part of their lives in estuaries. EPA's National Estuary Program was established by Congress in 1987 to improve the quality of estuaries of national importance. Section 320 directs EPA to develop plans for attaining and maintaining water quality in an estuary. This includes protection of public water supplies and propagation of a balanced indigenous population of shellfish, fish

and wildlife; allows for recreational activities on and in water; and requires control of point and nonpoint sources of pollution to supplement existing controls of pollution.

The National Estuary Program now boasts 28 estuaries in almost every coastal State around the country. Since 1987 the program has restored or protected 700,000 acres of coastal habitat. The EPA works with federal agencies, State and local governments, non-profit institutions, industry, and citizens to address an estuary's environmental problems. The program is a watershed approach in which all affected interests participate in creating solutions that balance environmental objectives with competing issues.

Estuaries support many commercial and other activities. The shipping industry relies on estuaries and is a large source of employment and an integral part of the national economy. Estuaries also provide great opportunities for tourism and recreation. Finally, coastal populations depend on clean water drawn from an estuary's freshwater tributaries to support public infrastructure such as drinking water and water supplies for industrial facilities, wastewater treatment plants, and irrigation.

Much of my congressional district lies within the Delaware Estuary Study Area, so I am intimately familiar with the importance of protecting this particular estuary. The Delaware Estuary has sustained a human population for thousands of years, but by the end of the 19th Century, increased population and industrialization had transformed much of the upper Estuary watershed. Fisheries were in decline due to pollution, and drinking water supplies were contaminated by pollution which caused outbreaks of typhoid and other diseases in urban areas. Both the industrialization and pollution of the water led to a dramatic decrease in the recreational use of the Delaware River. And it became less of a regional focal point as fewer people had direct contact with it.

By the mid-20th Century, even more pollution flowed into the Delaware Estuary, and the urban reach of the Delaware was one of the most polluted stretches of river in the world, with essentially zero dissolved oxygen in the water during the warmer months of the year.

Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, increased State, interstate, federal and public interest led to dramatic improvements in the Estuary's water quality. Today, with the assistance of the Estuary Program, the Delaware Estuary is cleaner than at any time in the last century. Over 90 percent of the Estuary meets swimmable and fishable goals of the Clean Water Act. Public access to the Estuary is increased as a result of public parks.

Seeing the rebirth of the Delaware Estuary as a valuable natural resource is certainly encouraging, and I am encouraged not just by the progress made

in the Delaware Estuary but in estuaries throughout the country. For this reason, I believe it is vitally important that we act quickly to reauthorize the National Estuary Program and allow this progress to continue.

Mr. Speaker, again, I would like to thank the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DUNCAN), the chairman of our subcommittee; and the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG), chairman of our committee, for their efforts and their leadership, and I urge all Members to support this important bill.

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

Sometimes some of the best and most important legislation that this Congress does comes to the floor without much fanfare and does not receive a lot of attention because it is non-controversial. This is such a bill. But I can tell the Members that it is a privilege for me, as chairman of the Water Resources and Environment Subcommittee, to bring such vital legislation to this floor and urge its passage.

I want to thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GERLACH), the sponsor, and I want to thank the gentleman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) for her assistance and cooperation on this, and I especially want to thank the staff that has worked on this very important bill. I urge passage of this bill.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BONNER). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DUNCAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4731.

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.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. DUNCAN. 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 the bill, H.R. 4731.

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

There was no objection.

AUTHORIZING BOARD OF REGENTS OF SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION TO CARRY OUT CONSTRUCTION AND RELATED ACTIVITIES IN SUPPORT OF VERITAS ON KITT PEAK

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5105) to authorize the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution to carry out construction and related activities in support of the collaborative Very Energetic Radiation

Imaging Telescope Array System (VERITAS) project on Kitt Peak near Tucson, Arizona.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 5105

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

SECTION 1. AUTHORIZING BOARD OF REGENTS OF SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION TO CARRY OUT CONSTRUCTION AND RELATED ACTIVITIES IN SUPPORT OF VERITAS ASTROPHYSICAL OBSERVATORY PROJECT.

The Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution is authorized to carry out construction and related activities in support of the collaborative Very Energetic Radiation Imaging Telescope Array System (VERITAS) project on Kitt Peak near Tucson, Arizona.

SEC. 2. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

There is authorized to be appropriated \$1,000,000 for fiscal year 2005 to carry out section 1.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE) and the gentleman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE).

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

I want to begin this evening by congratulating the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia on the impending return of Major League Baseball to the Washington, D.C., area. I would only ask if she could use her considerable clout to get the new team located in the American League, and I could watch the Cleveland Indians play here in the Nation's Capital.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 5105, introduced by the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. NEY), my good friend, authorizes site development and construction of support facilities for the VERITAS project at Kitt Peak National Observatory in Arizona.

I want to pause for a minute because this particular piece of legislation has been sort of a tug of war with our good friends in the Parliamentarian's Office and our good friends in the Committee on House Administration, together with the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. And I want to commend the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. NEY), chairman of the Committee on House Administration, for working with us. Those of us who love and enjoy the jurisdiction of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure believe that this is a piece of legislation and this is a project that belongs solely within our jurisdiction. We have an artistic difference with some of our friends, and we have worked through that. So, again, I want to thank the parliamentarians and the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. NEY) for getting us to this point this evening.

This project, carried out by the Smithsonian Institution in conjunction with nearly a dozen universities from the United States, U.K., Canada, and Ireland, the new telescopic array will