

But Oregon Deputy Secretary of State Paddy J. McGuire (D) said he believes the intent of such a message is not to protect the homeland but to "scare people away from the polls."

Some Democrats are suspicious of the timing of the announcements, noting that warnings about an election-season threat came on April 19, when Bush was close to his low in the polls; on Aug. 1, right after the Democratic National Convention; and last week, as the president's post-National Republican Convention bounce ebbed.

In a statement last week, Sen. Edward M. Kennedy (Mass.), the ranking Democrat on the Senate Judiciary Committee, warned that it is possible for terrorism response plans created in the name of election security to discourage voting and "become a thinly veiled partisan tactic to tilt the elections."

Spokesmen for Ashcroft and Ridge emphasized that the effort to secure the election was initiated and led by the states, which administer elections. Federal law normally prohibits the presence of armed federal agents near polling sites. They also noted that the effort is supported by the National Governors Association, chaired by Virginia Gov. Mark R. Warner (D), whose aides have said it is vital to address the issue of election security in a post-Sept. 11, 2001, era.

"We do not do politics at Homeland Security," Ridge spokesman Brian Roehrkas said.

Nevertheless, partisan tensions were apparent as officials of the NGA and the National Association of Secretaries of State and homeland security experts sparred last week over the timing and content of a public announcement.

Rebecca Vigil-Giron (D), New Mexico secretary of state and president of the secretaries of state association, said the directive sent out by her organization to the states to step up preparations to safeguard national balloting has been "blown way out of proportion." She said election officials must plan a coordinated response to an election disrupted by a terrorist attack, but she said, "I want to make very sure that these plans don't look anything like voter suppression."

Still, civil rights organizations are worried. People for the American Way Foundation issued a report concluding that various efforts in the name of combating voter fraud have replaced Jim Crow-era laws restricting ballot access as a way to hold down minority voting.

Elliott Minberg, the foundation's legal director, said he suspected that efforts to protect against terrorism, could have the same effect. "The devil is in the details," he said, "and I want to be sure that this is not done in a way that scares people away from the polls."

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this resolution to promote greater civic awareness among all people of the United States. This issue is particularly important at a time when voter participation has been decreasing. The Census Bureau found that only 46% of eligible voters participated in the 2002 elections.

This is not acceptable. Full participation in the electoral process by all Americans is truly a bipartisan concern. We are a society that values democracy. One of the most basic of all rights in a free and democratic society is the right to participate. Exercising the right to vote makes us productive members of society and contributes to the substance of our laws and char-

acter. The fact of the matter is clear; the right to vote is the most basic constitutional act of citizenship.

As a society, we must take steps to raise civic awareness and to develop strategies to promote civic responsibility. Too many people have shed blood and died for us to have this right. While promoting civic awareness, we must also ensure that there are no barriers to the process. In 2000, a number of people went to the polls, but their votes were not counted due to faulty equipment and human error. This must never happen in the world's greatest democracy.

Again, I rise in support of this legislation because it represents progress in addressing voter complacency.

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

Mr. NEY. Mr. Speaker, I just want to again thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HALL) and the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. ROSS) for their introduction and support of this resolution.

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 Ohio (Mr. NEY) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 796.

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.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. NEY. 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. Res. 796.

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

There was no objection.

LAKE PONTCHARTRAIN RESTORATION PROGRAM AUTHORIZATION

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4470) to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to extend the authorization of appropriations for the Lake Pontchartrain Basin Restoration Program from fiscal year 2005 to 2010, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 4470

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

SECTION 1. LAKE PONTCHARTRAIN RESTORATION PROGRAM.

(a) STAKEHOLDERS CONFERENCE.—For purposes of carrying out section 121 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1273), the Lake Pontchartrain, Louisiana, basin stakeholders conference convened on February 25, 2002, shall be treated as being a

management conference convened under section 320 of such Act (33 U.S.C. 1330).

(b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—The first sentence of section 121(f)(1) of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1273(f)(1)) is amended by inserting before the period at the end the following: ", \$19,000,000 for fiscal year 2006, and \$20,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2007 through 2010".

SEC. 2. TECHNICAL CORRECTION.

The second section 121 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1274; relating to wet weather watershed projects) is redesignated as section 122.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. COSTELLO) 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.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 4470, to reauthorize the Lake Pontchartrain Basin Program. Working with the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. JEFFERSON), the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. BAKER) and other Members, the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER) developed legislation during his very first year in the Congress to authorize EPA to help people in Louisiana and Mississippi address pollution problems affecting Lake Pontchartrain.

Their legislation, the Lake Pontchartrain Basin Restoration Act, was enacted into law as title V of the Estuaries and Clean Water Act of 2000. Now, 4 years later, it is now time to reauthorize Lake Pontchartrain Basin Program.

H.R. 4470, introduced by the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER), the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. JEFFERSON) the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. BAKER) and the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. TAUZIN), would reauthorize the Lake Pontchartrain Basin Restoration Program for an addition will 5 years.

I want to commend all of the sponsors for their efforts to restore the ecological health of Lake Pontchartrain, and I urge all Members to support this legislation.

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 rise in support of H.R. 4470, a bill that would reauthorize appropriations for the Environmental Protection Agency Lake Pontchartrain Basin Restoration Program.

Since its authorization in 2000, this program has been helpful in coordinating restoration work for Lake Pontchartrain, located in Southeastern Louisiana. This legislation would extend the authorization of \$20 million annually through 2010 for restoration projects and studies recommended by the Lake Pontchartrain Management Conference, as well as public education projects to inform the local community of public health concerns and

practical ways to help clean up the lake.

Mr. Speaker, I support the efforts to clean up Lake Pontchartrain and urge all of my colleagues to join me in supporting this bipartisan legislation.

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

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER), the author and champion of the legislation and, again, in his very first year in Congress.

Mr. VITTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of my legislation, H.R. 4470. In 2000, Congress passed the Lake Pontchartrain Basin Restoration Act by an overwhelming margin. The purpose of the legislation was to give Lake Pontchartrain the same status as the Great Lakes and the Florida Everglades in their restoration efforts.

In addition, this legislation also created a real and innovative partnership between the Federal Government and local Louisiana stakeholders to further efforts to clean up the lake. This was the first step in achieving the ultimate goal of fully restoring the lake.

The basin is a 5,000 square mile watershed encompassing 16 parishes in the State of Louisiana as well as four counties in the State of Mississippi. It is the second largest lake in the United States after the Great Lakes, and its 1.5 million residents in the whole basin make it the most populated part of Louisiana.

Since we first passed this legislation in 2000, a great deal has been done. There has been real and clearly monitored improvement in water clarity in Lake Pontchartrain. "No swimming" signs are coming down as water quality improves and beaches are reopened. But more work remains to be done.

We have come so far. Various water quality studies have been conducted. These studies provide keys to solutions, pointing us in the right direction in the future. But now we must continue that work and also move on to the next stage of that vital work, which includes actual construction of key projects.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation would move on to that next phase with the reauthorization of the program for fiscal years 2005 to 2010. It was reported unanimously from both the subcommittee and the committee with bipartisan support. I urge all of my colleagues to vote in favor of it.

Mr. Speaker, I thank all of the Members of the committee, particularly the chairman, the ranking member, and also the chair and ranking member of the relevant subcommittee, for all of their work in passing this bill.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 4470. The bill extends the authorization of appropriations for the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Lake Pontchartrain Basin Restoration Program. Since its establishment in 2000, this program has helped coordinate restoration work for Lake Pontchartrain, in southeastern Louisiana.

This legislation authorizes \$99 million through 2010 for restoration projects and studies recommended by the Lake Pontchartrain Management Conference, public education projects to inform the local community of public health concerns, and practical ways to help clean up the Lake. It also clarifies the status of the Management Conference so that protection of Lake Pontchartrain can proceed expeditiously.

I support the bill, and urge all Members to join me in that support.

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Speaker, I urge passage of the bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4470, 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.

TIJUANA RIVER VALLEY ESTUARY AND BEACH SEWAGE CLEANUP ACT OF 2000 AMENDMENT

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4794) to amend the Tijuana River Valley Estuary and Beach Sewage Cleanup Act of 2000 to extend the authorization of appropriations, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 4794

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

SECTION 1. ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN.

(a) SECONDARY TREATMENT.—Section 804(a)(1) of the Tijuana River Valley Estuary and Beach Sewage Cleanup Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 277d-44(a)(1); 114 Stat. 1978) is amended by striking "Subject to" and all that follows through "of this Act," and inserting "Pursuant to Treaty Minute 311 to the Treaty for the Utilization of Waters of the Colorado and Tijuana Rivers and of the Rio Grande, dated February 3, 1944,".

(b) CONTRACT.—Section 804(c) of such Act is amended as follows:

(1) By striking paragraph (1) and inserting the following:

"(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any provision of Federal procurement law, the Commission may enter into a multiyear fee-for-services contract with the owner of a Mexican facility in order to carry out the secondary treatment requirements of subsection (a) and make payments under such contract, subject to the availability of appropriations and subject to the terms of paragraph (2)."

(2) In paragraph (2)(I) by striking "with such annual payment" and all that follows through the period at the end and inserting "including costs associated with the purchase of any insurance or other financial instrument under subparagraph (K). Costs associated with the purchase of such insurance or other financial instrument may be amortized over the term of the contract."

(3) In paragraph (2) by redesignating subparagraphs (J) through (P) as subparagraphs (L) through (R), respectively, and by inserting after subparagraph (I) the following:

"(J) Neither the Commission nor the United States Government shall be liable for payment of any cancellation fees if the Commission cancels the contract.

"(K) The owner of the Mexican facility may purchase insurance or other financial instrument to cover the risk of cancellation of the contract by the Commission. Any such insurance or other financial instrument shall not be provided or guaranteed by the United States Government, and the Government may reserve the right to validate independently the reasonableness of the premium when negotiating the annual service fee with the owner."

(4) By striking paragraphs (2)(L) and (2)(M) (as redesignated by paragraph (3) of this subsection) and inserting the following:

"(L) Transfer of ownership of the Mexican facility to an appropriate governmental entity, other than the United States, if the Commission cancels the contract.

"(M) Transfer of ownership of the Mexican facility to an appropriate governmental entity, other than the United States, if the owner of the Mexican facility fails to perform under the contract."

(5) In paragraph (2)(N) (as redesignated by paragraph (3) of this subsection) by inserting after "competitive procedures" the following: "under applicable law".

SEC. 2. IMPLEMENTATION OF NEW TREATY MINUTE.

Section 805 of the Tijuana River Valley Estuary and Beach Sewage Cleanup Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 277d-45; 114 Stat. 1980) is amended—

(1) in the section heading striking "negotiation of"; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

"(c) IMPLEMENTATION.—In light of the continuing threat to the environment and to public health and safety within the United States as a result of the river and ocean pollution in the San Diego-Tijuana border region, the Commission is requested to give the highest priority to the implementation of Treaty Minute 311 to the Treaty for the Utilization of Waters of the Colorado and Tijuana Rivers and of the Rio Grande, dated February 3, 1944, which establishes a framework for the siting of a treatment facility in Mexico to provide for the secondary treatment of effluent from the IWTP at the Mexican facility, to provide for additional capacity for advanced primary and secondary treatment of additional sewage emanating from the Tijuana River area, Mexico, and to meet the water quality standards of Mexico, the United States, and the State of California consistent with the provisions of this title, in order that the other provisions of this title to address such pollution may be implemented as soon as possible."

SEC. 3. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

Section 806 of the Tijuana River Valley Estuary and Beach Sewage Cleanup Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 277d-46; 114 Stat. 1981) is amended by striking "a total of \$156,000,000 for fiscal years 2001 through 2005" and inserting "such sums as may be necessary".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. COSTELLO) 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.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 4794, to amend the Tijuana River Valley Estuary and Beach Sewage Cleanup Act of 2000.