

coastal waters and those who travel to the shore. According to the latest reports from the Travel Industry Association of America, 109.5 million travelers visit the beach per year. Over 36 percent of those tourists stayed for a week or longer, and 41 percent of the travelers were children—those who could most be adversely affected by contaminated waters.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud the efforts of our Committee colleague, Mr. BISHOP, in proposing this important legislation. As the representative of the northern part of the Long Island Sound, the gentleman is well aware of the importance of clean beaches and public notification of potential health exceedances for residents and visitors to the Sound. I commend the gentleman's hard work in reauthorizing funding for this program.

I support this reauthorization and I urge my colleagues to let "a day at the beach" continue to be a pseudonym for recreational relaxation and enjoyment, not a risk of pollution and ill health.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, as one of the original authors of the BEACH Act five years ago, I rise in support of H.R. 1721 and thank my friend from New York, Mr. BISHOP, for working to move this legislation forward.

The BEACH Act of 2000 took major steps towards improving water quality testing and monitoring at beaches across the country, which is critical to protecting the health of beachgoers. The Act had three provisions: requiring states to adopt current EPA water quality criteria to protect beachgoers from getting sick; requiring the EPA to update these water quality criteria, developed in 1986, with new science and technologies to provide better, faster water testing; and providing grants to states to implement coastal water monitoring programs.

The bill before us extends the authorization for appropriations under this third provision, which expired at the end of this fiscal year, until 2011. This is an important step because every coastal state now has a beach water monitoring program that relies on federal grant funding. However, we need to realize that there are still outstanding issues in the implementation of the other portions of the BEACH Act that merit Congressional involvement.

In particular, EPA was to have completed new water quality criteria by October of this year to make sure that all Americans can feel safe swimming at the beach without worrying that they will get sick. My office has spoken extensively with EPA about this, however, and it seems that this will likely not be completed until 2011. EPA is spending nearly a decade studying water testing methods, waiting to collect data on freshwater beaches before even beginning to test marine beaches.

This delay, likely due at least in part to insufficient funding from the Administration and this Congress, has prevented EPA from helping communities implement rapid water testing methods that could shorten the time for beginning and ending beach closures from two days to merely a few hours. Such an improvement would provide much greater protection to beachgoers and help shore economies by avoiding unnecessary closures.

I intend to work with my colleagues here and with EPA to improve the implementation of the original BEACH Act and keep our coastal waters as clean as possible. In the meantime, I am pleased to see the House extend the grants program through this bill.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BISHOP of Utah). 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. 1721.

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.

FEDERAL WATER POLLUTION CONTROL ACT AMENDMENT

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3963) to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to extend the authorization of appropriations for Long Island Sound.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 3963

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

SECTION 1. LONG ISLAND SOUND AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

Section 119(f) of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1269(f)) is amended by striking "2005" each place it appears and inserting "2010".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DUNCAN) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. BISHOP) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Tennessee.

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 under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 3963 to extend the authorization of appropriations for the Long Island Sound program under the Clean Water Act.

More than 8 million people live within the Long Island Sound watershed. The sound generates more than \$5 billion annually for the regional economy from boating, swimming, and commercial and sport fishing, plus other activities. The Long Island Sound, like many estuaries around the Nation, supports multiple uses and demands and provides habitat for a multitude of fish and wildlife species.

Yet despite its value, the sound is experiencing stress from increasing population growth and development. Storm water and agricultural runoff, wastewater discharges with high nutrient levels, industrial pollution, and commercial and recreational waste all have

led to water quality issues arising in the sound. The Long Island Sound is one of the estuaries in the EPA's national estuary program. A long-term estuary management plan has been developed and approved for the sound. The Long Island Sound program was created in part to help carry out the goals of the sound's estuary management plan.

H.R. 3963 reauthorizes the current level of funding for the Long Island Sound program to continue implementing the sound's estuary management plan. This includes \$40 million annually through fiscal year 2010 for the EPA to make grants to State and local parties for projects and studies aimed at improving water quality in the sound. H.R. 3963 will help the local States and the EPA to restore and protect Long Island Sound, which is so important to the economy of this very important region of our country.

I want to especially congratulate the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SIMMONS) for sponsoring and pushing this bill to the floor here today. I urge all Members to support this bill.

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

Mr. BISHOP of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in full support of H.R. 3963, bipartisan legislation offered by the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SIMMONS). This bill is important to all of us who rely on the sound as an economic engine for our communities and as a clean source of water and food for our families.

It is important to recognize nationally designated estuaries such as Long Island Sound, not only for the economic growth they generate, but also their important role in the global environment. Estuaries provide feeding and nursing grounds for diverse plant life, wild birds and fish, along with other animals.

In addition, countless families and businesses in my district and indeed throughout the northeast rely on Long Island Sound for their livelihood, enjoyment and peace of mind. The sound plays an integral role in not only the 8 million people who live in the immediate vicinity, but also the tens of millions who visit the area each year.

In fact, this dynamic body of water produces \$5.5 billion in revenue for State and local economies in the tourism, fishing and boating industries in the northeast each year.

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I am proud to have participated in developing this legislation, and today's consideration ensures that we will be renewing our commitment to preserving Long Island Sound for future generations of Americans.

On a more personal note, Mr. Speaker, I would encourage each of my colleagues to visit the sound and experience its grandeur. Again, I appreciate

my colleague from Connecticut's leadership and hard work on this legislation, and I urge support of this important bill.

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

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the primary sponsor of this legislation, the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SIMMONS).

Mr. SIMMONS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of this legislation, H.R. 3963, to reauthorize appropriations for the Long Island Sound Restoration Act set to expire at the end of this year. I want to thank Chairman DUNCAN for his very distinguished work in carrying this forward, as well as the chairman of the full committee, Chairman YOUNG. And in particular, I would like to thank my co-chair of the Long Island Sound Caucus, the gentleman from New York (Mr. ISRAEL), who has worked with me in a bipartisan fashion, and also the gentleman from, I believe, the First District of New York (Mr. BISHOP), who actually assisted during the mark-up of this legislation when I had to be away. This is a classic case of Members of this body working across party lines, working across State lines for the common good; and I thank them for that support.

As we have heard, Long Island Sound is a unique estuary in our country with both economic and ecological importance to the region and to the whole Nation. The sound generates between 5 and \$6 billion of revenue on an annual basis and is cherished by the 28 million people who live within 50 miles of it. Think about that: 28 million people, 28 million American citizens live within 50 miles of Long Island Sound. That is 10 percent of the Nation's population, and they can benefit from this wonderful resource.

The Long Island Sound today is challenged by nitrogen loading that leads to hypoxia or low dissolved oxygen. The best way to defeat this problem is to remove significant levels of nitrogen from wastewater through complicated and expensive upgrades to sewage treatment plants. Connecticut, New York, and the Environmental Protection Agency have committed to reducing this nitrogen loading to the sound by 50 percent by 2014. But this cannot be done without this legislation and without the funds that this legislation carries. That is why this legislation is so critically important.

Mr. Speaker, I submit for printing in the RECORD the following three letters as an example of the support that we have back home for this legislation:

EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS,
STATE CAPITOL,
Hartford, CT, October 25, 2005.

Hon. DON YOUNG,
Rayburn House Office Building,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN YOUNG: I am writing to urge your vigorous support for H.R. 3963, a bill to extend the authorization of appropriations from the Long Island Sound Restora-

tion Act of 2000 ("LISRA") (Title IV of Public Law 106-457). As detailed in the attached fact sheet, the approximately 9.7 million dollars in LISRA funds awarded to Connecticut have benefited over 16 distressed communities in Connecticut. The distressed communities have utilized the funds to plan for and design upgrades at their sewage treatment plants to remove nitrogen, the most significant threat to water quality in Long Island Sound.

Long Island Sound (LIS or Sound) is a complex and unique estuary, and Connecticut's most precious environmental resource. The Sound has a 16,000 square mile watershed that is home to approximately 10 percent of the population of the United States. LIS contributes more than \$6 billion to the regional economy, through activities such as boating, commercial and sport fishing, swimming, and beach going. The ports of Bridgeport, New Haven and New London handle national and international freight.

The Sound is facing a number of serious challenges due to the developed nature of its watershed, including excessive nitrogen loading that causes hypoxia or low dissolved oxygen. Connecticut, New York and the Environmental Protection Agency have committed to reducing nitrogen loading to the Sound by 58.5% by 2014 to address the hypoxia. Such reduction can best be accomplished by upgrading sewage treatment plants to remove nitrogen, a process that requires a substantial investment in planning, design and construction.

A federal appropriation under LISRA will leverage Connecticut's state based initiatives to control nitrogen. To date, Connecticut has invested over \$150 million from our state Clean Water Fund to upgrade sewage treatment plants to remove nitrogen. We estimate that demand for funds to control nitrogen in the next two fiscal years will be over \$200 million, with that amount increasing in future fiscal years.

In summary, the Long Island Sound Restoration Act provides a critical federal contribution to projects designed to restore the health of Long Island Sound. Further, the funds are used by Connecticut to assist our distressed communities in doing their part to restore Long Island Sound, an estuary of national significance. Thank you in advance for your support.

Sincerely,

M. JODI RELL,
Governor.

AUDUBON CONNECTICUT,
Southbury, CT, October 26, 2005.

Hon. ROBERT R. SIMMONS,
Cannon House Office Building,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SIMMONS: I am writing you in strong support of House Bill 3963, the reauthorization of the Long Island Sound Restoration Act. This legislation has been vital to the success of efforts to restore water quality in the Sound, an Estuary of National Significance. We thank you for your sponsorship of this important legislation.

The Long Island Sound Restoration Act (the Act) is making a tangible difference in the health of the Sound. With the help of funding provided through the Act, nitrogen loading in Long Island Sound has been reduced by 25%. This is a great start, but still far from meeting the goal of reducing the total enriched nitrogen load to the Sound from point and nonpoint sources within the Connecticut and New York portions of the watershed by 58.5% by 2014, as agreed to by the EPA and the Governors of Connecticut and New York in the 2003 Long Island Sound Agreement.

Re-authorization of the Long Island Sound Restoration Act is critical to continued

water quality improvement in the Sound. The States of Connecticut and New York cannot do it alone.

The Sound is a national, as well as regional resource. Approximately, 10% of the U.S. population lives within 50 miles of the Sound, making it a key recreational area for the region. The Sound provides an oasis of essential wildlife habitat in a densely-populated area of the country. The Sound is also an economic engine, pumping an estimated \$5.5 billion per year into the regional economy. Restoring clean water to the Sound is imperative.

Audubon Connecticut, a part of the National Audubon Society with more than 10,000 members statewide, works to protect birds, other wildlife and their habitat using science, conservation, education and advocacy. Audubon Connecticut is a member of the Long Island Sound Study's Citizen's Advisory Committee and Stewardship Work Group. Together with Audubon New York and Audubon's National Policy Office in D.C., we have launched a joint Long Island Sound Campaign that focuses on improving water quality and habitat, two key areas that will have the most benefit for people and wildlife. We also participate in the Clean Water Jobs Coalition, an alliance of business, labor and environmental organizations that advocates water quality improvements in the Sound.

Sincerely,

ALEXANDRA BRESLIN,
Director of Governmental Affairs.

SAVE THE SOUND,
Norwalk, CT, October 26, 2005.

Hon. ROBERT R. SIMMONS,
Cannon House Office Building,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SIMMONS: The purpose of this letter is to express our strong support of House Bill 3963, the re-authorization of the Long Island Sound Restoration Act. Thank you for sponsoring this important legislation which has been critical to the success of efforts to restore water quality in the Sound, an Estuary of National Significance.

The Long Island Sound Restoration Act (the Act) has had a real and quantifiable impact on the health of the Sound. With the help of funding provided through the Act, nitrogen loading in Long Island Sound has been reduced by 25%. While this represents real progress, we have a long way to go to meet the goal of reducing the total enriched nitrogen load to the Sound from point and nonpoint sources within the Connecticut and New York portions of the watershed by 58.5% by 2014, as agreed to by the EPA and the Governors of Connecticut and New York in the 2003 Long Island Sound Agreement.

Re-authorization of the Long Island Sound Restoration Act is essential to achieving continued water quality improvement in the Sound. The States of Connecticut and New York cannot do it alone.

As you know, Long Island Sound is a significant natural resource, both regionally and on a national level. Approximately 10% of the U.S. population lives within 50 miles of the Sound, making it the signature recreational area for the region. The Sound provides a variety of essential wildlife habitats in a densely populated area of the country. The Sound is also valuable as an economic asset, generating an estimated \$5.5 billion of revenue for the regional economy each year. Restoring clean water to the Sound is imperative to sustaining these critical values.

Save the Sound, a program of Connecticut Fund for the Environment, is dedicated to the protection, restoration and appreciation of Long Island. We are a member of the Long Island Sound Study's Citizen's Advisory Committee and Long Island Sound Stewardship Work Group. We are actively engaged in

habitat restoration projects around the Sound and we manage shoreline cleanups in Connecticut, partnering with citizens, agencies and other organizations to achieve results.

Sincerely,

ROBIN KRIESBERG,
Director, Environmental Projects.

Mr. BISHOP of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. ISRAEL), the co-chair of the Long Island Sound Caucus.

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in very strong support of the reauthorization of the Long Island Sound Restoration Act. I want to begin by thanking Chairman YOUNG and Ranking Member OBERSTAR for their efforts to bring this legislation to the floor today. I want to in particular thank my cochair of the Long Island Sound Taskforce, Mr. SIMMONS, and Mr. BISHOP for their leadership on this important legislation and their ongoing efforts to put politics aside and advance the cause of environmental and economic preservation of the Long Island Sound.

This is, as the gentleman from Connecticut said, a classic example that there is no Republican or Democratic way to protect a body of water. This is something that we need to develop consensus on and this bill does just that. This bill is bipartisan, and it is bicoastal at the same time. I am hoping that when we come back next year we can continue that spirit of bipartisanship and advance the Long Island Sound stewardship program which Mr. BISHOP, Mr. SIMMONS, and I have been working on; and I am confident that the same sense of consensus will prevail.

As we have heard, Mr. Speaker, the Long Island Sound is one of America's great natural wonders. It sustains the diversity of birds, wildlife, marine organisms and serves as a recreational magnet and economic generator to the tens of millions of American who live within 50 miles of its shores. The Long Island Sound is an important part of America's heritage. Nathan Hale slipped across the Long Island Sound, arrived in Huntington. It played a critical part in the American Revolution. It is important to our economy. It is important to our national identity. It is important to our environment.

For thousands of years, the sound has been a productive and a central resource for the human inhabitants occupying its shores. Three New York counties, 24 Connecticut towns border the sound. That puts pressure on this environmental asset in terms of surface run off from some of the most densely populated areas in the country. Over 100 sewage treatment plants discharge a combined one billion gallons of waste into the sound each day.

Thankfully, in 2000 the Long Island Sound Restoration Act authorized the Federal Government to spend \$40 million annually over 5 years to clean the sound. Now we need to continue that important effort.

There is still a lot of work to be done. We have made some progress, but not enough. Nitrogen levels have decreased since 2000, but the sound continues to suffer from significant nitrogen pollution, and high nitrogen levels in the sound lead to decreased levels of dissolved oxygen in the water, a condition called hypoxia, which kills marine life and destroys the delicate ecosystem of the sound.

This reauthorization gives us an opportunity to continue the important work of respecting and preserving the Long Island Sound, not only as a critical environmental asset for the United States of America but also as an important economic generator.

Once again I want to thank the gentleman from New York (Mr. BISHOP), the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SIMMONS), my cochair of the Long Island Sound; the ranking member and chairman for bringing us to this point today and urge support for this bill.

Mr. BISHOP of New York. Mr. Speaker, I will close simply by urging my colleagues to support this very worthwhile and very important piece of legislation. Again I want to thank the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SIMMONS) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. ISRAEL) for their great work on this important bill.

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

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, I will close simply by saying, as has been pointed out, 8 million people live directly within the Long Island Watershed, 28 million people within 50 miles, and millions more visit those areas each year. This is a bill that is very important for the environment and very important for the economy. Both of these bills amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, and both the BEACH Act and the Long Island Sound legislation are good bills that all Members on both sides can be very proud of.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to support H.R. 3963, a bill to extend the authorization of appropriations for the Long Island Sound Program until 2010. A healthy Sound is critical to the communities surrounding the urban watershed as well as to the wildlife within it. I offer my congratulations to my colleagues on the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Mr. BISHOP and Mr. SIMMONS, for working so diligently on this imperative bill.

Long Island Sound stretches 110 miles, from New York City to southern New England. One in ten Americans lives within an hour's drive of the Sound, which provides over \$5 billion for the local economy. Over 120 species of finfish currently inhabit its waters, supplying a diverse population for sport fishing and the seafood industry. The Sound supports its neighboring industries with not only products for sale but also an important means of transportation. It provides aquatic recreation activities, sightseeing, and beautiful views for homes along its shores. Indeed, the Sound is the foundation of livelihood for many.

However, many pressures from residential, industrial, and agricultural activities have caused the natural conditions of this region to

be altered. Economic advances in the watershed have changed land surfaces, reduced open spaces, and restricted access to the Sound, while increasing several types of pollution in the waters.

These harmful effects are not a hopeless ending to the Sound. In the early 1900s, the Sound's population of terrapins was near the point of extinction due to overfarming to feed the nation's appetite for turtle soup. During Prohibition, however, sherry—a key ingredient in turtle soup—was forbidden to be sold. The farming for the terrapins waned and the population was able to rebound to its natural state, even after sherry became legal once more.

Similar progress to restore and protect the populations and quality of the Sound are still necessary, this time in a more direct manner. The Long Island Program contributes this support that is so direly needed.

I support this bill and urge my colleagues to take swift action for its passage.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 3963, which would reauthorize appropriations through fiscal year 2010 for the Office of Management Conference of the Long Island Sound Study and for grants to implement the Long Island Sound Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan.

Protecting and preserving the environment is one of the most important jobs I have as a Member of Congress. We simply will not have a world to live in if we continue our neglectful ways.

Long Island Sound, which contributes more than \$5 billion annually to the regional economy, is one of the most populated and visited areas of our country. In fact, approximately 10 percent of the American population lives within the Long Island Sound watershed.

It is a source of livelihood, nourishment and recreation for many in Connecticut and elsewhere, and it is critical that we treat it well.

In the interest of preserving open space, increasing access to the Sound, and protecting and managing important habitats, the reauthorization of this funding is needed to identify and protect coastal areas along this precious estuary with significant biological, scientific or recreational value.

I am pleased this legislation is being considered so we ensure funding for this critical habitat will continue to be preserved and urge passage of the legislation.

Mr. DUNCAN. 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 Tennessee (Mr. DUNCAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3963.

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.

ETHICS IN GOVERNMENT ACT OF 1978 AMENDMENT

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4311) to amend section 105(b)(3) of the Ethics in Government Act of 1978.

The Clerk read as follows: