

I am pleased that the Senate bill strengthens the civil liberties protections of the PATRIOT Act, and provides for increased judicial oversight of the Justice Department as it uses these powers.

The bill before us enacts a number of much-needed procedural changes that will enhance judicial oversight of Section 215 orders. Under current law, the recipient of a Section 215 order lacks an explicit statutory right to petition the FISA (Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act) court to modify or set aside either the production order or the non-disclosure requirement. The conference report provides that recipients have an explicit right to challenge the legality of the Section 215 order in certain FISA courts. This bill further expands the individual's right to challenge the government assertion that a business records search must remain secret.

The legislation also reforms the FBI process used to issue National Security Letters (NSL). Unlike current law, the conference report explicitly permits recipients of NSLs to consult with an attorney to challenge the letter in court. This bill further strengthens individual rights by allowing the recipient of an NSL to consult with an attorney in secret, and does not require the recipient to disclose the name of the attorney to the FBI.

Finally, this bill provides that public, academic, or research libraries that offer Internet access or other electronic research tools are not considered to be electronic communication services, and therefore are not subject to search by an NSL.

ROCKY MOUNTAIN NATIONAL PARK WILDERNESS AND THE INDIAN PEAKS WILDERNESS EX- PANSION ACT

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 9, 2006

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing a revised bill to designate as wilderness most of the lands within the Rocky Mountain National Park, in Colorado.

Since introduction of my previous bill (H.R. 3193), I have heard from a number of local communities and other interests on the western side of the park regarding some issues and accommodations they would like to see reflected in the bill. The bill I am introducing today reflects that input.

This legislation will provide important protection and management direction for some truly remarkable country, adding well over 200,000 acres in the park to the National Wilderness Preservation System. The bill is similar to one previously introduced by my predecessor, Representative David Skaggs, and one I introduced in the 107th and 108th Congresses. Those bills in turn were based on similar measures earlier proposed, including some by former Senator Bill Armstrong and others.

Over a number of years my predecessor and I have worked with the National Park Service and others to refine the boundaries of the areas proposed for wilderness designation and consulted closely with many interested parties in Colorado, including local officials and both the Northern Colorado Water Conservancy District and the St. Vrain & Left

Hand Ditch Water Conservancy District. These consultations provided the basis for many of the provisions of the bill I am introducing today, particularly regarding the status of existing water facilities.

Unlike these previous bills, the new bill includes designation as wilderness of more than 700 acres in the Twin Sisters area south of Estes Park. These lands were acquired by the United States and made part of the park after submission to Congress of the original wilderness recommendation for the park in the 1970s, and so were not included in that recommendation. They are lands of a wilderness character and their designation will not conflict with any current uses.

Since I introduced the earlier bill in this Congress, the communities bordering the park have been considering this wilderness proposal. The communities and local governments along the eastern side of the Park have expressed support for this proposal, including the Town of Estes Park and Larimer County.

On the west side, the Town of Grand Lake and Grand County requested that about 650 acres inward from the Park boundary around the Town be omitted from the wilderness designation in order to allow the Park to respond to potential forest fire threats. The revised bill reflects this change.

In addition, the Town of Grand Lake, Grand County and the Headwaters Trails Alliance (a group composed of local communities in Grand County that seeks to establish opportunities for mountain biking) requested that an additional non-wilderness area remain along the western park boundary, running south along Lake Granby from the Town to the park's southern boundary. This request was made to allow the National Park Service to retain the option of authorizing construction of a possible future mountain bike route within this part of the park.

The revised bill introduced today responds to that request by omitting from wilderness an area, called the East Shore Trail Area, in this part of the park. However, it provides that the area will become wilderness 25 years after enactment unless a bicycle trail has been constructed before then.

During the discussions of the previous version of the bill, it was suggested that the existing Indian Peaks Wilderness Area (within the Arapaho National Forest) should be expanded.

The new bill adopts that suggestion by inclusion of a new section that would expand the Indian Peaks Wilderness Area by 1,000 acres in the area south of the park and north of Lake Granby. The lands involved are currently managed as part of the Arapaho National Recreation Area, which accordingly would be reduced by about 1,000 acres.

In addition, this section of the revised bill would amend the original Indian Peaks Wilderness Act to reflect this additional acreage as well as the 2,232-acre Ranch Creek Addition and the 963-acre Fourth of July Addition to the Indian Peaks Wilderness Area that were made in the James Peak Wilderness and Protection Area Act in 2001. These changes will be reflected by a new official map for both areas which will establish the precise location of the Indian Peaks Wilderness Area boundary north of Lake Granby and the corresponding boundary change to the Arapaho National Recreation Area.

Finally, a new section has been added to authorize the park to lease a property called

the Leiffer Property. This 11-acre property was donated to the National Park Service in 1977, under terms requiring it to be retained by the Park Service. It is an isolated tract outside the boundaries of the park and has two buildings, including a house that is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Park Service would like to have the option of leasing the tract, but their leasing authority is limited to "property administered . . . as part of the National Park System," and this property does not qualify because it is neither within nor contiguous to the park's boundaries. The new section would allow the Park Service to lease the property as if it were located inside or contiguous to the park.

The wilderness designation for the park will cover some 94 percent of the park, including Longs Peaks and other major mountains along the Great Continental Divide, glacial cirques and snow fields, broad expanses of alpine tundra and wet meadows, old-growth forests, and hundreds of lakes and streams, all untrammelled by human structures or passage. Indeed, examples of all the natural ecosystems that make up the splendor of the Park are included in the wilderness that would be designated by this bill.

The features of these lands and waters that make Rocky Mountain National Park a true gem in our national parks system also make it an outstanding wilderness candidate.

The wilderness boundaries will assure continued access for use of existing roadways, buildings and developed areas, privately owned land, and areas where additional facilities and roadwork will improve park management and visitor services. In addition, specific provisions are included to assure that there will be no adverse effects on continue use of existing water facilities.

This bill is based on National Park Service recommendations, prepared more than 25 years ago and presented to Congress by President Richard Nixon. It seems to me that, in that time, there has been sufficient study, consideration, and refinement of those recommendations so that Congress can proceed with this legislation. I believe that this bill constitutes a fair and complete proposal, sufficiently providing for the legitimate needs of the public at large and all interested groups, and deserves to be enacted.

It took more than a decade before the Colorado delegation and the Congress were finally able, in 1993, to pass a statewide national forest wilderness bill. Since then, action has been completed on bills designating wilderness in the Spanish Peaks area of the San Isabel National Forest as well as in the Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park, the Gunnison Gorge, the Black Ridge portion of the Colorado Canyons National Conservation Area, and the James Peak area of the Arapaho-Roosevelt National Forests.

We now need to continue making progress regarding wilderness designations for deserving lands, including other public lands in our state that are managed by the Bureau of Land Management. And the time is ripe for finally resolving the status of the lands within Rocky Mountain National Park that are dealt with in the bill I am introducing today.

All Coloradans know that the question of possible impacts on water rights can be a primary point of contention in Congressional debates over designating wilderness areas. So,

it's very important to understand that the question of water rights for Rocky Mountain National Park wilderness is entirely different from many considered before, and is far simpler.

To begin with, it has long been recognized under the laws of the United States and Colorado, including a decision of the Colorado Supreme Court, that Rocky Mountain National Park already has extensive federal reserved water rights arising from the creation of the national park itself.

This is not, so far as I have been able to find out, a controversial decision, because there is a widespread consensus that there should be no new water projects developed within Rocky Mountain National Park. And, since the park sits astride the continental divide, there's no higher land around from which streams flow into the park, so there is no possibility of any upstream diversions. And it's important to emphasize that in any event water rights associated with wilderness would amount only to guarantees that water will continue to flow through and out of the park as it always has. This preserves the natural environment of the park, but it doesn't affect downstream water use.

The bottom line is that once water leaves the park, it will continue to be available for diversion and use under Colorado law regardless of whether or not lands within the park are designated as wilderness.

These legal and practical realities are reflected in my bill—as in my predecessor's—by inclusion of a finding that because the park already has these extensive reserved rights to water, there is no need for any additional reservation of such right, and an explicit disclaimer that the bill effects any such reservation.

Some may ask, why should we designate wilderness in a national park? Isn't park protection the same as wilderness, or at least as good? The answer is that the wilderness designation will give an important additional level of protection to most of the park.

Our national park system was created, in part, to recognize and preserve prime examples of outstanding landscape. At Rocky Mountain National Park in particular, good Park Service management over the past 83 years has kept most of the park in a natural condition. And all the lands that are covered by this bill are currently being managed, in essence, to protect their wilderness character. Formal wilderness designation will no longer leave this question to the discretion of the Park Service, but will make it clear that within the designated areas there will never be roads, visitor facilities, or other manmade features that interfere with the spectacular natural beauty and wildness of the mountains.

This kind of protection is especially important for a park like Rocky Mountain, which is relatively small by western standards. As nearby land development and alteration has accelerated in recent years, the pristine nature of the park's backcountry becomes an increasingly rare feature of Colorado's landscape.

Further, Rocky Mountain National Park's popularity demands definitive and permanent protection for wild areas against possible pressures for development within the park. While only about one tenth the size of Yellowstone National Park, Rocky Mountain sees nearly the same number of visitors each year as does our first national park.

At the same time, designating these carefully selected portions of Rocky Mountain as

wilderness will make other areas, now restricted under interim wilderness protection management, available for overdue improvements to park roads and visitor facilities.

So, Mr. Speaker, this bill will protect some of our nation's finest wild lands. It will protect existing rights. It will not limit any existing opportunity for new water development. And it will affirm our commitment in Colorado to preserving the very features that make our State such a remarkable place to live. So, I think the bill deserves prompt enactment.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. SUE WILKINS MYRICK

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 9, 2006

Mrs. MYRICK. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to participate in the following votes. If I had been present, I would have voted as follows:

February 28, 2006: Rollcall vote 14, on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 1096, to establish the Thomas Edison National Historical Park, I would have voted "aye." Rollcall vote 15, on the motion to suspend the rules and agree to H. Res. 668—celebrating the 40th anniversary of Texas Western's 1966 NCAA Basketball Championship, I would have voted "aye." Rollcall vote 16, on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 1259—to authorize the President to award a gold medal on behalf of the Congress, I would have voted "aye."

March 1, 2006: Rollcall vote 17, on the motion to suspend the rules and agree to H. Res. 357—honoring Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, I would have voted "aye."

March 2, 2006: Rollcall vote 18, on ordering the previous question, H. Res. 702—providing for consideration of H.R. 4167, to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act, I would have voted "aye."

TRIBUTE TO FAMILY-LIFE TV

HON. PHIL ENGLISH

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 9, 2006

Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize and honor the 30th Anniversary of Family-Life TV. Throughout its existence, Family-Life TV has offered quality religious, entertainment, and informational programming and it is my hope that it will continue to provide these services long into the future.

Founded on March 7, 1976, Family-Life TV was the brainchild of David J. Croyle. Too young to legally run the station himself, David's father, Reverend Robert F. Croyle, served as the station's first President. This role passed to David upon his father's death in 2001.

The station initially broadcasted three hours each day and only reached cable subscribers in central Armstrong County. Since that time, Family-Life TV has grown rapidly. It now offers 24 hour programming and reaches cable subscribers well beyond its initial range. Additionally, Family-Life TV has ventured into the realm of the internet, touching the lives of indi-

viduals from over 30 different nations worldwide.

Family-Life TV has become the thread that binds the Armstrong community together and ties it to the world. For this, its record of impeccable quality programming, and its 30 years of broadcasting, Family-Life TV deserves thanks and congratulations.

Mr. Speaker, I hope my fellow members will join me at this time, and once again congratulate Family-Life TV on its 30th Anniversary and wish it a long and successful future.

OPPOSITION TO LIMITATIONS ON RELIGIOUS FREEDOM IN ROMANIA

HON. WALTER B. JONES

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 9, 2006

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my opposition to any limitations on religious freedom in Romania.

The religion bill that recently passed the Romanian Senate, discriminates against virtually all Christians except the dominant Orthodox Church. The bill that now stands before the Chamber of Deputies would in many ways treat Evangelical Protestants and Catholics as inferior.

The Romanian bill would restrict minority religious education and the use of church cemeteries, and would not protect private legal rights for all religious denominations or allow tax incentives to donors.

The spokesperson for a leading human rights group in Bucharest said "the draft law infringes many laws and the Constitution of Romania, as well as international human rights commitments to which Romania is subject" and that "it would close the possibility for religious communities, such as the Greek Catholic churches, to reclaim any property in the hands of other faiths." The head of the Romanian Evangelical Alliance, Dr. Paul Negrut, pronounced NAY GROOTS, with whom I met two weeks ago said: "this is a very critical time for religious liberty in Romania."

Because we as Americans have to stand for religious freedom everywhere, we are especially concerned about this development in an emerging democracy that is a friend and ally of the U.S.

As one who has championed the Houses of Worship bill in the U.S. Congress, it is a personal matter of importance to me.

I urge the Romanian President and the Romanian Parliament to reject this discriminatory religious bill to help protect freedom of religion and to help improve U.S.-Romanian relations.

CALLING FOR THE IMMEDIATE CONSIDERATION OF THE "FAIR LABOR STANDARDS ACT OF 2005"

HON. JOE BACA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 9, 2006

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to call for the immediate passage of H. Res. 614, a bill which allows for the consideration of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 2005, to provide for an increase in the Federal minimum wage.