

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

CEILING INCREASE ON FEDERAL SHARE OF WATER RECLAMATION PROJECT

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1175) to amend the Reclamation Wastewater and Groundwater Study and Facilities Act to increase the ceiling on the Federal share of the costs of phase I of the Orange County, California, Regional Water Reclamation Project.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1175

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

SECTION 1. CEILING INCREASE ON FEDERAL SHARE OF WATER RECLAMATION PROJECT.

Section 1631(d) of the Reclamation Wastewater and Groundwater Study and Facilities Act (43 U.S.C. 390h-13(d)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1) by striking “paragraph (2)” and inserting “paragraphs (2) and (3)”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(3) The Federal share of the costs of the project authorized by section 1624 shall not exceed the following:

“(A) \$22,000,000 for fiscal year 2007.

“(B) \$24,200,000 for fiscal year 2008.

“(C) \$26,620,000 for fiscal year 2009.

“(D) \$29,282,000 for fiscal year 2010.

“(E) \$32,210,200 for fiscal year 2011.

“(F) \$35,431,220 for fiscal year 2012.

“(G) \$38,974,342 for fiscal year 2013.

“(H) \$42,871,776 for fiscal year 2014.

“(I) \$47,158,953 for fiscal year 2015.

“(J) \$51,874,849 for fiscal year 2016.”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Mrs. CHRISTENSEN) and the gentleman from Utah (Mr. CANNON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands.

□ 1500

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 days 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 gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands?

There was no objection.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I would first like to commend my friend and our colleague from California, Representative LORETTA SANCHEZ, for her dedicated and hard work on this legislation over several Congresses.

The purpose of H.R. 1175, as introduced by Ms. SANCHEZ, is to amend the

Reclamation Wastewater and Groundwater Study and Facilities Act to increase the Federal cost share of phase one of the Orange County, California Regional Water Reclamation Project.

The project authorized by H.R. 1175 will supplement existing water supplies by providing a new, reliable, high quality source of water to recharge the Orange County Groundwater Basin and protect it from further degradation due to seawater intrusion.

I thank Ms. SANCHEZ for her efforts on this legislation and urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 1175.

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

Mr. CANNON. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1175 and yield myself such time as I may consume.

The Democratic bill manager has adequately explained the bill. This legislation has been cosponsored by five of my Republican colleagues, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. GARY MILLER of California, Mr. ROHRBACHER, Mr. ROYCE and Mr. CAMPBELL of California.

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1175, a bill that I have introduced for two consecutive Congresses. I am pleased to see that the bill is on the Suspension Calendar today. I would like to thank the House leadership for making that happen.

H.R. 1175 would increase the ceiling on the federal share of the Orange County, California, Regional Water Reclamation Project—from \$20 million to \$51,874,849. This project will ultimately allow Orange County to complete its innovative groundwater replenishment system, which is designed to reuse advanced treated wastewater to recharge the aquifer in northern Orange County.

This aquifer is the primary source of drinking water for over 144,000 families in Orange County each year, serving about 2.3 million residents from north and central Orange County. This reclamation effort has the potential of creating a new water supply of 72,000 acre-feet per year.

The OC Groundwater Replenishment Project is an innovative program which has drawn national and international attention. Many U.S. states and foreign nations—including Japan, Korea, Taiwan—have come to Orange County to look at our tertiary cleaning system. They have observed that reusing recycled water—especially important in the arid west—will help preserve and recharge overdrawn river and groundwater supplies, and will help protect our environment from unexpected scarcity of water.

What this bill does is to increase the federal share of the project, bringing it closer to the 25 percent level, the level at which almost every other reclamation project is funded in the Reclamation Wastewater and Groundwater Study and Facilities Act of 1992 and the Reclamation Cycling and Water Conservation Act.

The project is not just important to Orange County, California, but also to the entire western United States. By recycling our own water, we will not rely so heavily on the Colorado River Aqueduct or water from the San Francisco Bay Delta.

Members from both sides of the aisle recognize the need for this project and have been

consistently supportive of this effort. I would like to thank, in particular, my colleagues from Orange County who are all original cosponsors of this bill. I appreciate their continued support for this legislation, and this important project.

Let me thank, again, the gentleman from West Virginia, Mr. RAHALL, for his support, as well as Ranking Member YOUNG, Subcommittee Chairwoman NAPOLITANO and Ranking Member MCMORRIS for their overwhelming support of H.R. 1175.

Finally, let me thank Denis Bilodeau, Irv Pickler, Virginia Grebbien, Philip Anthony, Craig Miller, and everyone affiliated with the Orange County Water District and Orange County Sanitation District for their hard work and leadership in groundwater treatment and recycling. Their innovation has put Orange County at the forefront of water recycling and groundwater replenishment technology. I thank them for all they continue to do for Orange County.

I urge my colleagues to support this measure.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Mrs. CHRISTENSEN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1175.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

LOWER RIO GRANDE VALLEY WATER RESOURCES CONSERVATION AND IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2007

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 361) to amend the Lower Rio Grande Valley Water Resources Conservation and Improvement Act of 2000 to authorize additional projects and activities under that Act, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 361

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Lower Rio Grande Valley Water Resources Conservation and Improvement Act of 2007”.

SEC. 2. AUTHORIZATION OF ADDITIONAL PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES UNDER THE LOWER RIO GRANDE WATER CONSERVATION AND IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM.

(a) ADDITIONAL PROJECTS.—Section 4(a) of the Lower Rio Grande Valley Water Resources Conservation and Improvement Act of 2000 (Public Law 106-576; 114 Stat. 3067) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(20) In Cameron County, Texas, Bayview Irrigation District No. 11, water conservation and improvement projects as identified in the March 3, 2004, engineering report by NRS Consulting Engineers at a cost of \$1,425,219.

“(21) In the Cameron County, Texas, Brownsville Irrigation District, water conservation and improvement projects as identified in the February 11, 2004 engineering report by NRS Consulting Engineers at a cost of \$722,100.

“(22) In the Cameron County, Texas Harlingen Irrigation District No. 1, water conservation and improvement projects as identified in the March, 2004, engineering report by Axiom-Blair Engineering at a cost of \$4,173,950.

“(23) In the Cameron County, Texas, Cameron County Irrigation District No. 2, water conservation and improvement projects as identified in the February 11, 2004 engineering report by NRS Consulting Engineers at a cost of \$8,269,576.

“(24) In the Cameron County, Texas, Cameron County Irrigation District No. 6, water conservation and improvement projects as identified in an engineering report by Turner Collie Braden, Inc., at a cost of \$5,607,300.

“(25) In the Cameron County, Texas, Adams Gardens Irrigation District No. 19, water conservation and improvement projects as identified in the March, 2004 engineering report by Axiom-Blair Engineering at a cost of \$2,500,000.

“(26) In the Hidalgo and Cameron Counties, Texas, Hidalgo and Cameron Counties Irrigation District No. 9, water conservation and improvement projects as identified by the February 11 engineering report by NRS Consulting Engineers at a cost of \$8,929,152.

“(27) In the Hidalgo and Willacy Counties, Texas, Delta Lake Irrigation District, water conservation and improvement projects as identified in the March, 2004 engineering report by Axiom-Blair Engineering at a cost of \$8,000,000.

“(28) In the Hidalgo County, Texas, Hidalgo County Irrigation District No. 2, a water conservation and improvement project identified in the engineering reports attached to a letter dated February 11, 2004, from the district's general manager, at a cost of \$5,312,475.

“(29) In the Hidalgo County, Texas, Hidalgo County Irrigation District No. 1, water conservation and improvement projects identified in an engineering report dated March 5, 2004 by Melden and Hunt, Inc. at a cost of \$5,595,018.

“(30) In the Hidalgo County, Texas, Hidalgo County Irrigation District No. 6, water conservation and improvement projects as identified in the March, 2004, engineering report by Axiom-Blair Engineering at a cost of \$3,450,000.

“(31) In the Hidalgo County, Texas Santa Cruz Irrigation District No. 15, water conservation and improvement projects as identified in an engineering report dated March 5, 2004 by Melden and Hunt at a cost of \$4,609,000.

“(32) In the Hidalgo County, Texas, Engelman Irrigation District, water conservation and improvement projects as identified in an engineering report dated March 5, 2004 by Melden and Hunt, Inc. at a cost of \$2,251,480.

“(33) In the Hidalgo County, Texas, Valley Acres Water District, water conservation and improvement projects as identified in an engineering report dated March, 2004 by Axiom-Blair Engineering at a cost of \$500,000.

“(34) In the Hudspeth County, Texas, Hudspeth County Conservation and Reclamation District No. 1, water conservation and improvement projects as identified in the March, 2004, engineering report by Axiom-Blair Engineering at a cost of \$1,500,000.

“(35) In the El Paso County, Texas, El Paso County Water Improvement District No. 1, water conservation and improvement projects as identified in the March, 2004, en-

gineering report by Axiom-Blair Engineering at a cost of \$10,500,000.

“(36) In the Hidalgo County, Texas, Donna Irrigation District, water conservation and improvement projects identified in an engineering report dated March 22, 2004 by Melden and Hunt, Inc. at a cost of \$2,500,000.

“(37) In the Hidalgo County, Texas, Hidalgo County Irrigation District No. 16, water conservation and improvement projects identified in an engineering report dated March 22, 2004 by Melden and Hunt, Inc. at a cost of \$2,800,000.

“(38) The United Irrigation District of Hidalgo County water conservation and improvement projects as identified in a March 2004 engineering report by Sigler Winston, Greenwood and Associates at a cost of \$6,067,021.”

(b) INCLUSION OF ACTIVITIES TO CONSERVE WATER OR IMPROVE SUPPLY; TRANSFERS AMONG PROJECTS.—Section 4 of such Act (Public Law 106-576; 114 Stat. 3067) is further amended by redesignating subsection (c) as subsection (e), and by inserting after subsection (b) the following:

“(c) INCLUSION OF ACTIVITIES TO CONSERVE WATER OR IMPROVE SUPPLY.—In addition to the activities identified in the engineering reports referred to in subsection (a), each project that the Secretary conducts or participates in under subsection (a) may include any of the following:

“(1) The replacement of irrigation canals and lateral canals with buried pipelines.

“(2) The impervious lining of irrigation canals and lateral canals.

“(3) Installation of water level, flow measurement, pump control, and telemetry systems.

“(4) The renovation and replacement of pumping plants.

“(5) Other activities that will result in the conservation of water or an improved supply of water.

“(d) TRANSFERS AMONG PROJECTS.—Of amounts made available for a project referred to in any of paragraphs (20) through (38) of subsection (a), the Secretary may transfer and use for another such project up to 10 percent.”

SEC. 3. REAUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS FOR LOWER RIO GRANDE CONSTRUCTION.

Section 4(e) of the Lower Rio Grande Valley Water Resources Conservation and Improvement Act of 2000 (Public Law 106-576; 114 Stat. 3067), as redesignated by section 2(b) of this Act, is further amended by inserting before the period the following: “for projects referred to in paragraphs (1) through (19) of subsection (a), and \$42,356,145 (2004 dollars) for projects referred to in paragraphs (20) through (38) of subsection (a)”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Mrs. CHRISTENSEN) and the gentleman from Utah (Mr. CANNON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 days 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 gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands?

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I would like to first commend our colleague from Texas, and my classmate, Representative HINOJOSA, for his dedication to and hard work on this legislation.

The purpose of H.R. 361 is to amend the Lower Rio Grande Valley Water Resources Conservation and Improvement Act of 2000 to authorize additional projects and related activities.

H.R. 361, when enacted, would authorize limited Federal assistance for 19 projects aimed at conserving water or improving water supply. This would include the replacement of irrigation canals and lateral canals, the lining of channels and the installation of water level, flow measurement, pump control, and remote control systems.

This legislation would help to accomplish a more sustainable water supply by enhancing existing water distribution systems and monitoring water resources.

I thank Mr. HINOJOSA for his efforts on this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask unanimous consent to have his remarks inserted into the RECORD, and I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 361.

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

Mr. CANNON. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 361 and yield myself such time as I may consume.

The gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands has appropriately explained the bill, which has passed the bill in the last two Congresses in one form or another. I support the bill.

Mr. HINOJOSA. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 361, a bill that will authorize a number of projects which will improve irrigation and water conservation throughout the Rio Grande Valley. I want to thank Chairman RAHALL and Chairwoman NAPOLITANO as well as my colleagues from the Texas Border Region, Congressmen ORTIZ, REYES, RODRIGUEZ, and CUELLAR for their support in bringing this vitally important legislation onto the House floor.

I represent a region of the country that is experiencing phenomenal population growth yet is subject to severe periodic droughts. The 2000 Census showed that the population of Hidalgo County, in my district, increased by 48 percent. On the Mexican side of the border, millions have come to work in the maquiladoras and to take advantage of the economic boom that has come from NAFTA.

This growth has placed an enormous strain on water delivery systems throughout the Texas-Mexico border region. Water intended for irrigating crops flows through open dirt ditches where much of the precious water supply is lost to seepage and evaporation. Municipalities also rely on the water from these inefficient and outdated irrigation delivery systems to meet the water needs of growing communities.

H.R. 361 will authorize 19 projects that will allow border water districts to continue upgrading and modernizing our antiquated water delivery systems through the installation of water pipes and canal linings. Similar projects were authorized in the 106th and 107th Congresses.

The Rio Grande Valley has already made a great deal of progress because this has been a collaborative effort. The irrigation district have provided matching funds. The Texas Water Development Board and Texas A&M University have paid for many of the engineering studies. Federal appropriators have provided more than \$10 million. As a result, we are seeing water savings of almost 80 percent in the projects that have been completed.

Most importantly, Federal authorization has allowed us to tap into the resources of the North American Development Bank. To date, NADBank has approved almost \$24 million for these projects and passage of H.R. 361 will make these new projects eligible for NADBank assistance.

These funds are being put to good use. Numerous projects are already underway and some are almost completed.

When the metering system is fully installed, irrigation districts will have a much clearer picture of water usage and water savings. This data will be vital to improving water management throughout the region.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Mrs. CHRISTENSEN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 361.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

SENATOR PAUL SIMON STUDY ABROAD FOUNDATION ACT OF 2007

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1469) to establish the Senator Paul Simon Study Abroad Foundation under the authorities of the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1469

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Senator Paul Simon Study Abroad Foundation Act of 2007".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress makes the following findings:

(1) According to President George W. Bush, "America's leadership and national security rest on our commitment to educate and prepare our youth for active engagement in the international community."

(2) According to former President William J. Clinton, "Today, the defense of United States interests, the effective management of global issues, and even an understanding of our Nation's diversity require ever-greater contact with, and understanding of, people and cultures beyond our borders."

(3) Congress authorized the establishment of the Commission on the Abraham Lincoln

Study Abroad Fellowship Program pursuant to section 104 of the Miscellaneous Appropriations and Offsets Act, 2004 (division H of Public Law 108-199). Pursuant to its mandate, the Lincoln Commission has submitted to Congress and the President a report of its recommendations for greatly expanding the opportunity for students at institutions of higher education in the United States to study abroad, with special emphasis on studying in developing nations.

(4) According to the Lincoln Commission, "[s]tudy abroad is one of the major means of producing foreign language speakers and enhancing foreign language learning" and, for that reason, "is simply essential to the [N]ation's security".

(5) Studies consistently show that United States students score below their counterparts in other advanced countries on indicators of international knowledge. This lack of global literacy is a national liability in an age of global trade and business, global interdependence, and global terror.

(6) Americans believe that it is important for their children to learn other languages, study abroad, attend a college where they can interact with international students, learn about other countries and cultures, and generally be prepared for the global age.

(7) In today's world, it is more important than ever for the United States to be a responsible, constructive leader that other countries are willing to follow. Such leadership cannot be sustained without an informed citizenry with significant knowledge and awareness of the world.

(8) Study abroad has proven to be a very effective means of imparting international and foreign-language competency to students.

(9) In any given year, only approximately one percent of all students enrolled in United States institutions of higher education study abroad.

(10) Less than 10 percent of the students who graduate from United States institutions of higher education with bachelors degrees have studied abroad.

(11) Far more study abroad must take place in developing countries. Ninety-five percent of the world's population growth over the next 50 years will occur outside of Europe. Yet in the academic year 2004-2005, 60 percent of United States students studying abroad studied in Europe, and 45 percent studied in four countries—the United Kingdom, Italy, Spain, and France—according to the Institute of International Education.

(12) The Final Report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States (The 9/11 Commission Report) recommended that the United States increase support for "scholarship, exchange, and library programs". The 9/11 Public Discourse Project, successor to the 9/11 Commission, noted in its November 14, 2005, status report that this recommendation was "unfulfilled," and stated that "The U.S. should increase support for scholarship and exchange programs, our most powerful tool to shape attitudes over the course of a generation." In its December 5, 2005, Final Report on the 9/11 Commission Recommendations, the 9/11 Public Discourse Project gave the government a grade of "D" for its implementation of this recommendation.

(13) Investing in a national study abroad program would help turn a grade of "D" into an "A" by equipping United States students to communicate United States values and way of life through the unique dialogue that takes place among citizens from around the world when individuals study abroad.

(14) An enhanced national study abroad program could help further the goals of other United States Government initiatives to promote educational, social, and political reform and the status of women in developing

and reforming societies around the world, such as the Middle East Partnership Initiative.

(15) To complement such worthwhile Federal programs and initiatives as the Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship Program, the National Security Education Program, and the National Security Language Initiative, a broad-based undergraduate study abroad program is needed that will make many more study abroad opportunities accessible to all undergraduate students, regardless of their field of study, ethnicity, socio-economic status, or gender.

SEC. 3. PURPOSES.

The purposes of this Act are—

(1) to significantly enhance the global competitiveness and international knowledge base of the United States by ensuring that more United States students have the opportunity to acquire foreign language skills and international knowledge through significantly expanded study abroad;

(2) to enhance the foreign policy capacity of the United States by significantly expanding and diversifying the talent pool of individuals with non-traditional foreign language skills and cultural knowledge in the United States who are available for recruitment by United States foreign affairs agencies, legislative branch agencies, and non-governmental organizations involved in foreign affairs activities;

(3) to ensure that an increasing portion of study abroad by United States students will take place in nontraditional study abroad destinations such as the People's Republic of China, countries of the Middle East region, and developing countries; and

(4) to create greater cultural understanding of the United States by exposing foreign students and their families to United States students in countries that have not traditionally hosted large numbers of United States students.

SEC. 4. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term "appropriate congressional committees" means—

(A) the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives; and

(B) the Committee on Foreign Relations and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate.

(2) BOARD.—The term "Board" means the Board of Directors of the Foundation established pursuant to section 5(d).

(3) CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER.—The term "Chief Executive Officer" means the chief executive officer of the Foundation appointed pursuant to section 5(c).

(4) FOUNDATION.—The term "Foundation" means the Senator Paul Simon Study Abroad Foundation established by section 5(a).

(5) INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—The term "institution of higher education" has the meaning given the term in section 101(a) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001(a)).

(6) NONTRADITIONAL STUDY ABROAD DESTINATION.—The term "nontraditional study abroad destination" means a location that is determined by the Foundation to be a less common destination for United States students who study abroad.

(7) STUDY ABROAD.—The term "study abroad" means an educational program of study, work, research, internship, or combination thereof that is conducted outside the United States and that carries academic credit toward fulfilling the participating student's degree requirements.

(8) UNITED STATES.—The term "United States" means any of the several States, the