

noted that the committee report includes \$1 million for land acquisition in the Columbia Gorge National Scenic Area requested by our colleagues, Mr. BLUMENAUER of Oregon and Mr. BAIRD of Washington. I would like to clarify with the chairman that it is not his intent that these funds would be spent on land acquisition in the part of the scenic area that I represent.

Again, I would be happy to yield to the chairman on this question.

Mr. DICKS. That is correct. The earmark in the committee report is for land acquisition in areas of the scenic area represented by the two gentlemen who requested the funding.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. I thank the chairman. I appreciate very much your comments. I look forward to working with you on issues related to the implementation of the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Act.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Rules Committee, by a voice vote, approved an open rule for the consideration of the Department of Interior, Environment and Related Agencies Appropriation Act. I am pleased that this rule keeps with the longstanding tradition of allowing an open debate on spending bills. I support House Resolution 514.

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

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, the underlying legislation moves our country in a better direction, providing improvements long overdue to our entire Nation. Our investments today will ensure that our children and grandchildren will have water and air that is cleaner, natural landscapes and historic structures that are protected, and arts and humanity centers that are bolstered.

This bill fulfills past due obligations to our underserved communities and to our entire planet. Republicans in the last Congress and in the current administration have continued to fail to effectively fund the environmental and conservation needs of the American people and its natural resources.

Today, under the Democratic leadership, we are reversing this trend and restoring funding to vital programs and agencies, fulfilling our promise to this Nation and to this Earth. The investments this bill makes are of vital importance today, and their benefits will be felt for years to come.

I urge a "yes" vote on the previous question and on the rule.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The previous question was ordered.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. DICKS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 2643, and

that I may include tabular material on the same.

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

There was no objection.

#### PERMISSION TO REDUCE TIME FOR ELECTRONIC VOTING DURING CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2643, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2008

Mr. DICKS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that, during consideration of H.R. 2643 pursuant to House Resolution 514, the Chair may reduce to 2 minutes the minimum time for electronic voting under clause 6 of rule XVIII and clauses 8 and 9 of rule XX.

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

There was no objection.

#### DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2008

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 514 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 2643.

The Chair designates the gentleman from Ohio (Mrs. JONES) as Chairman of the Committee of the Whole, and requests the gentleman from New York (Mr. McNULTY) to assume the chair temporarily.

□ 1106

#### IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 2643) making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2008, and for other purposes, with Mr. McNULTY in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered read the first time.

The gentleman from Washington (Mr. DICKS) and the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. TIAHRT) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Washington.

Mr. DICKS. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I have waited 30 years for the honor of presenting an Interior and Environment bill to the House of Representatives as subcommittee chairman. I am very proud to present H.R. 2643 to the committee as my first Interior appropriations bill.

The bill includes \$27.6 billion for the Department of the Interior, the Envi-

ronmental Protection Agency, the Forest Service, the Indian Health Service and Related Agencies under this Subcommittee's jurisdiction. This is an increase of \$1.193 billion over the 2007 enacted level, or about a 4.3 percent increase.

Mr. Chairman, the recommendations reflected in the 2008 Interior bill are the product of a very deliberate and bipartisan process. Our Interior and Environment Subcommittee held 38 separate hearings over 3 months with more than 250 witnesses. The printed record of these hearings is included in eight volumes, totaling over 10,000 pages.

During these hearings, we heard from agency officials, Members of Congress and more than 100 Tribal leaders and other public witnesses. This testimony made it clear that substantial increases in environmental and conservation programs were badly needed. These sessions also highlighted the critical health and education needs in Indian country.

While the Office of Management and Budget and other Members of the House may criticize the overall size of the bill, I do not know of one increase in this package which can't be fully justified based on need or on the ability to spend the money wisely. Frankly, I don't think I have to remind Members that this bill started in a deep hole created more than a decade ago.

As Members have heard me say many times, and as this chart clearly demonstrates, in our hearings and other statements on the floor, between 2000 and 2007, based on OMB's own tables, funding for the Interior Department fell 16 percent in real terms. EPA has been reduced by 29 percent, and the Forest Service nonfire budget by 35 percent when adjusted for inflation. Given that history, I believe the 4.3 percent increase in this bill is well justified.

I might just mention that one of the most important powers that Congress possesses is the power of the purse. This is in the Constitution. This is one of Congress' major authorities and one way we can check the actions of the executive branch.

Now, while I do not go into all the details, a few of the increases and decreases deserve special mention this morning.

□ 1115

The bill provides a \$223 million increase for our national parks, as proposed by the President, for the 10-year, \$3 billion Centennial Challenge effort to restore the parks for the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Park Service in 2016. The additional funds will support 3,000 badly needed new seasonal employees and 590 year-round staff. We also provide \$50 million of discretionary funds for Centennial Challenge projects to be matched by private funds. These funds will support enhancements at our parks beyond the funding necessary for core operations.

We provide a \$56 million increase for our national wildlife refuges, a 14-percent increase above the fiscal year 2007

enacted level. This will reverse the current staffing shortfall problem on our refuges, which have lost almost 600 staff members since 2004.

The bill provides a total of \$5.7 billion for programs serving Native Americans. This is \$235 million over the President's request for the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Indian Health Service. To address one of the biggest issues facing Indian country, Mr. TIAHRT and I have added \$35 million above the request for a methamphetamine prevention initiative that spans both the BIA and the Indian Health Service.

The bill provides \$2.8 billion for wildfire programs, an increase of \$200 million over the current level. The President's budget had proposed more than \$100 million in reductions in critical fire preparedness activities, which I believe both sides of the aisle considered completely irresponsible. The bill restores those cuts and provides an increase of \$163 million over FY 2007 for wildfire suppression. As we see on television every day, and particularly out in the Lake Tahoe area, this year's fire season is shaping up to be one of our worst. The funds in the bill are the minimum necessary for the wildfire program.

We have also restored basic funding for the Forest Service, providing a total of \$2.6 billion for the non-fire programs, which is \$92 million above 2007 and \$355 million above the President's request. This maintains important science, cooperative forestry programs, and land management, and also includes \$65 million for a new Legacy Road and Trail Remediation Program to repair damaged roads and decommission those that receive little use, particularly in areas where we have many endangered species.

We have provided over \$8 billion for the EPA, roughly a \$900 million increase over the President's completely inadequate request. As Members know, the President had proposed more than half a billion dollars of cuts for the agency. We restore most of the cuts and provide a number of critical increases. Those include a \$437 million increase above the request for the Clean Water State Revolving Fund, \$52 million above the request to clean up toxic and hazardous waste sites, \$220 million for Clean Air State grants, \$140 million for sewer and water grants in local communities, and \$50 million for the new diesel emission reduction program.

This bill recognizes the importance of protecting and restoring a number of our Nation's most important water bodies by providing an increase of \$65 million above the President's request for the Chesapeake Bay, the Great Lakes, Long Island Sound, Puget Sound, and 28 estuaries funded through the National Estuary Program and other grants for other targeted watersheds.

The bill provides an increase of \$50 million for our cultural agencies to get

them partially back to where they were in 1994. The National Endowment for the Arts will get a \$35 million increase to \$160 million and the National Endowment for Humanities would get an increase of \$19 million for a total of \$160 million.

One of our witnesses this spring, actress Kerry Washington, described the role of the arts in offering her a world beyond her inner-city neighborhood and giving her "something to reach for and something to reach with." Hopefully, the money in the bill for the NEA and the NEH will give other young people the same kind of inspiration and opportunity.

Mr. Chairman, I want to draw special attention to our recommendations with regard to climate change. It is now clear that global warming is occurring and that its effects will likely alter how we live in very serious ways. This reality was confirmed at hearings held by the Interior Subcommittee in April where witnesses from the Interior Department, Forest Service and other agencies described climate-related changes already occurring on the Nation's public lands. These impacts include increased wildfires, changing precipitation and water availability patterns, increasing presence of invasive species, changing migratory patterns for many animals and birds and significant loss of habitat for many species.

In response to this challenge, the subcommittee has made a series of recommendations.

First, we included in the bill the same Sense of Congress resolution on climate change which I offered last year and which was accepted by the Appropriations Committee during the 109th Congress. This appears as title V of this bill. It recognizes in statute that climate change is a reality, that human activity contributes to it in significant ways, and that this country must take action to address this very serious problem.

Second, the bill provides \$264 million for various climate change activities throughout the bill, an increase of \$94 million over the 2007 level; \$199 million is provided for EPA climate programs; \$67 million for the Department of the Interior, principally for the U.S. Geological Survey; and \$22 million for the Forest Service.

Third, we set aside \$2 million for the EPA to begin to develop the framework for regulation of greenhouse gases. The Supreme Court ruled in April that the agency has the authority to regulate greenhouse gases under the Clean Air Act. This bill does not mandate the form of these regulations or set a specific deadline for producing the final regulation, but in law it says the process must begin in earnest during 2008.

Lastly, we establish a new temporary 2-year Commission on Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation and appropriate \$50 million for its work. This commission will be chaired by the president of the National Academy of Sciences, Dr. Ralph Cicerone, a world-

renowned authority on climate change, and will focus on the science issues related to how the world adapts to the reality of climate change. Its role is essentially that of a public-private advisory committee to identify the highest priorities for climate science investment for 2008 across the government. \$5 million is provided to cover the cost of the commission for 2 years, with the remaining \$45 million to be distributed to jump-start climate science at the various Federal agencies.

In summary, the message of this bill with respect to climate change is it is time to quit talking about the problem and start doing something about it.

Members should understand that this bill is not all increases. The subcommittee bill includes reductions below the 2007 level totaling over \$400 million. This includes \$135 million cut from construction programs throughout the bill and termination of a number of programs, including the Land Owner Incentive Program and Private Stewardship Program at the Fish and Wildlife Service.

Mr. Chairman, as Members know, consideration of this bill was delayed for a while as the committee complied with the agreement to include Member projects in committee reports prior to bills being considered on the floor of the House. House Report 110-187, part 2, filed on June 22, fulfills this requirement. This report lists 228 projects requested by the Members of the House with a total cost of approximately \$114 million. The financial disclosure certifications for these projects have been made available to the public, and we believe the filing of the report meets all requirements under clause 9 of rule XXI.

Mr. Chairman, I want to emphasize that the \$114 million in this bill for projects constitutes only four-tenths of one percent of the roughly \$28 billion in this bill. When Senate projects are counted later, the total allocated to such projects will be less than 1 percent, or roughly eight-tenths of one percent.

As I said during the consideration in the full committee last week, many Members will, unfortunately, be disappointed by the project list included in this report. Based on the agreement reached earlier this year with House leadership, funding for Member projects has been reduced by 50 percent compared to funding for similar projects in 2006.

Because of this requirement to reduce funding for projects, Mr. TIAHRT and I agreed to concentrate limited funding, with a few exceptions, on critically needed water and sewer infrastructure grants and historic preservation grants. These are the two areas where we get the most requests. Projects requested in these areas were individually reviewed on a nonpartisan basis by our joint staffs working together to ensure that each project was fully justified based on both the quality of the proposal and the needs of the

communities. In the end, however, due to the limited amount of funding, hundreds of worthwhile projects could not be accommodated. I wish we could have done more, but this is the hand we were dealt.

I would just add to that, when Christine Todd Whitman was the head of the EPA, she said the backlog on these sewer infrastructure projects was \$388 billion. So we are spending \$140 million. It is just a little dent in this huge requirement that we have out there.

Mr. Chairman, before yielding to other Members for remarks, I want to say how much I have enjoyed working with Mr. TIAHRT as the Interior and Environment Subcommittee's new ranking member. We sat together for over 100 hours of hearings over 3 months, and we have met together privately with many of the agencies. It has been very hard work, but I think because of these efforts, we have a very good bill which should be supported by every Member of the House. I look forward to many years as chairman working with Mr. TIAHRT as my ranking member, or vice versa.

I also want to recognize the hard work of our exceptional staff on both sides of the aisle who have worked together as a bipartisan team throughout this process. I want to mention the staff: Mike Stephens, Chris Topik, Greg Knadle, Delia Scott, Beth Houser and Martin Brockman on the majority; Deb Weatherly, Dave LesStrang and Steve Crane for the minority; Pete Modaff and Kelli Shillito on my personal staff; and Amy Claire Bruschi on Mr. TIAHRT's staff.

Before I finish here, I just wanted to say that I am very proud of this bill. I think it is a good bill; and as, Mr. Natcher said, it is a good bill and everybody ought to vote for it.

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

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, Chairman DICKS is to be commended for the reasonable manner in which he has conducted the business of the Interior Appropriations Committee and the personal consideration he has given me in my role as ranking member. It is a reflection of the experience he received while waiting 30 years to become chairman. We should all recognize the patience and expertise that Mr. DICKS brings to the floor of the House.

Mr. Chairman, the subcommittee's work this year has been a bipartisan collaborative effort. But in spite of the comity reflected in much of the subcommittee's work, the minority does have genuine policy differences with the Democratic majority and a divergence of views over the level of funding necessary to address the critical needs of this bill.

Our 38 subcommittee hearings revealed many unmet needs and urgent priorities. Still, while we have an obligation to be good stewards of our Nation's environment and public lands for

future generations, we also have an obligation to be good stewards of our tax dollars. In that respect, I believe this legislation falls short.

The 302(b) allocation for this bill is \$27.6 billion, a \$1.9 billion increase over the President's budget increase and a \$1.2 billion increase over the enacted fiscal year 2007 Interior bill. The enacted fiscal year 2007 Interior bill itself was \$400 million over what the House passed last fall.

The initial subcommittee allocation, which was \$858 million above the fiscal year 2007 enacted level, though very generous, would have resulted, I believe, in a better, more balanced bill. The additional \$335 million added to the subcommittee's already charitable allocation is simply unnecessary, and, more importantly, unsustainable. No matter how well-intentioned, this overly generous allocation will cause many of the same problems down the road that this subcommittee has been trying to resolve in recent years, namely, huge backlogs in operations and maintenance.

The circumstance is, in many respects, similar to the homeowner who receives a big bonus and uses these extra funds to buy a bigger house for his family. The bigger bonus is welcome and unexpected. Buying a bigger house seems like a great idea at the time. But down the road he realizes he can't depend on getting a bonus every year, and he finds himself unable to afford living in this new house. He, like this subcommittee, risks becoming overextended and unable to pay the bills. The difference is the homeowner goes bankrupt and a new owner takes over. The government fails to keep up with the new property, and the property soon becomes listed on a maintenance backlog.

It is human nature that we want to create new programs to build new structures, to buy new land. Yet it seems no one worries about the future cost of maintaining them. Over the years, this subcommittee has learned through good oversight that too little money can do real harm. The same is true for too much money.

We believe that the subcommittee should strive for a balance, and that is precisely what the original subcommittee allocation achieved. We ought to provide enough money to allow the agencies to carry out their primary mission. We should focus on taking care of what we presently have in the public trust. We have to give careful, thoughtful consideration before purchasing something new. Again, we must strive for balance. As this bill goes on to conference with the Senate, I am hopeful that the majority will be sensitive and responsive to this challenge.

In many areas this legislation has achieved balance. I applaud Chairman DICKS for his focus on the operating accounts within this bill. There has clearly been an erosion in this area, due in part to the absorption of the pay

and fixed costs over the years. However, I believe the subcommittee should move more cautiously in providing funds for new land acquisition and construction. While there are high priority needs in these areas, it is important that we focus on the core mission of these agencies and not become overextended.

The subcommittee risks creating a larger problem down the road by hastily expanding current areas that we cannot oversee or creating new ones that we cannot maintain. Many will recall that when Congress provided these agencies with too much funding too quickly in the early to mid-nineties, they lost focus. The result was a huge backlog, redundant programs and large unobligated balances, many of which still remain, and numerous operational shortfalls. Our job is to provide for core needs, be vigilant about oversight, and avoid the mistakes of the past.

I recognize that Chairman DICKS and Chairman OBEY have a special place in their heart for the great open spaces of this country, and I know that they appreciate the grandeur of our national parks; and I join both chairmen in support of the \$198 million increase in the operations budget for the National Park Service.

I am also very pleased with the needed attention in this bill that it provides to the Native Americans. There are many unmet needs in Indian country, in education, healthcare, law enforcement, methamphetamine treatment and other areas; and this bill does a great deal to address those priorities. I also believe it is critically important to restore full funding for Urban Indian Health Clinics, and this bill does exactly that.

While this bill is positive in many respects, I would be remiss if I didn't outline several specific areas where I would have written the bill differently. The fire season is upon us once again and catastrophic fires out west are again commanding national headlines, like the South Lake Tahoe fire just yesterday. It is appropriate that this bill provides additional funding for wildfire preparedness at the Bureau of Land Management and the U.S. Forest Service.

Subcommittee hearings this year demonstrated that there is a great interest and great concern over the ongoing wildfire suppression challenge which is presently burning up about 45 percent of the Forest Service budget. In light of the large subcommittee allocation and the tremendous anticipated need during this fire season, I think the subcommittee could have done even more to address fire preparedness and fire suppression problems, because being prepared can avoid the need for fire suppression.

□ 1130

Mr. Chairman, while reasonable people may disagree over the cause, there is clearly a need for more focused science on climate change. I believe

Chairman DICKS would agree that our response to climate change must look at long-term solutions rather than simply trying to provide for a quick fix.

The USGS is the science agency for the Department of the Interior, and I believe they should manage any additional funds directed to address this issue for the department. While I have the greatest respect for Chairman DICKS, I am concerned about the inclusion of the global climate change sense of Congress resolution in this bill. My concern is based on the simple fact that it does not reflect a consensus opinion of many climate change experts who testified before the subcommittee this year. It proposes conclusions and solutions to a problem that is not yet fully understood. Historically, mandatory market-based limits suggested in the language simply have not worked.

I believe we need to make wise, science-based decisions rather than merely respond to the heated rhetoric of political dialogue of the day.

As one agency scientist testified this year, our greatest need is to focus on the gaps in credible scientific information. Without understanding the complete scientific data, we will be unable to solve the problems created by climate change, and it will create a false hope presenting bad solutions to the wrong problems.

America needs to secure its own sources of energy, be it from oil, natural gas, coal, nuclear, renewable or other sources. A strong and vibrant economy and the well-paying jobs that go along with it are closely linked to reliable and preferably inexpensive energy sources.

If we want to help American working families to continue to build and strengthen our economy, we must provide them with the tools they need to pursue reliable sources of energy. I believe responsible use of our resources is precisely the right course. The approximately 43 million outer continental shelf acres under lease generally account for 20 percent of America's domestic natural gas. To address the growing demand for domestic sources of natural gas, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PETERSON) last year offered a commonsense amendment in full committee which was supported on a bipartisan basis.

Republicans and Democrats alike agreed that the United States needed to lessen its dependence on foreign sources of natural gas. Mr. PETERSON will soon be offering the same amendment on the House floor, and I urge its adoption.

Many heard me say over the past few months how fortunate I have been to be selected as the ranking member of the Interior, Environment Appropriations Subcommittee. Not only do I have the privilege of working with Chairman DICKS, but I have had the pleasure of working with a fine appropriations committee staff.

First, I would like to thank Debbie Weatherly and Dave LesStrang here be-

side me on the Republican staff for all of their hard work and dedication not only to crafting this bill, but also preparing me for this new subcommittee in this inaugural role as ranking member. This spring would have been a very difficult learning process but for their guidance.

Many of you know Debbie and her impeccable stewardship of this appropriations bill during the Republican majority. She is also one of the most beloved and respected committee staffers I have ever come across. The fact that Members across the aisle continue to consult her is a testament to her depth of knowledge. I have appreciated all of the time she has spent with me over the past few months. I know that her husband, Glenn, has missed her, and I am glad he will soon get to see her more often.

I am also extremely grateful to Dave LesStrang who has taken on Interior Appropriations as part of his portfolio for Mr. LEWIS. Like Debbie, Dave is one of the most respected and well-liked staffers on the Capitol campus. I thank Mr. LEWIS, and especially Dave's wife, Elaine, and his sons Matthew and Michael for their patience in allowing him to spend so much time on the important work of this subcommittee.

Let me also commend Steve Crane of the minority staff for his guidance on issues related to offshore oil and gas drilling. Steve's expertise on these issues is exceeded only by his knowledge of anything related to the Boston Red Sox.

I am also grateful to the majority staff led by Mike Stephens. They have been cooperative and effective in not only crafting this bill, but also in helping me and my staff become acquainted with the Interior, Environment appropriations process. The entire Interior staff is to be commended for fostering a spirit of teamwork in crafting this legislation. Chris Topik, Delia Scott, Greg Knadle, Beth Houser, and Martin Brockman are bright, friendly, dedicated and among the most knowledgeable staffers on the Hill. I am pleased that once this bill is passed, they will finally have a weekend to themselves.

I would be remiss if I did not also point out the many contributions of Pete Modaff and Kelli Shilito of Chairman DICKS' staff, as well as Jeff Kahrs, AmyClaire Brusck, and Melissa James of my own staff.

In closing, Mr. Chairman, while I have real policy differences and spending concerns related to this legislation, it is our hope that between now and the conference negotiations with the Senate later this year, we can address those issues of disagreement and seek a bipartisan consensus on a reasonable, sustainable subcommittee allocation. Our sincere desire is to work with Chairman DICKS to fashion a responsible, balanced conference report worthy of broad bipartisan support.

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

Mr. DICKS. Mr. Chairman, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Ken-

tucky (Mr. CHANDLER) who is a valued member of our subcommittee.

Mr. CHANDLER. Mr. Chairman, it is a pleasure today to rise to my feet to support what I think is a wonderful Interior, Environment Appropriations Act, and it has been a tremendous pleasure to work with Chairman DICKS who, after 30 years of waiting, is now the chairman of this subcommittee and has done a first-rate job on this bill. And the staff, I can't say enough about the staff. They are, as Mr. TIAHRT said, amongst the best on Capitol Hill.

Each year Congress considers anew the needs of many Federal agencies that carry out essential work on behalf of our citizens. This year our subcommittee, under Chairman DICKS' leadership, held extensive hearings on virtually every budget item under the subcommittee's jurisdiction. What we found were serious budget shortcomings that require our immediate attention.

In the area of conservation, this bill does wonderful things for our environment. It protects habitats through a 14 percent increase in funding for national wildlife refuges, and a 10 percent increase in funding for the Forest Legacy Program which enables our private forest owners to have an economically feasible alternative to selling their land for development.

In addition, the committee's bill also directly protects endangered species and migratory birds.

In the area of environmental protection, Mr. Chairman, in this legislation we make strong investments in programs that protect our environment. The Superfund program cleans up our Nation's most contaminated sites.

The increasing frequency and cost of wildfires is consuming more and more of the Federal budget. We take steps in this bill to prevent fires from ever occurring.

This Congress has paid a lot of attention to the issue of climate change, and our subcommittee is no exception. We take steps to advance research concerning this critical issue.

In the area of human health, deteriorating water infrastructure across the country endangers the health of our citizens and that of our environment. This bill will begin to address the problems in our communities by funding the Clean Water State Revolving Fund and the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund. Funding these programs will allow States and localities to upgrade their drinking water and wastewater facilities.

In the area of cultural identity, this bill takes steps to preserve our cultural heritage and educate our citizens about our history. The National Park Service sees historic funding increases in advance of its centennial celebration in 2016. The funding levels of the National Endowment for the Arts and Humanities have each been raised by 28 percent to help these programs recover from deep cuts over the last decade.

The fund for historic preservation is provided with \$82 million, including \$45

million for State historic preservation offices, the highest amount in that account since 2001.

In many ways each of these efforts add significantly to our understanding of who we are as Americans. I believe it is incredibly important to preserve and to celebrate our heritage, and this is a wise investment of the taxpayers' dollars.

Fiscal responsibility. Being good stewards of the taxpayers' money is at the heart of our duty as representatives of the American people. After years of fiscal mismanagement, we have restored pay-as-you-go rules while investing in critical priorities. Investing in critical priorities. Reinvesting our money now, whether through cleaning up a town's drinking water or keeping our ecosystems in balance will save us money in the long run and will make our country a better place to live. That is what being a good steward is all about.

This is a good bill, and every Member should vote for it. Mr. Chairman, I believe that this legislation is a responsible investment in our future. It protects our environment, it protects our health, and it celebrates our heritage.

Chairman DICKS and the excellent staff led by Michael Stephens ought to be commended for working so diligently to produce this bill. It is a tremendous bill. It is, in my view, true stewardship of the resources we have been given, and I am very proud to support it.

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Chairman, I yield the gentleman from California (Mr. LEWIS), the distinguished ranking member of the Appropriations Committee, such time as he may consume.

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Chairman, I want to congratulate both the chairman and the ranking member for a fabulous product that is reflected in this bill. The Interior appropriations bill is, by tradition, one of the most bipartisan bills among all of the bills that our committee considers each year. The House is, indeed, fortunate that the work of this subcommittee this year falls to Chairman NORM DICKS and Ranking Member TODD TIAHRT. They are not only good friends, they are capable legislators who recognize the value of bipartisanship. Clearly they do not agree on each and every single piece of this bill relative to policy or funding; but nonetheless, when they disagree, they recognize the value of communication and sharing information.

What makes this relationship even more valuable is it also extends to the professional staff on both sides of the aisle. The working relationship of Chairman DICKS and Mr. TIAHRT, coupled with a reasonable allocation, could produce a very fine product.

In this instance, however, an excessive subcommittee allocation has thrown this bill out of balance. More money does not always guarantee a better bill. In this instance, in fact, just the opposite is true. This sub-

committee allocation for this bill is \$27.6 billion, a \$1.9 billion increase over the President's budget request, and \$1.2 billion increase over the enacted fiscal year 2007 Interior bill. This subcommittee allocation represents exactly the kind of unfettered spending that so closely identifies the differences of philosophies between House Republicans and House Democrats.

And who is going to pay for this increased spending? In fiscal year 2004, 50 percent of the total Federal tax burden was shouldered by the 65 million households earning between \$24,000 and \$65,000 a year. The vast majority of these taxes are being paid by individuals between the ages of 45 and 54, and with incomes between \$55,000 and \$77,000 a year. These are middle income families, many of them from the sandwich generation shouldering the financial burden of supporting both young children and aging parents.

Middle income families end up paying the bill for expanded government. The 302(b) allocation for this bill guarantees years of payments middle income families do not want it and cannot afford.

Mr. Chairman, the Interior bill has great potential of being a truly bipartisan bill. My hope is that Chairman DICKS and Ranking Member TIAHRT will work with their Senate counterparts in conference to fashion a conference report that the House can support and the President will sign.

Mr. DICKS. Mr. Chairman, it is a great honor for me to yield 3 minutes to my friend, the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER) who has been one of the strongest environmentalists in this House.

□ 1145

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. I thank the gentleman for yielding. I want to thank him and the ranking member for bringing this bill to the floor and certainly thanking the staff that has worked with all of the Members on this legislation. I think this is a very good bill. I think this bill reflects the priorities of America, that we would once again start reinvesting in the Clean Water Revolving Fund so that people and communities can meet their obligations for clean water. And as millions of Americans set out across America with their families to visit the national parks, this bill makes legislation about the importance of those national parks, about the value of those national parks and the importance that we lay out a plan over the next 10 years to restore them and to reinvest in them so that the visitors a decade from now will have the same experience or a better experience when they visit the national parks as people do today.

The national parks have far too much neglect in terms of the backlog of projects that need to be done, to enhance them, to improve them and to protect the national parks. The state-side of the Land and Water Conserva-

tion allows the Federal Government to be a partner with local communities on their priorities for the protection of open space and the enhancement of recreational opportunities, to improve the quality of life in our communities. We have seen this very, very successful program to enhance the communities, to enrich the experience for families in those communities.

Finally, I would say in the Indian education programs where again as Indian tribes and others have more and more say in the education of their young people, where they're bringing about very innovative programs, to see us again invest in those programs. What we see now is we have a record number of Indian children who have gone on to college, who are enrolled in college, who are getting advanced degrees. We've got to continue to improve that program and this legislation does it.

I also want to thank the committee for recognizing the Rosie the Riveter World War II Home Front National Park. This is a park that's growing in popularity. It tells the incredible and magnificent story of the women who came to the shipyards in California to build the ships to win the war in the Pacific and what that meant to us as country, as a culture, what it meant to the integration of the workforce during World War II, and certainly what it meant in terms of supplying our troops with the materials necessary to win the war in the Pacific.

We have seen women from all across the country come with their daughters, with their granddaughters, with their great granddaughters and explain to them, this is where I worked, this is where we built and launched a ship a week in these shipyards. It's remarkable the ceremonies that are held there, to see these women, to come there and to leave their historical documents, to leave their letters home, to leave their welders' cards and their ironworkers' cards with the museum, and now we will be able to share all of that with the public as part of a greater effort in the National Park Service to develop the home front national park system all across the country where those who were on the home front during the war enabled us to successfully win and prosecute the Second World War.

I want to thank the committee and the members.

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Chairman, I would like to yield 4 minutes to the cochairman of the Parks Caucus, who has a great passion for our national park system, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. SOUDER).

(Mr. SOUDER asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SOUDER. I want to thank the subcommittee chairman and ranking member for plussing up our National Park Service. We are at a very critical junction. We are approaching the 100th birthday, in the year 2016, of the National Park Service.

Why do I say we're approaching? Because there are certain moments in time where you can gather and build public support for something that will last from generation to generation. When the first kind of preserved areas were preserved at Yellowstone and the Yosemite Grant and a few of those in the 1800s, it took dramatic intervention from Theodore Roosevelt and the creation under Stephen Mather of the National Park Service. Then it really took in the World War II era, the Great Depression era, the different relief projects that built much of the architecture in our parks because we put people to work, and much of the historic architecture that we see in our national parks came in the WPA and CCC programs. Then nothing really much happened until it started to approach the 50th birthday. When I say "started to approach," when you did Mission 66 and most of the visitor centers you see in our parks today, most of the lodging that you see, much of it at least in our parks, much of the road infrastructure, the sewage infrastructure, everything, came heavily out of this Mission 66 commitment. But you don't just do that in 1 year. If you wanted to be prepared for the 50th birthday, you started a decade ahead. We are getting inside that decade. If we are going to have a vision of where our National Park Service is going to be at 100 years and where it's going to go, we need to start making the investments now.

I support, as our Parks Caucus does, the Centennial Act, which also would as part of this build a better foundation as to how we're going to fund parks. But this particular bill puts \$50 million in above what we would normally get to start this process. Because if we don't start now, by the year 2016 we won't be able to be ready for the 100th birthday. Part of the question which the National Park Service has been going around talking to Americans all over the country is, where do you want our Park Service to be? How is it going to be different? We need to preserve our natural sites. We have preserved many of those, but we can expand that. We need to expand our cultural sites because our history is a constantly evolving thing, just as Congressman MILLER just referred to, the Rosie the Riveter Park and that type of cultural heritage. As we look at Hispanic sites, at African American sites, at Angel Island and various Asian sites, as we look at more urban sites and what's the role of the National Park Service in urban sites, but also how are we going to deal with the Internet age. How can we expand?

The National Park Service has more fish and wildlife, has more natural resources at Carlsbad Caverns with bats. How can we use this at other places with grizzly bears, with wolves, with frogs, with trees? And we can learn much of science. How can we interconnect that with our educational institutions? How can we take the Park

Service in its 100th birthday to the next level? What are we going to do with interpretive rangers? What are we going to do with our visitor centers? How can we make our heritage, cultural and natural, something that we can preserve for generations and generations?

To do that, we need to do that now. We need to start laying the foundation in these appropriations bills, what this bill does. We also need to be looking at a permanent way so the Park Service doesn't have the up-and-down cycles, where we pass additional land things, they don't have money to do it. We give them new homeland security things, and they don't have enough money to do it. We say we want this done and that done by a Park Service but don't give them the annual funds to do it.

I'm very pleased that it's in this bill. I hope this is the start of moving towards the 100th birthday. It's a very good start. I thank the chairman and the ranking member for doing that.

Mr. DICKS. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. SOUDER. I yield to the gentleman from Washington.

Mr. DICKS. I just want to commend the gentleman for his leadership on the National Parks Caucus. This issue should never be partisan. I'm glad we can work together with Mr. TIAHRT to strengthen our parks and to enact the Centennial Challenge.

Mr. SOUDER. Thank you.

Mr. DICKS. Mr. Chairman, it gives me great pleasure to yield 4 minutes to the chairman of the Natural Resources Committee, a fellow member of the class of 1976 and also a person who had to wait 30 years to be chairman, my good friend from West Virginia (Mr. RAHALL).

Mr. RAHALL. I thank the distinguished chairman of the subcommittee for yielding me the time and certainly commend him for his leadership as well as that of the full committee chairman, Mr. OBEY.

Mr. Chairman, for over a decade while our Government lingered in Republican control, America's investment in itself, in those programs that provide for the most fundamental needs of our citizens, has been literally on the chopping block. As a result, Americans are coping with diminishing services and declining opportunities. Those programs that fall under the purview of the Natural Resources Committee, which I chair, are no exception. In fact, they have been particularly hard hit. As a result, our ability to preserve for future generations these unique places that are a rich part of America's past is diminishing. Our means of ensuring the thoughtful conservation and balanced development of our resources has been undercut. And our ability to protect our treasured natural vistas and irreplaceable wildlife has suffered mightily.

But this year we have turned the corner and that is due in large part, as I

have said, because of the leadership of our distinguished appropriations Chair, DAVE OBEY, and the chairman of the Interior appropriations subcommittee, my classmate and dear friend, NORM DICKS. I thank and commend Chairman DICKS for his outstanding efforts on the bill before us today. It is a good bill, it's a great bill that will move us in a positive direction.

It is most remarkable for its differences from Interior bills of recent years. It has been a very long time since we have seen a bill that provides funding levels that come anywhere close to providing for the Nation's real and growing conservation needs. And while this bill is constrained by the government's overall budgetary limitations, it is an honest effort that provides needed nourishment to important accounts that were on a forced starvation diet.

I am particularly pleased and encouraged to see that Chairman DICKS has substantially increased funding for our national parks, these national treasures that hold a special place in the hearts of many Americans, but recent funding for them has not reflected their true value. This bill reverses years of disinvestment, helping to ensure that parks funding does not come at the expense of other programs. It also reverses a decline in staffing and visitor services, providing an increase in seasonal and permanent employees.

In addition, support is improved for the endangered species program and other accounts that are critical to saving God's creatures from extinction. This money will go a long way toward ensuring the Endangered Species Act is implemented as it was originally intended.

In what signals one of the most obvious and commendable departures from Republican priorities of recent years, this bill includes a 13 percent increase for the office of the Inspector General at Interior. That increase responds to the kinds of gross problems that I have been probing in our committee hearings this year with respect to Interior's inexcusable failure to collect moneys due the American people from Big Oil.

This appropriation measure also honors our Federal trust responsibilities to Native Americans. It restores badly needed dollars for the Indian Health Improvement Fund and the Urban Indian Health Care Program. It also recognizes, Mr. Chairman, the importance of the Indian Housing Improvement Program by ensuring that the program is not eliminated as the administration had proposed. The tribes have suffered under the bare-bones budget of recent years, but this bill thankfully attempts to set things back on the right course.

Finally, I am very encouraged to see funding increases for the long-neglected Land and Water Conservation Fund as well as for Payment in Lieu of Taxes. The stateside grants, in particular, have suffered greatly at the hands of the administration budget butchers.



Again, I commend Chairman NORM DICKS for crafting a serious appropriation bill that helps our Federal agencies conserve our natural and cultural heritage for generations to come, and I commend the ranking member, Mr. TODD TIAHRT, for his working with our chairman as well.

Mr. DICKS. Mr. Chairman, how much time is there on both sides?

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The gentleman from Kansas has 10½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from Washington has 3 minutes remaining.

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. DICKS. I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL), who is also a valued member of our subcommittee and a very good friend, and a great tennis player.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The gentleman from New Mexico is recognized for up to 3 minutes.

(Mr. UDALL of New Mexico asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Let me also say that our chairman is an incredible tennis player, and I always like to be on the same side of the net with him rather than on the other side.

I would like to first of all congratulate NORM DICKS and TODD TIAHRT for their leadership and their bipartisan cooperation on this bill. We haven't seen this kind of leadership in a long time, I think it's very impressive, and I want to applaud it.

Let me also say that we have done some very significant oversight in this subcommittee of the appropriations. We have tackled a variety of issues. We've had all the Departments in. We've taken a very, very hard look at the kinds of things that are going on in these Departments. We also haven't seen that in a long time. One of the things that Chairman DICKS and Ranking Member TIAHRT have done is restore the public witness day. That's something that's very important and hasn't been around for about 10 years, where every member of the public can walk in and comment and tell us what their point of view is. Much of those points of views that were reflected in the committee are specifically in this bill.

I also want to thank Mr. Stephens and all of the staff. They've done a pretty incredible job. What this bill is about is the stewardship of our natural resources. This is a bipartisan tradition that started many years ago, over 100 years ago with Teddy Roosevelt and the first chief of the Forest Service, Gifford Pinchot. This was a Republican tradition and started out as a Republican tradition, and we hope that Republicans will join us in a bipartisan way on this bill rather than picking it apart, because this moves the country in a very, very important direction, and this bill also reflects the Nation's values that we haven't seen reflected in the appropriation bill over the last 6 years.

□ 1200

Let's just look at what's happened over the last 6 years. The Forest Service is down, 35 percent. This bill isn't able to restore all of that, but we start working back up. The EPA, a cut of 29 percent.

There we're talking about law enforcement and doing things about cleaning up air and water and toxics, an unconscionable cut in the EPA of 29 percent. This bill moves it back in the right direction to restore those enforcement capabilities, and a cut in the Interior Department of 16 percent over the last 6 years.

This bill once again starts to move us back in the right direction. This bill is about protecting public lands, protecting wildlife, recreation, and clean air and clean water.

One of the other things that I think this bill does that is very important is fund the National Park Service. I urge all of my colleagues, Republican and Democrat, to support this bill. It's a good bill, and they have done a great job at pulling it together.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of H.R. 2643, the proposed Fiscal Year 2008 appropriations for the Department of Interior, Environment, and other related agencies. I commend Chairman NORMAN DICKS, and his Appropriations Subcommittee for the work he has done in responding to the needs of the Department of Interior in carrying out its mission to protect our Nation's resources.

As Chairwoman of the Natural Resources Subcommittee on Insular Affairs which has jurisdiction over all U.S. territories, I want to especially acknowledge the work of Chairman DICKS to increase funding to Interior's Office of Insular Affairs so it can respond to the changing needs and priorities of our U.S. Insular areas and the relationships we have with the freely associated states in Micronesia.

The Subcommittee on Insular Affairs convened an oversight hearing in February over that portion of the President's proposed Fiscal Year 2008 Interior budget which had a direct effect on the Department's ability to assist our U.S. territories and freely associated states. In addition to the Department officials, the governors of American Samoa and Guam, and the Resident Representative of the CNMI provided testimony in support of the work of the Office of Insular Affairs with a caveat that more resources should be given to them to enhance the work it does for U.S. territories.

I am pleased that the Appropriations Committee was able to increase such resources for the Department to expand its efforts in assisting economic development. I also point out that the increases in this budget will respond to specific requests, such as strengthening the judicial systems in the Pacific, addressing the needs of Marshall Islanders adversely affected by our nuclear testing program carried out in the 1950s.

Notwithstanding the above, I would be remiss if I did not express my strong disappointment that my requests for funding for critical infrastructure needs in my own Congressional District was not included in the bill. While I recognize that the subcommittee had difficult choices to make, I look forward to continuing to work with the Chairman and Ranking Mem-

ber should there be opportunities to fund additional priority projects as the bill moves forward.

The Department of Interior's budget meant to benefit development and accountability in our U.S. territories is a small portion of what is being considered today. However, the increases carry out the mandate of the Interior Department is significant to improving the lives of our fellow Americans in those outlying jurisdictions. Again, I applaud the work of the Appropriations Committee and urge passage of H.R. 2643.

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Chairman, in accordance with House earmark reforms, I would like to place in the RECORD a listing of the congressionally-directed projects in my home state of Idaho that are contained the report of the FY08 Interior, Environment and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill.

The project provides \$500,000 within the Environmental Protection Agency, State and Tribal Assistance Grants to the City of Twin Falls for the Auger Falls Wastewater Treatment Project.

Funding such as this is critical to assisting rural Idaho communities in upgrading their water and wastewater treatment facilities. In the case of Twin Falls, this funding is required to comply with unfunded mandates passed down by this Congress and federal agencies. The State of Idaho, under court order, has implemented Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) limits for phosphorus compounds on all significant discharges to the river. The City of Twin Falls Wastewater Treatment Plan, with a daily discharge of approximately 7.1 million gallons of treated wastewater per day, is one of the largest dischargers of phosphorus on the Middle Snake River and periodically exceeds the EPA TMDL limit. The City is planning to meet its TMDL limits through the use of natural treatments on city owned property, in the form of constructed wetlands and habitat creation.

This funding will allow the City of Twin Falls to develop the beneficial wildlife habitats that will function as wastewater treatment systems to further reduce nutrients in City wastewater. This will ensure that the wastewater does not exceed the Environmental Protection Agency's Total Maximum Daily Load mandates for the City's wastewater discharged into the Snake River.

I am proud to have obtained this funding for Idaho and look forward to working with Idaho's communities in the future to meet their water resource challenges.

I appreciate the opportunity to provide a list of Congressionally-directed projects in my district and an explanation of my support for them.

(1) \$500,000 City of Twin Falls for the Auger Falls Wastewater Treatment.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong support of the Interior Appropriations Bill; especially do I support the increase in funding for the National Endowment for the Arts.

I know that we have great concern for National Security, Homeland Security, funding for military warlike activities, education, health, other social welfare issues, infrastructure improvements, job creation and all other aspects of life; however, it is not my feeling that these concerns out-weigh the need to keep art and culture high on our list of concerns.

Art is a connector, a bridge builder, a motivator, a stimulator, an activator and a way

for people, especially our children to have experience that otherwise they would never ever have the opportunity to have.

Art is, and should be a great part of every child's learning experience and it is our opportunity to make sure that is available.

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to any amendments that would strike the longstanding existing moratoria on offshore oil and gas drilling along the East and West Coasts.

When you look at these amendments, you see that they are particularly empty of any promise to reduce our dependence on foreign oil. Right now, without these amendments, drilling is already allowed in areas holding roughly 80 percent of the estimated oil and gas resources. In fact, of the 8,000 active leases oil companies hold in the Gulf of Mexico, more than 6,000 have yet to begin producing oil. So if you are worried about making sure that the oil and gas industry has access to the Outer Continental Shelf, stop worrying. They already have more leases than they know what to do with. They have been given the right to drill for the vast majority of oil and gas offshore and are not even producing from the majority of leases they hold in the Gulf. The oil companies should begin producing on the leases they already hold, not looking to acquire new ones in environmentally sensitive areas that do not even have large estimated oil and gas resources.

Moreover, let's not forget the Republican leadership just rammed through an offshore drilling bill in the waning hours of the last Congress as a going out of business bonanza for big oil. That legislation opened up additional areas in the Gulf of Mexico holding 1.26 billion barrels of oil and 5.83 trillion cubic feet of natural gas. But barely six months later, drilling proponents are back for another bite at the apple, once again attempting to give away our important coastal areas away to Big Oil.

G.O.P still stands for the Gas and Oil Party.

It is highly misleading to suggest that we can solve the problem of our oil dependence or high gas prices with more drilling, when the real answer is not more drilling, but using technology to make our cars and SUVs more energy efficient. After Congress mandated a doubling of fuel economy standards from 13.5 to 27.5 miles per gallon, our dependence on foreign oil went from 46.5% in 1977 to 27% in 1985 but we are now back up to 60%.

We should be making our vehicles more efficient, not giving away our public lands to big oil companies that are making record profits. Soon, this House will have an opportunity to go on Record on the Markey-Platts legislation, which would mandate a 35 mile per gallon combined fleet fuel efficiency standard—an improvement that will allow us to reduce our consumption by roughly the same amount of oil that we currently import from the Persian Gulf by 2022.

I am pleased that the underlying bill once again includes language authored by myself and Mr. HINCHEY that would give oil companies a strong incentive to renegotiate the faulty leases from 1998 and 1999. The Government Accountability Office has estimated that these leases could cost the American taxpayers more than \$10 billion. The House has gone on record time and time again in overwhelming support of putting real pressure to renegotiate on every company holding these leases. Last year, the House adopted the Mar-

key-Hinchey royalty relief fix that is included in this bill by a vote of 252–165 and earlier this year this body passed the royalty fixes contained in H.R. 6 by a vote of 264–163. It is time to put an end to big oil's free ride. I urge opposition to any amendments that would open up our coastlines to drilling and strongly support passage of the underlying bill.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. All time for general debate has expired.

Pursuant to the rule, the bill shall be considered for amendment under the 5-minute rule.

During consideration of the bill for amendment, the Chair may accord priority in recognition to a Member offering an amendment that he has printed in the designated place in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. Those amendments will be considered read.

The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows.

H.R. 2643

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,* That the following sums are appropriated, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2008, and for other purposes, namely:

TITLE I—DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
MANAGEMENT OF LANDS AND RESOURCES

For necessary expenses for protection, use, improvement, development, disposal, cadastral surveying, classification, acquisition of easements and other interests in lands, and performance of other functions, including maintenance of facilities, as authorized by law, in the management of lands and their resources under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Land Management, including the general administration of the Bureau, and assessment of mineral potential of public lands pursuant to Public Law 96-487 (16 U.S.C. 3150(a)), \$888,628,000, to remain available until expended, of which not to exceed \$92,129,000 is available for oil and gas management; and of which \$1,500,000 is for high priority projects, to be carried out by the Youth Conservation Corps; and of which \$2,800,000 shall be available in fiscal year 2008 subject to a match by at least an equal amount by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation for cost-shared projects supporting conservation of Bureau lands; and such funds shall be advanced to the Foundation as a lump sum grant without regard to when expenses are incurred.

Mr. DICKS. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the requisite number of words.

I am prepared to yield to my distinguished colleague from Tennessee, the chairman of the Science and Technology Committee.

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee. I want to say that I share the gentleman's concern about the issue of climate change and about the impact that it may have on our Nation.

My committee held three hearings on the working group reports, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, IPCC, released earlier this year. The Committee on Science and Technology is marking up a bipartisan bill tomorrow authored by Mr. UDALL and Mr. INGLIS, the different Mr.

UDALL, H.R. 906, to restructure the U.S. Global Change Research Program to provide more policy-relevant information to Congress and to regional organizations, State and local governments, and to businesses and organizations that are developing and implementing adaptation mitigation strategies.

The Global Change Resource Program authorized in the Global Change Research Act of 1990 has guided our government's climate science agenda for the past 17 years. It has had many successes. Much of the research that has been summarized in the IPCC reports emerge from this program, and I commend the gentleman for producing a bill that makes additional money available for climate change.

I fully support the allocation of an additional \$50 million for the important task of developing adaptation and mitigation strategies. We need to lessen the impact of climate change on our Nation.

However, the structure authorized in the bill for determining the research agenda and allocating the funds is not compatible with either the existing structure of the program or the bill the Science Committee will be marking up tomorrow.

Mr. Chairman, I have a responsibility to lead the Committee on Science and Technology in a fashion that produces good, consensus-based legislation. I take that very seriously. In the spirit of cooperation, and in the interest of comity, I will not support a motion to strike the climate change commission language from the bill with the understanding that you will agree to work with our committee as we go forward to allocate these funds in a manner that is compatible with authorizing legislation.

I am confident that H.R. 906 will provide a solid foundation for reaching the goal that you and I share, addressing the challenge of the climate change through applications of a solid foundation of science on adaptation and mitigation.

Mr. DICKS. Will the gentleman yield. Mr. GORDON of Tennessee. Certainly.

Mr. DICKS. I appreciate your concerns and want to assure the gentleman and his committee that we are very open to making changes to ensure the funds are spent in a manner which reflects the legislation coming from the Science Committee.

I look forward to working with you and your staff over the next few months to coordinate our joint efforts in climate science. I want to congratulate the gentleman on working on a consensus basis. We tried to do that in the interior bill, and the chairman knows that he has my word on this issue, and we will work this out.

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee. Mr. DICKS, we do have a bipartisan bill, and we look forward to working with you in a bipartisan manner to make this good bill even better.



Mr. KIND. Madam Chair, I move to strike the last word.

I just want to take a moment to congratulate the Chair and the ranking member and the entire committee for the wonderful job they did in regards to the stewardship of our public lands.

If you take a look at the budget, and this was eloquently stated by my friend from New Mexico, whether it was the National Park Service, whether it was the National Wildlife Refuge, if you take a look at funding for our public lands in recent years, it has been static at best and having severe consequences in regards to the management of our national park system but also the national wildlife refuges.

As one of the cochairs of the Congressional Wildlife Refuge Caucus, along with my colleagues, JIM SAXTON, MIKE CASTLE, MIKE THOMPSON, we have taken it upon us to try to educate our fellow colleagues in both the House and the Senate with regard to the real challenges that we are facing throughout the refuge system.

While there are over 500 refuges nationwide right now, over 20 percent of them are not staffed and not offering any educational value to visitors, more refuges being prepared to be mothballed in the future, serious staff cuts with the agency budget, given the limitation of funds that they have seen.

Now with this \$56 million increase, the first increase since 2003 when we celebrated the centennial anniversary of the creation of the refuge system, this will go a long ways as far as stemming the cuts in personnel, staff, educational opportunities, but also the importance of maintaining and operating these refuges which are currently facing about a \$3 billion backlog in routine maintenance and operation.

I commend the committee, again, for their devotion and their attention to this very serious issue. But they are also recognizing we have another centennial anniversary coming up, and that's for the park service in just a few years, and a lot of work that needs to be done to bring that up to par so that they are worthy of the public attention and hopefully the increased visits that will lead up to this centennial anniversary of the national park system as well.

I just want to take a moment to commend one park service person in particular, who my family and I had the privilege of spending Father's Day Sunday with, and that was at the Antietam National Battlefield, just outside of Washington here.

The gentleman's name is Mike Gamble, and he works for the Park Service at the Antietam Battlefield. He was a 30-year history teacher for a local high school. He has been with Antietam Battlefield now for the last 9 years conducting tours and offering services to the visitors.

If there is anyone with greater depth of knowledge of what took place, that crucial battle, the Battlefield of Antie-

tam, the bloodiest day in American history, I don't know who that could be.

He was incredibly well versed, extremely interesting, very educational, and even for my 9 and 10 year-old little boys, he brought that battlefield to life with great personal relevance in their lives. It's people like Mike and those who serve in our park service, whether it's Civil War battlefields or national parks or in our refuges, that really make this the great monuments to civilization that we have in this country.

Mr. DICKS. Would the gentleman yield?

Mr. KIND. I would be happy to yield.

Mr. DICKS. I want to commend the gentleman for his leadership, particularly on the wildlife refuges. We have had a cut over the last few years of over 600 employees. I couldn't believe the testimony this year of the people saying these refuges are in dire need, you have got to do something.

That's why we are trying to put money back into these important areas. It's only a small amount, the work is absolutely essential. I appreciate the gentleman's leadership and his work in presenting our committee with information on the wildlife refuge.

Mr. KIND. Again, I appreciate this gentleman's leadership and the committee's work in regards to refocusing our attention on a great need in our Nation.

I wanted to also mention to my colleagues that I, along with the other cochairs of the Wildlife Refuge Caucus, recently introduced legislation called the Repair Act. We had a nice hearing before the Natural Resources Committee last week that would hopefully provide singular focus on one of the great threats facing our refuge system, and that's invasive species, plants, animals. What we are trying to do is establish an important public and private partnership by working with friends groups, with Federal, State, local agencies, but other nonprivate organizations, so we can develop a battle plan to deal with these invasive species, try to get out ahead of the curve, which is one of the great threats facing the entire refuge system today.

So I would hope my colleagues would take a look at the legislation that we have recently introduced. Hopefully we will have the cooperation of the committee, be able to move it to the floor for consideration, so we can start providing a singular focus and a good plan in place to deal with the invasive species threat that we are facing in this Nation.

Again, I thank the committee for the work that they have done, they have produced a good product here, and I would encourage its passage.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Madam Chair, I move to strike the last word.

One of the issues that we are dealing with this in this particular budget deals with the question that we have that deals with both immigration as

well as the processes of that immigration. We are talking this time about immigration, and the devastating impact that it has.

One of the things we missed is the impact on land of immigration. Our land managers have documented, pleaded their efforts before and in the past on some of the problems that we seem to be facing with immigration. We have illegal trails that are going across the desert that are leading to erosion. Literally our resources are being washed away.

Where that is not happening, trash is being left behind by illegal border crossers. We are talking about plastic bottles, shoes, cars, even vehicles at some times. That is not necessarily the habitat of endangered species. We seem to be having devastating fires taking place started by abandoned camps.

Even last week, 1,900 acres in the Buenos Aires National Wildlife Refuge was burned, and it is believed that its was started by illegal immigration cooking fire. The Coronado National Forest, in testimony last year before the Appropriations Committee, has 60 miles of contiguous border with the Mexican border. In this national forest, there are 12 separate rangers, eight wilderness areas, 203 threatened and endangered sensitive species, and the staff said that the resources are suffering significant adverse impacts due to illegal border traffic. Even livestock and closure fences, meant to try to separate livestock from endangered species, are being torn down.

Probably the most specific and egregious of all those examples is given by the National Park Service. The Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument, one-third of that monument is closed to visitors because of the threats of assault by AK-47-packing drug runners is too great. Land managers and biologists responsible for the park must be escorted by armed personnel to do their work in the park.

If we had machine-gun toting bandits or terrorists walking through Yellowstone or Yosemite, we would not tolerate that. But that is the reality that we have today, and the land managers are asking for tools to do their job.

That, indeed, is an issue of significance that needed to be addressed in this particular bill. Perhaps at some point in the future we can actually address that particular issue and that difficult problem and see if we can move forward to a resolution of that and establish priorities that we want to have border security and the impact, the negative impact it's having on public lands, we need to make sure that we move forward as a government to stop that and suppress that.

Mr. TIAHRT. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. I will be happy to yield to the ranking member.

Mr. TIAHRT. I thank the gentleman from Utah for bringing up this very important issue.

We have heard in testimony in the Interior Committee that not being able

to maintain the security of our borders has had an impact on our park service and Interior lands. We need to do a better job of maintaining our borders. I thank the gentleman for his efforts in trying to make this country more safe by maintaining our borders.

## ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

The CHAIRMAN. The Chair will remind Members to refrain from trafficking the well while a Member is under recognition.

## AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. BISHOP OF UTAH

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Madam Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment offered by Mr. BISHOP of Utah: On page 2, line 15, insert after the dollar amount "(increased by \$11,055,800)".

On page 11, line 21, insert after the dollar amount "(increased by \$4,738,200)".

On page 18, line 23, insert after the dollar amount "(increased by \$11,055,800)".

On page 67, line 8, insert after the dollar amount "(increased by \$4,738,200)".

On page 96, line 14, insert after the dollar amount "(decreased by \$31,588,000)".

Mr. BISHOP of Utah (during the reading). Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent that the amendment be considered as read and printed in the RECORD.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Utah?

There was no objection.

Mr. DICKS. Madam Chairman, I reserve a point of order against the amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. A point of order is reserved.

□ 1215

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Madam Chair, we just mentioned a few things that are significant to this particular issue and tried to mention some of the important points that we are making. We need greater control on the Park Service and BLM land on our border areas that is being devastated by illegal border crossing.

The amendment that I am proposing goes directly to that goal and that purpose by committing \$30 million towards law enforcement activities. Actually, it's \$31.5 million toward law enforcement activities by agencies who are on our southern border.

We, as a government, have a responsibility to prevent illegal border crossings. We also have a responsibility for land managers to be managing the land in that particular area.

Now, this amendment that I have does move money around. I feel sorry for that. The particular area in which I am transferring the money is something that bothers me personally.

I met my wife during a community theater. When I was in the legislature in Utah, I was the one that instituted a percent for the art programs so that 1 percent of all our construction monies went for arts to be considered. I have been a supporter of the Utah Arts Council.

I also think it's appropriate that local dollars fund art programs so that

local control can be there on the process level.

With this particular amendment, it still leaves a \$4 million, \$4.5 million, roughly \$4 million increase in the National Endowment for the Arts over last year's funding base, so there still is an increase. But in addition to that increase, there is \$30 million that will go to enforcement of our borders, enforcement of our borders that is necessary to protect the land that is there. It is a matter of priority.

Now, CBO has scored this one. I'm convinced there is probably no PAYGO efforts, but that may be one of the issues we want to talk about. But the bottom line is still this: We need to prioritize what we're doing with this budget. And this is a tremendous area that has been de-emphasized and needs to be re-emphasized. And I contend that this is the appropriate way to put that emphasis there.

## POINT OF ORDER

Mr. DICKS. Madam Chairman, I make a point of order.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman will state his point of order.

Mr. DICKS. Madam Chairman, the amendment filed by the gentleman may not be considered en bloc under clause 2(f) of rule XXI. The rule states in part that amendments may only be considered en bloc if they do not increase either budget authority or outlays in the bill.

While the amendments proposed by the gentleman are offset fully in budget authority, the combined effect of the changes would increase outlays by \$8 million, in violation of paragraph 2(f). The amendments are, therefore, not in order to be considered en bloc.

The CHAIRMAN. Does any other Member wish to be recognized on this amendment?

The Chair will make a ruling. To be considered en bloc pursuant to clause 2(f) of rule XXI, an amendment must not propose to increase the levels of budget authority or outlays in the bill. Because the amendment offered by the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) proposes a net increase in the level of outlays in the bill as argued by the chairman of the Subcommittee on Appropriations, it may not avail itself of clause 2(f) to address portions of the bill not yet read.

The amendment is not in order.

The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

In addition, \$20,000,000 is for the processing of applications for permit to drill and related use authorizations, to remain available until expended, to be reduced by amounts collected by the Bureau and credited to this appropriation that shall be derived from \$1,866 per new application for permit to drill that the Bureau shall collect upon submission of each new application, and in addition, \$34,696,000 is for Mining Law Administration program operations, including the cost of administering the mining claim fee program; to remain available until expended, to be reduced by amounts collected by the Bureau and credited to this appropriation from annual mining claim fees so as to result in a

final appropriation estimated at not more than \$888,628,000, and \$2,000,000, to remain available until expended, from communication site rental fees established by the Bureau for the cost of administering communication site activities.

## CONSTRUCTION

For construction of buildings, recreation facilities, roads, trails, and appurtenant facilities, \$6,476,000 to remain available until expended.

## LAND ACQUISITION

For expenses necessary to carry out sections 205, 206, and 318(d) of Public Law 94-579, including administrative expenses and acquisition of lands or waters, or interests therein, \$18,634,000 to be derived from the Land and Water Conservation Fund and to remain available until expended.

## AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. BISHOP OF UTAH

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Madam Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment offered by Mr. BISHOP of Utah: Page 4, line 1, after the dollar amount, insert "(reduced by \$17,015,000)".

Mr. DICKS. Madam Chairman, I reserve a point of order against this amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. A point of order is reserved.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. One of the issues with which we struggle in this legislature deals with simply the concept of prioritization. And what I'm talking about in this particular issue is money put into the budget above and beyond what the President recommended, but money put into this budget for new acquisitions, not taking care of what we already have, but new acquisitions.

Now, I'm going to contend here that what we need to do is prioritize so that what we do is put our money in what we already have and make sure that we are doing the best we have with our parks and public lands.

I have a picture right here of a facility that's not in my district, but it is in my State. Dinosaur National Monument is actually in the Second District of Utah. This particular facility is a beautiful facility. I was there before it was condemned. I was there. So you could go in there with all my kids and look at the dinosaur bones that are still in place in the mountainside as it has been scraped away so you can see the prehistoric history of this country. It's a wonderful place. It is a wonderful exhibit. It's a great learning experience, all of which has been closed because this building has been condemned and we don't have enough money to fix the facility.

This facility should be fixed before we put 17 million new dollars into new programs somewhere else. This facility should be fixed before we expand what we are trying to do. We need to take care of what we have already identified as important and significant and make sure it takes place.

And that, my fellow Members of this House, is the reason I'm proposing this amendment, that we simply reprioritize to do what's most important, and we fix what we have first and make

sure that is functioning before we put any new additional money into acquisition of new land, new properties and new proposals.

Mr. DICKS. Madam Chair, I withdraw my point of order on this amendment, but I would like to be recognized for 5 minutes in opposition.

The CHAIRMAN. The point of order is withdrawn.

The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes in opposition.

Mr. DICKS. Madam Chairman, this amendment, if it were adopted, would eliminate nearly all land acquisitions that are high-priority projects that need to be done. It would leave only \$1.6 million in the acquisition account, not even enough to continue to staff the program.

These are not new projects. These are inholdings. These are inholdings within lands that are owned by the Bureau of Land Management, and these are very important from both an environmental perspective and to lock up land. That's why the BLM favors the acquisition of these inholdings.

So I urge a "no" vote on this amendment.

Mr. TIAHRT. Madam Speaker, I move to strike the last word.

I think that the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) has made a good point and reinforced what I was saying in my opening statement that we can get overextended in the Park Service and acquire more than we can take care of.

The beautiful building that he used in his example provides a wonderful purpose is now closed because we have not been able to maintain it. My concern, in getting overextended, is that we build new buildings and acquire new land that we are unable to maintain and we get into the same problem that we're trying to correct today.

So I thank the gentleman for offering his amendment, and I think it makes a valid point.

The CHAIRMAN. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP).

The amendment was rejected.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Madam Chair, I move to strike the last word.

Madam Chair, I was going to offer an amendment today, but would like, rather, to speak on the subject of the amendment.

Madam Chair, I'd like to thank Chairman DICKS for all of his hard work on this bill.

Last week, Madam Chair, I was joined by Representative GERLACH and Representative PITTS as we relaunched the Bipartisan Land Conservation Caucus. And as one of the new co-Chairs of that caucus, I'm thrilled that the Interior Department budget that Mr. DICKS and his subcommittee have put together includes a major new investment in open space preservation funding, and I applaud their work here.

But protecting these spaces, once preserved, is a time-consuming, expensive, and often complex process. We're

lucky in this country, especially in New England where I hail from, to have amazing partners in this process, which are local land trusts. These land trusts were started by community members who want to preserve and protect the regional character of their special part of the world. Since their creation, they've grown into full-fledged partners in the conservation effort. Many of these trusts across the country have expanded and now have up to 10 or 20 full-time staff members; however, many still remain very small volunteer organizations with no staff support. For example, of the 128 land trusts in Connecticut, 103 of them are comprised solely of volunteers, the largest number of volunteer trusts in the country. It's these small land trusts that do most of the on-the-ground work, saving historic sites and priceless vistas that are so important to our regional character in New England.

However, in recent years the burden on these small land trusts has grown tremendously. In addition to their original task of seeking out lands to preserve, they are also now bound by IRS red tape and heavy enforcement duties. These land trusts are now responsible for ensuring that any conservation donation qualifies for the tax deduction offered by the IRS. These tax deductions have caused legions of landowners to choose to put valuable conservation easements on their land; however, a local volunteer land trust with no paid staffers cannot be expected to do the IRS's work for them to evaluate and sign off on every donation.

In addition, these small land trusts are now required to enforce and patrol the easements that they already hold. As more and more land is put into easements, more and more burdens are put on local land trusts to make sure that these easements are enforced. In Connecticut, there are now over 24,000 acres of land with conservation easements, and more and more land is added every year.

If the government is going to rely on these land trusts to do the administrative work associated with these easements for programs like the Land and Water Conservation Fund and Forest Legacy, it makes sense that we should partner with them to help them with these administrative duties.

I had planned on offering an amendment that would have allowed 1 percent of all land and water conservation funds appropriated by the Bureau of Land Management to be available to competitive grants to volunteer land trusts across this country. That money could be used in order to help them with some of the administrative costs that have been imposed.

Mr. DICKS. Madam Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. I yield to the gentleman from Washington.

Mr. DICKS. I want to commend the gentleman from Connecticut for his leadership on the land trust. This is

close to my heart. My youngest son, Ryan Dicks, works for the Cascade Land Conservancy in the State of Washington, and I'm very familiar with the work that these important agencies do.

And I want you to know that in our bill we have \$62 million in the Forest Legacy account, and we also have \$268 million for land and water conservation grants, of which 50 million is for the Stateside program. And though I can't accept your amendment this year, I want the gentleman to know that I want to work with you and see if there's some way that we can help these important entities do the job that is so important in preserving lands that are important to the American people.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Madam Chair, reclaiming my time. I thank the chairman very much for his offer to help. This is a historic investment in this bill in open space preservation and land preservation funding. I thank the chairman and his committee for their commitment to this very important issue, and I look forward to working with him to make sure that we are doing all we can to help those land trusts make the best use of this new historic and incredibly important commitment to land preservation and open space preservation.

Mr. SAXTON. Madam Chairlady, I rise to strike the last word.

Madam Chairlady, I would like to engage my distinguished colleague from Washington, Chairman DICKS, in a colloquy regarding funding for an important conservation project in the district I represent.

The State of New Jersey has only 3 percent Federal land ownership and is also the most densely populated State in the country. From national parks and wildlife areas to soccer fields and city playgrounds, our investments in conservation, preservation, wildlife and recreation pay dividends each and every day.

The coastal areas of our Nation are under extreme pressure for development. The Third District of New Jersey, where the Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge is located, is no exception. It is vital that we assist our States and local governments in a true Federal/State/local partnership to purchase tracts of land like the one within the Forsythe Refuge boundary, environmentally valuable land that can be bought now but most likely will be lost permanently for future use in the very near future.

I appreciate the challenges that the subcommittee faced in this difficult budget year; however, I am hopeful that we will recognize the importance of this project to the people that I represent and New Jersey as a whole.

We have a responsibility to our children to ensure that green spaces remain to provide clean air and water and ample opportunities to enjoy wildlife and the great outdoors. The economy of the district I represent depends on a vibrant and healthy economy.

I yield to my friend from Washington.

□ 1230

Mr. DICKS. I appreciate your yielding.

Madam Chairman, I thank my colleague from New Jersey for bringing this important project to my attention. I will be pleased to consider this funding need should additional funds become available in conference. And I also want to congratulate the gentleman for his outstanding leadership on many important issues dealing with conservation and the environment. And I particularly appreciated his cosponsorship of our bill that has just been reported out of the Natural Resources Committee in protecting our wildlife.

The gentleman is certainly an important leader from New Jersey, and we want to work with him.

Mr. SAXTON. Madam Chairman, I thank the chairman very much for his comments, and I appreciate our ongoing partnership and effort on issues such as this.

Mr. LUCAS. Madam Chairman, I move to strike the requisite number of words.

Madam Chairman, I wish to enter into a colloquy with the distinguished chairman of the subcommittee regarding the Indian Arts and Crafts Museum funding within the Department of Interior.

Chairman DICKS, I stand here today in support of the continued funding of the 2008 Interior appropriations bill for the three Regional Indian Arts and Crafts Museums that are currently operated by the Indian Arts and Crafts Board. Congress passed the Indian Arts and Crafts Act, which created and charged the Indian Arts and Crafts Board with promoting the Indian arts and crafts movement and with protecting the integrity of the art from non-Indian counterfeiters selling products advertised as "Indian made." To aid in this mission, the board operates three regional museums including the Southern Plains Indian Museum in Anadarko, Oklahoma; the Museum of the Plains Indian in Browning, Montana; and the Sioux Indian Museum in Rapid City, South Dakota.

In 1935 Congress recognized, under the first Indian Arts and Crafts Act, the unique and culturally rich art of the American Indian is vital to the importance of the economic welfare of tribal communities. The production and sale of these items provide an entrepreneurial opportunity to one of the most economically challenged groups of our society. These three museums play an essential role in promoting the ideals set forth in the Indian Arts and Crafts Act by creating interest in the Native American heritage, helping Indian artisans gain access to an interested market, and bringing members of the Indian arts community together to celebrate and preserve this way of life.

The collections showcased by the museums are extensive in their display of

American Indian artwork and artifacts. And to preserve the history and integrity of these priceless collections, the museums must stay intact and the collections under their roofs must stay in Federal control.

I stand today in full support of appropriations to support the mission of the Indian Arts and Crafts Board and insist that the funding and operation of the three Regional Indian Arts and Crafts Museums remain a continued, imperative part of this mission.

Mr. Chairman, it is the understanding of the committee that Congress charged the Indian Arts and Crafts Board with developing and expanding the market for the products of Indian art as well as protecting the integrity of such items through prohibiting and investigating instances of misrepresentation of "Indian-made" products.

Mr. DICKS. Madam Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. LUCAS. I yield to the gentleman from Washington.

Mr. DICKS. That is correct.

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Chairman, it is the understanding of the committee that the funding and operation of the three Regional Indian Arts and Crafts Museums in their housing, preserving, and promoting Native American history, art, and culture is clearly an essential part of the mission that Congress charged the Indian Arts and Crafts Board with.

Mr. DICKS. That is correct.

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Chairman, I want to clarify that that it is the intent of the committee that the money provided for the fiscal year 2008 Interior appropriations bill for the continued functions of the Arts and Crafts Board does include the operation of those three museums.

Mr. DICKS. The gentleman is correct. It is the intent of the committee to continue the operation of the three museums, and I appreciate the gentleman's interest in artwork on this important issue.

Mr. LUCAS. Madam Chairman, reclaiming my time, I thank the chairman and the ranking member and the committee for their very diligent work this year.

The CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will read. The Clerk read as follows:

#### OREGON AND CALIFORNIA GRANT LANDS

For expenses necessary for management, protection, and development of resources and for construction, operation, and maintenance of access roads, reforestation, and other improvements on the revested Oregon and California Railroad grant lands, on other Federal lands in the Oregon and California land-grant counties of Oregon, and on adjacent rights-of-way; and acquisition of lands or interests therein, including existing connecting roads on or adjacent to such grant lands; \$110,242,000, to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That 25 percent of the aggregate of all receipts during the current fiscal year from the revested Oregon and California Railroad grant lands is hereby made a charge against the Oregon and California land-grant fund and shall be transferred to the General Fund in the Treasury in accordance with the second paragraph of

subsection (b) of title II of the Act of August 28, 1937 (50 Stat. 876).

#### FOREST ECOSYSTEM HEALTH AND RECOVERY FUND

(REVOLVING FUND, SPECIAL ACCOUNT)

In addition to the purposes authorized in Public Law 102-381, funds made available in the Forest Ecosystem Health and Recovery Fund can be used for the purpose of planning, preparing, implementing and monitoring salvage timber sales and forest ecosystem health and recovery activities, such as release from competing vegetation and density control treatments. The Federal share of receipts (defined as the portion of salvage timber receipts not paid to the counties under 43 U.S.C. 1181f and 43 U.S.C. 1181f-1 et seq., and Public Law 106-393) derived from treatments funded by this account shall be deposited into the Forest Ecosystem Health and Recovery Fund.

#### RANGE IMPROVEMENTS

For rehabilitation, protection, and acquisition of lands and interests therein, and improvement of Federal rangelands pursuant to section 401 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1701), notwithstanding any other Act, sums equal to 50 percent of all moneys received during the prior fiscal year under sections 3 and 15 of the Taylor Grazing Act (43 U.S.C. 315 et seq.) and the amount designated for range improvements from grazing fees and mineral leasing receipts from Bankhead-Jones lands transferred to the Department of the Interior pursuant to law, but not less than \$10,000,000, to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That not to exceed \$600,000 shall be available for administrative expenses.

#### SERVICE CHARGES, DEPOSITS, AND FORFEITURES

For administrative expenses and other costs related to processing application documents and other authorizations for use and disposal of public lands and resources, for costs of providing copies of official public land documents, for monitoring construction, operation, and termination of facilities in conjunction with use authorizations, and for rehabilitation of damaged property, such amounts as may be collected under Public Law 94-579, as amended, and Public Law 93-153, to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That, notwithstanding any provision to the contrary of section 305(a) of Public Law 94-579 (43 U.S.C. 1735(a)), any moneys that have been or will be received pursuant to that section, whether as a result of forfeiture, compromise, or settlement, if not appropriate for refund pursuant to section 305(c) of that Act (43 U.S.C. 1735(c)), shall be available and may be expended under the authority of this Act by the Secretary to improve, protect, or rehabilitate any public lands administered through the Bureau of Land Management which have been damaged by the action of a resource developer, purchaser, permittee, or any unauthorized person, without regard to whether all moneys collected from each such action are used on the exact lands damaged which led to the action: *Provided further*, That any such moneys that are in excess of amounts needed to repair damage to the exact land for which funds were collected may be used to repair other damaged public lands.

#### MISCELLANEOUS TRUST FUNDS

In addition to amounts authorized to be expended under existing laws, there is hereby appropriated such amounts as may be contributed under section 307 of the Act of October 21, 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1701), and such amounts as may be advanced for administrative costs, surveys, appraisals, and costs of making conveyances of omitted lands under section

211(b) of that Act, to remain available until expended.

WILDLAND FIRE MANAGEMENT  
(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For necessary expenses for fire preparedness, suppression operations, fire science and research, emergency rehabilitation and hazardous fuels reduction by the Department of the Interior, \$806,644,000, to remain available until expended, of which not to exceed \$4,000,000 shall be for the renovation or construction of fire facilities: *Provided*, That such funds are also available for repayment of advances to other appropriation accounts from which funds were previously transferred for such purposes: *Provided further*, That persons hired pursuant to 43 U.S.C. 1469 may be furnished subsistence and lodging without cost from funds available from this appropriation: *Provided further*, That notwithstanding 42 U.S.C. 1856d, sums received by a bureau or office of the Department of the Interior for fire protection rendered pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 1856 et seq., protection of United States property, may be credited to the appropriation from which funds were expended to provide that protection, and are available without fiscal year limitation: *Provided further*, That using the amounts designated under this title of this Act, the Secretary of the Interior may enter into procurement contracts, grants, or cooperative agreements, for hazardous fuels reduction activities, and for training and monitoring associated with such hazardous fuels reduction activities, on Federal land, or on adjacent non-Federal land for activities that benefit resources on Federal land: *Provided further*, That the costs of implementing any cooperative agreement between the Federal Government and any non-Federal entity may be shared, as mutually agreed on by the affected parties: *Provided further*, That notwithstanding requirements of the Competition in Contracting Act, the Secretary, for purposes of hazardous fuels reduction activities, may obtain maximum practicable competition among: (1) local private, nonprofit, or cooperative entities; (2) Youth Conservation Corps crews, Public Lands Corps (Public Law 109-154), or related partnerships with State, local, or non-profit youth groups; (3) small or micro-businesses; or (4) other entities that will hire or train locally a significant percentage, defined as 50 percent or more, of the project workforce to complete such contracts: *Provided further*, That in implementing this section, the Secretary shall develop written guidance to field units to ensure accountability and consistent application of the authorities provided herein: *Provided further*, That funds appropriated under this head may be used to reimburse the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service for the costs of carrying out their responsibilities under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.) to consult and conference, as required by section 7 of such Act, in connection with wildland fire management activities: *Provided further*, That the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture may authorize the transfer of funds appropriated for wildland fire management, in an aggregate amount not to exceed \$9,000,000, between the Departments when such transfers would facilitate and expedite jointly funded wildland fire management programs and projects: *Provided further*, That funds provided for wildfire suppression shall be available for support of Federal emergency response actions.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS

Appropriations for the Bureau of Land Management shall be available for purchase, erection, and dismantlement of temporary

structures, and alteration and maintenance of necessary buildings and appurtenant facilities to which the United States has title; up to \$100,000 for payments, at the discretion of the Secretary, for information or evidence concerning violations of laws administered by the Bureau; miscellaneous and emergency expenses of enforcement activities authorized or approved by the Secretary and to be accounted for solely on the Secretary's certificate, not to exceed \$10,000: *Provided*, That notwithstanding 44 U.S.C. 501, the Bureau may, under cooperative cost-sharing and partnership arrangements authorized by law, procure printing services from cooperators in connection with jointly produced publications for which the cooperators share the cost of printing either in cash or in services, and the Bureau determines the cooperator is capable of meeting accepted quality standards.

Section 28 of title 30, United States Code, is amended: (1) in section 28 by striking the phrase "shall commence at 12 o'clock meridian on the 1st day of September" and inserting "shall commence at 12:01 ante meridian on the 1st day of September"; (2) in section 28(a), by striking the phrase "for years 2004 through 2008"; and (3) in section 28g, by striking the phrase "and before September 30, 2008".

Sums not to exceed one percent of the total value of procurements received by the Bureau of Land Management from vendors under enterprise information technology procurements that the Department of the Interior and other Federal Government agencies may use to order information technology hereafter may be deposited into the Management of Lands and Resources account to offset costs incurred in conducting the procurement.

UNITED STATES FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE  
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

For necessary expenses of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, as authorized by law, and for scientific and economic studies, maintenance of the herd of long-horned cattle on the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge, general administration, and for the performance of other authorized functions related to such resources by direct expenditure, contracts, grants, cooperative agreements and reimbursable agreements with public and private entities, \$1,104,572,000, to remain available until September 30, 2009 except as otherwise provided herein: *Provided*, That \$2,500,000 is for high priority projects, which shall be carried out by the Youth Conservation Corps: *Provided further*, That not to exceed \$18,763,000 shall be used for implementing subsections (a), (b), (c), and (e) of section 4 of the Endangered Species Act, as amended, for species that are indigenous to the United States (except for processing petitions, developing and issuing proposed and final regulations, and taking any other steps to implement actions described in subsection (c)(2)(A), (c)(2)(B)(i), or (c)(2)(B)(ii)), of which not to exceed \$12,926,000 shall be used for any activity regarding the designation of critical habitat, pursuant to subsection (a)(3), excluding litigation support, for species listed pursuant to subsection (a)(1) prior to October 1, 2007: *Provided further*, That of the amount available for law enforcement, up to \$400,000, to remain available until expended, may at the discretion of the Secretary be used for payment for information, rewards, or evidence concerning violations of laws administered by the Service, and miscellaneous and emergency expenses of enforcement activity, authorized or approved by the Secretary and to be accounted for solely on the Secretary's certificate: *Provided further*, That of the amount provided for environmental contami-

nants, up to \$1,000,000 may remain available until expended for contaminant sample analyses.

CONSTRUCTION

For construction, improvement, acquisition, or removal of buildings and other facilities required in the conservation, management, investigation, protection, and utilization of fishery and wildlife resources, and the acquisition of lands and interests therein; \$31,653,000, to remain available until expended.

LAND ACQUISITION

For expenses necessary to carry out the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965, as amended (16 U.S.C. 4601-4 through 11), including administrative expenses, and for acquisition of land or waters, or interest therein, in accordance with statutory authority applicable to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, \$43,046,000, to be derived from the Land and Water Conservation Fund and to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That none of the funds appropriated for specific land acquisition projects can be used to pay for any administrative overhead, planning or other management costs.

COOPERATIVE ENDANGERED SPECIES  
CONSERVATION FUND

For expenses necessary to carry out section 6 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.), as amended, \$81,001,000, to remain available until expended.

NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE FUND

For expenses necessary to implement the Act of October 17, 1978 (16 U.S.C. 715s), \$14,202,000.

NORTH AMERICAN WETLANDS CONSERVATION  
FUND

For expenses necessary to carry out the provisions of the North American Wetlands Conservation Act, as amended, (16 U.S.C. 4401-4414), \$42,646,000 to remain available until expended.

NEOTROPICAL MIGRATORY BIRD CONSERVATION

For expenses necessary to carry out the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 6101 et seq.), \$5,000,000, to remain available until expended.

MULTINATIONAL SPECIES CONSERVATION FUND

For expenses necessary to carry out the African Elephant Conservation Act (16 U.S.C. 4201-4203, 4211-4213, 4221-4225, 4241-4245, and 1538), the Asian Elephant Conservation Act of 1997 (16 U.S.C. 4261-4266), the Rhinoceros and Tiger Conservation Act of 1994 (16 U.S.C. 5301-5306), the Great Ape Conservation Act of 2000 (16 U.S.C. 6301-6305), and the Marine Turtle Conservation Act of 2004 (16 U.S.C. 6301-6305), \$10,000,000, to remain available until expended.

STATE AND TRIBAL WILDLIFE GRANTS

For wildlife conservation grants to States and to the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, the United States Virgin Islands, the Northern Mariana Islands, American Samoa, and federally-recognized Indian tribes under the provisions of the Fish and Wildlife Act of 1956 and the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, for the development and implementation of programs for the benefit of wildlife and their habitat, including species that are not hunted or fished, \$85,000,000, to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That of the amount provided herein, \$7,000,000 is for a competitive grant program for Indian tribes not subject to the remaining provisions of this appropriation: *Provided further*, That \$5,000,000 is for a competitive grant program for States, territories, and other jurisdictions with approved plans, not subject to the remaining provisions of this appropriation: *Provided further*, That the Secretary

shall, after deducting said \$12,000,000 and administrative expenses, apportion the amount provided herein in the following manner: (1) to the District of Columbia and to the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, each a sum equal to not more than one-half of 1 percent thereof; and (2) to Guam, American Samoa, the United States Virgin Islands, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, each a sum equal to not more than one-fourth of 1 percent thereof: *Provided further*, That the Secretary shall apportion the remaining amount in the following manner: (1) one-third of which is based on the ratio to which the land area of such State bears to the total land area of all such States; and (2) two-thirds of which is based on the ratio to which the population of such State bears to the total population of all such States: *Provided further*, That the amounts apportioned under this paragraph shall be adjusted equitably so that no State shall be apportioned a sum which is less than 1 percent of the amount available for apportionment under this paragraph for any fiscal year or more than 5 percent of such amount: *Provided further*, That the Federal share of planning grants shall not exceed 75 percent of the total costs of such projects and the Federal share of implementation grants shall not exceed 50 percent of the total costs of such projects: *Provided further*, That the non-Federal share of such projects may not be derived from Federal grant programs: *Provided further*, That no State, territory, or other jurisdiction shall receive a grant if its comprehensive wildlife conservation plan is disapproved and such funds that would have been distributed to such State, territory, or other jurisdiction shall be distributed equitably to States, territories, and other jurisdictions with approved plans: *Provided further*, That any amount apportioned in 2008 to any State, territory, or other jurisdiction that remains unobligated as of September 30, 2009, shall be reapportioned, together with funds appropriated in 2010, in the manner provided herein.

#### ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS

Appropriations and funds available to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service shall be available for repair of damage to public roads within and adjacent to reservation areas caused by operations of the Service; options for the purchase of land at not to exceed \$1 for each option; facilities incident to such public recreational uses on conservation areas as are consistent with their primary purpose; and the maintenance and improvement of aquaria, buildings, and other facilities under the jurisdiction of the Service and to which the United States has title, and which are used pursuant to law in connection with management, and investigation of fish and wildlife resources: *Provided*, That notwithstanding 44 U.S.C. 501, the Service may, under cooperative cost sharing and partnership arrangements authorized by law, procure printing services from cooperators in connection with jointly produced publications for which the cooperators share at least one-half the cost of printing either in cash or services and the Service determines the cooperator is capable of meeting accepted quality standards: *Provided further*, That, notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Service may use up to \$2,000,000 from funds provided for contracts for employment-related legal services: *Provided further*, That the Service may accept donated aircraft as replacements for existing aircraft: *Provided further*, That, notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary of the Interior may not spend any of the funds appropriated in this Act for the purchase of lands or interests in lands to be used in the establishment of any new unit of the Na-

tional Wildlife Refuge System unless the purchase is approved in advance by the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations in compliance with the reprogramming procedures contained in the statement of the managers accompanying this Act.

#### NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

##### OPERATION OF THE NATIONAL PARK SYSTEM

For expenses necessary for the management, operation, and maintenance of areas and facilities administered by the National Park Service (including expenses to carry out programs of the United States Park Police), and for the general administration of the National Park Service, \$2,046,809,000, of which \$9,965,000 is for planning and interagency coordination in support of Everglades restoration and shall remain available until expended; of which \$100,164,000, to remain available until September 30, 2009, is for maintenance, repair or rehabilitation projects for constructed assets, operation of the National Park Service automated facility management software system, environmental studies, and comprehensive facility condition assessments; and of which \$4,000,000 shall be for the Youth Conservation Corps and the Public Lands Corps (Public Law 109-154) for high priority projects.

##### AMENDMENT NO. 16 OFFERED BY MR. HASTINGS OF FLORIDA

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Madam Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Amendment No. 16 offered by Mr. HASTINGS of Florida:

Page 18, line 23, after the first dollar amount, insert “(reduced by \$1,000,000) (increased by \$1,000,000)”.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Madam Chairman, I rise today to offer an amendment with my good friend, Congressman MICHAEL CASTLE of Delaware, to the Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act for fiscal year 2008.

Our amendment designates \$1 million of the increase in appropriations to the National Park Service for operations and grants affiliated with the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom.

Madam Chairman, Members on both sides of the aisle agree that the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom is a phenomenal resource of the National Park Service. Interest in the network continues to grow with affiliates in 28 States and the District of Columbia now operating since its inception in 1998. More opportunities than ever are now available for families throughout the Nation to engage in interpretive learning experiences related to the significant triumph of the underground railroad.

Madam Chair, the President's request of \$493,000 for the operation demonstrates a slight increase for the network, but the true problem lies in the lack of grants for affiliates. The grant opportunities for network affiliates have only been funded three times since the establishment of the network in 1998 and woefully less than the \$2.5 million authorized in the establishing legislation.

Our amendment is not just about preserving black history. Madam Chair, it

is about preserving American history, and we cannot let our history be forgotten. Indeed, once Congress establishes a phenomenal program such as this, it should be ready to take the necessary action to ensure its perpetuity. This is our past and we must be faithful stewards of it.

I would like to thank Chairman DICKS and Ranking Member TIAHRT for their help in bringing this timely amendment to the floor today.

Madam Chairman, I would like to, at this time, yield to my friend, Mr. CASTLE.

Mr. CASTLE. Madam Chairman, let me thank the gentleman from Florida tremendously for his work on this. And I, too, rise in strong support of the Hastings-Castle amendment expressing congressional intent that the operations and grants budget for the Underground Railroad Network to Freedom program receive adequate funding.

I understand Chairman DICKS and Ranking Member TIAHRT are willing to accept the amendment; so I will be brief.

By helping local communities share the stories of the men and women who resisted slavery through escape and flight in the underground railroad, the Network to Freedom is a tremendous historical resource. Without continued and adequate funding, efforts to operate and provide grants to support a variety of underground railroad preservation and interpretive projects throughout the United States will be greatly diminished.

Promoting programs and partnerships to commemorate this time in history and educating the public about the historical significance of the underground railroad are vital. It is for this reason we offer this amendment today.

Again, I would like to thank the distinguished gentleman from Florida. We in Delaware have a lot of involvement with the underground railroad during that time. I think it is a significant part of our history.

Mr. DICKS. Madam Chairman, will the gentleman from Florida yield?

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. I yield to the gentleman from Washington.

Mr. DICKS. Madam Chairman, we are prepared to accept the amendment.

I want to commend the gentleman from Florida and the gentleman from Delaware for their outstanding leadership. This is a very important issue. And as we understand it, this would come out of existing funds within the park service?

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. That is correct.

Mr. DICKS. With that understanding, Madam Chairman, we accept the amendment.

Mr. TIAHRT. Madam Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. I yield to the gentleman from Kansas.

Mr. TIAHRT. Madam Chairman, I want to thank the gentleman from Florida and commend him on his leadership on this issue and also the gentleman from Delaware (Mr. CASTLE).



I think this is a very important time in American history that we need to capture and preserve for future generations. So congratulations. We have no objection to this amendment.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Reclaiming my time, thank you, Chairman DICKS, Ranking Member TIAHRT, and Governor CASTLE.

The CHAIRMAN. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 32 OFFERED BY MR. WEINER

Mr. WEINER. Madam Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Amendment No. 32 offered by Mr. WEINER: Page 18, line 23, insert "(increased by \$1,000,000)" after the first dollar amount.

Page 39, line 17, insert "(reduced by \$1,000,000)" after the first dollar amount.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WEINER. Madam Chairman, I doubt I will take the full 5 minutes.

As remarkable as it might seem to anyone who is listening to these remarks, there is one national park in our country that was closed after September 11 that remains closed to this day.

We all remember that after September 11, there was kind of a general lockdown. We weren't sure what was going to happen next. National parks throughout the country were closed. That included this building. It included the White House. It included, frankly, monuments, memorials, and parks throughout the country.

Almost immediately thereafter, with some changes to security, some more enhanced like this building, some less so like some national parks, every single one of the national parks and institutions was reopened, except for one: the Statue of Liberty. Perhaps the single most symbolic of all parks, the Statue of Liberty remains closed to this day. It is true you can take a ferry and go around the Statue of Liberty. It is even true that you can go to its base, walk inside, and tap Lady Liberty's toes. But the Statue of Liberty and its iconic stairway that leads to the very top, to the crown, where all of us or so many of us remember standing on our tiptoes to see that regal view, remains closed today.

Now, my colleagues, you might be wondering how could it be nearly 7 years after September 11 the park is still closed? Let me tell you a few reasons why it is not the case.

First of all, there has been plenty of money. This committee and private beneficiaries have raised over \$20 million for security enhancements, for changes. In fact, we all remember after September 11 a foundation was formed, Folger's and American Express and all kinds of institutions, the Daily News, my hometown newspaper. Kids were gathering up pennies and dimes and

nickles. So there was no shortage of money. But we do know what there appears to be a shortage of, and that is imagination or courage on the part of the National Park Service.

We in this House, by a resounding fashion last year, 266 of us voted to say open up Lady Liberty to her crown. But the National Park Service, after years of kind of thinking about it and scratching their chin and twiddling their hair and flipping through papers, last year, at the urging of Mr. DICKS and others, finally sent this body a letter that said, "we have concluded that the current access patterns reflect a responsible management strategy in the best interests of all our visitors."

□ 1245

Well, that is bureaucratic speech, saying to Congress and the American people, take a hike, we're going to do what we want. Saying to the chairman of the committee, the ranking member, 266 of us, We don't care what your views are, we don't care about the private donations, we don't care about the reasonable accommodations that can be made, we're not opening up the Statue of Liberty.

And I say reasonable accommodations because there are things that can be done. Look, there is no doubt about it, there are narrow staircases, there are narrow passageways, not as narrow as this building, and there are sensitive locations, not as sensitive as the White House, but we've figured out ways to accommodate visitors, although in a limited fashion, in those places.

My colleague, Congressman SIRES, who is here today to offer this amendment with me and who I, regretfully, have to admit, according to the Supreme Court, that the Statue of Liberty is in his district. Although I would point out that Lady Liberty's caboose faces New Jersey, not her proud crown. But I want to thank him for all that he has done and for seeing that this is a national issue.

Let me just say this in closing: you know, we have heard it thrown around a lot, We mustn't let the terrorists win, We mustn't let the terrorists win. Can you imagine the symbolic sacrifice and the symbolic surrender we have made by saying that, because there are security concerns, we're not going to reopen the Statue of Liberty? How many of us don't remember the experience of climbing those narrow staircases?

So what does this amendment do? This amendment says, you say you can't do it? We're going to give you another million dollars to do it. It takes \$1 million and strikes it from the administration's account, puts it in the National Park Service account and says, if you need more money, here it is.

I also want to thank my colleagues on the Resources Committee, subcommittee Chairman GRIJALVA, full committee Chairman RAHALL, for considering and tentatively agreeing to do hearings to look into this.

This is simply wrong. And to my chairman, Mr. DICKS, and to my ranking member, Mr. TIAHRT, there are no stronger advocates for the National Park Service than they, no stronger protectors of the national budget than they.

This is not a frivolous idea. This is Lady Liberty. This is making sure we restore the dignity of our National Park Service everywhere, but particularly in this most symbolic place.

Mr. SIRES. Madam Chair, I move to strike the last word.

I really want to thank Congressman WEINER, this has been an issue that is close to his heart, for offering this amendment.

Let me start my remarks talking a little bit about 9/11. I was the mayor of a small community across from New York, and I was a citizen. I watched as the Towers burned. I will never forget that vision in my mind. It was a symbolic blow to the Nation's spirit. But we have recovered our spirit. Today, America stands strong and proud again. And an important part of the recovery is due to the fact that we were able to get back to work. In short, we got back our lives.

As the Secretary of the Interior, Ms. Norton, said on September 12, 2001 while standing at the Hoover Dam, "Even though atrocities such as those of September 11 can affect us, they cannot close us down." That is why I am cosponsoring this amendment today.

The only national park that remains closed from 9/11 is the crown of the Statue of Liberty. I hope that with this amendment we will open up the crown for visiting once again.

Yes, it is symbolic, but symbols are important. And let me say that there are three sites that most immigrants, when they come to the area, like to look at. One is the Statue of Liberty, the other is going up the Empire State Building, and the other is Niagara Falls. We can go to the other two, but we cannot go all the way up to the Statue of Liberty.

I thank my friend from New York for proposing this amendment and for his time.

Mr. DICKS. If the gentleman will yield, I want to commend the gentlemen from New York and New Jersey for their leadership, and I urge that the committee adopt this amendment.

Mr. WEINER. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. SIRES. I will yield.

Mr. WEINER. I want to offer my gratitude to the chairman, who has been helpful to us all throughout, and the ranking member, Mr. TIAHRT, for all that they have done.

Mr. DICKS. And by the way, we have a new director of the National Parks Service. I think it may be good to give her an opportunity to review this, too. So I think we ought to give her another chance to look at this.

Mr. SIRES. We do have the Statue of Liberty in New Jersey, and we have the better side facing New Jersey.

Mr. TIAHRT. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. SIRES. Absolutely.

Mr. TIAHRT. I would like to say I have no objection to this, and I appreciate the gentlemen from New York and New Jersey for attempting to open up the steps of Liberty once again.

The CHAIRMAN. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. WEINER).

The amendment was agreed to.

Mr. OLVER. Madam Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

First I want to commend the chairman and the ranking member for bringing forward a very good bill. And I want to also commend the chairman and the ranking member for agreeing to the amendment that has just been adopted. But I want to put that a little bit in context here.

I have to say that I was surprised and somewhat chagrined by the characterization of the ranking member of the full committee when he described this legislation, this whole legislation, as having an excessive and overgenerous allocation. I don't really think that that is the case, and the Park Service programs within this bill are a perfect example of that.

We are coming up on the 100th anniversary of the National Park Service and have a lot of work to do to bring that up to a state of good repair, the facilities of the National Park Service up to a state of good repair.

The Park Service embarked on a program to try to repair some damage that has been done, particularly in the fiscal years 2005 and 2006. The reduction in budget compared with what would be, including inflation, the necessary funding to keep the maintenance of service in the Park Service programs is close to 20 percent in those two fiscal years. And in fiscal year 2007, we were able to virtually level fund the budget for programs within the Department of the Interior and the Park Service at just no increase. But now this year, with this legislation, there is an additional \$105 million in the legislation for the increase in the Park Service's base funding which should allow them to begin to make some additions in the maintenance, the backlog of maintenance, which is so well described in the previous amendment, and the need at one of our greatest, most important national monuments, the Statue of Liberty, to make that available to the public.

We have hundreds of millions of people in total that visit our national parks, our national monuments, our historic sites, our fish and wildlife refuges, and the maintenance backlog is in the billions of dollars level, of which \$105 million to deal with the backlog needs in the Park Service's accounts is only a small portion of what is needed to bring up our facilities that serve those hundreds of millions of the public who visit at all these variation locations each year, to bring them up to a state of good repair. So I think that it

is important that we provide those monies.

I know there will be other amendments. I will be supportive of those amendments, which also increase the amounts that can go, reasonably, into state of good repair for our facilities under the Park Service for those national parks, historic sites and national monuments that we so badly need in good repair for the visitation and for the education of the public.

The Park Service system is a national treasure, and it must be preserved and valued for our future generations.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. KING OF IOWA

Mr. KING of Iowa. Madam Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment offered by Mr. KING of Iowa:  
Page 18, line 23, insert "(increased by \$100,000,000)" after the first dollar amount.

Page 58, line 3 insert "(reduced by \$62,000,000)" after the dollar amount.

Page 59, line 3 insert "(reduced by \$160,000,000)" after the dollar amount.

Page 66, line 23, insert "(reduced by \$1,000,000)" after the dollar amount.

Mr. DICKS. Madam Chair, I reserve a point of order.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman reserves a point of order.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Madam Chair, the amendment that I offer here today is an amendment that reaches out and directs \$100 million to the National Parks Service for the purpose of putting up barriers on our border. This comes from one of my multiple trips down to the region where I sat and talked with a number of the park officers and visited the border parks that we have. And I can take you down through the pieces of this argument, but I think the centerpiece of it was addressed by Mr. BISHOP of Utah, when he talked about one-third of the Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument being set aside off limits to American citizens, to American tourists because it has been so inundated by illegals and by drug smugglers and drug traffickers and litter that when I asked to go to that area, they said it's not safe, we don't have the personnel to take you. So it's essential that we protect these national treasures that we have, these national parks and national monuments.

I want to reflect upon an example here, Madam Chair, and that is this poster that I have. This shows the entrance to the lesser long-nosed bat cave. It's one of four maternal bat caves in the United States. And this is an endangered species. This is a location where illegals used to go in and hole up. And their constant presence there drove the bats out. The 4,000 bats that lived here were driven to other places. They found \$75,000 in their budget and volunteer labor and went to build and construct this barrier around the bat cave to keep the illegals out. The bats returned, thankfully. But we have other species, and we have this precious area.

And if I can reflect back, Madam Chair, just upon my notes with a meeting with the director of one of our national parks on the border. First, he said we were concerned about disease, hoof and mouth disease, for example, as I am. But from 1978 to 1984, there wasn't much of a problem with illegal traffic. By 1989, activity had picked up. By 1999, 13 miles of fence were stolen. By the year 2002, "everything went haywire." The numbers increased dramatically, 20 to 25 cars at any one time abandoned, litter all over the parks, 20,000 pounds of drugs recovered just on that refuge alone. And his question is not, what are you going to give me? But what can I cut in order to save these national parks?

So I've made a recommendation on what to cut, Madam Chair, and it reaches out into three different areas to come up with \$100 million so that we can protect these national parks along our border from this traffic. When it gets so bad that the litter is so bad that we won't let Americans drive by on the road and look, when it gets so bad that a Member of Congress can't get an escort with enough armed personnel to go down into one-third of the Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument, the location where Park Officer Chris Eggle was killed in the line of duty in order to intercept a drug smuggler across the border, I call upon this Congress, Madam Chair, to do something. And the director of this park said to me, a year or two or five ago, I would have said don't build a fence, don't build a wall, I don't want that mark across my monument. Today I say, that's what will preserve the rest of it.

So I think that makes my strongest argument. We need to find the funds to protect our precious national resources. There should be not one square foot of a national park that an American citizen is off limits to because we can't protect it from infiltrators that come from across the border to smuggle drugs and commit crimes.

So I would urge adoption of this amendment.

Mr. DICKS. Madam Chairman, I rise in opposition to the gentleman's amendment.

First of all I want to say that I am a strong supporter of our national parks. And our committee takes a back seat to no one. My problem with this amendment is the source of the offset.

The bill provides a \$223 million increase for our national parks, for the 10-year \$3 billion Centennial Challenge effort to restore the parks for the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Park Service.

□ 1300

The bill also includes \$50 million in discretionary funds for the Centennial Challenge projects. These funds will support enhancements in our parks beyond the funding necessary for core operations. This is the best bill for the parks in decades, but I cannot support

a wholesale gutting of the important work done by the Environmental Protection Agency. The gentleman's amendment would severely cut two of EPA's most important programs. He proposes to reduce by \$160 million the Superfund program that cleans up toxic waste sites across our country.

Currently, there are over 1,400 Superfund sites. More than 6 million people live within 1 mile of a Superfund site and 76 million live within 4 miles of these sites.

Our bill increases Superfund above the request. Why? Because as the Superfund program matures, the remaining sites are more complex, take longer to clean up, and require more funding. How do we explain the proposed reduction to those 76 million Americans? Do you ask them to wait even longer to remove the hazardous substances in their neighborhoods?

The amendment would also cut EPA's core environmental programs, those funded through the environmental programs and management account.

The account funds the activities which are the backbone of the Nation's environmental programs. EPA sets pollutant abatement standards. It issues permits to control these standards. It enforces those permits to ensure compliance with environmental standards. This account funds programs that control toxic air pollutants which threaten to poison our cities.

This account funds the Energy Star program, a program that most Americans know by name and trust, a program that has saved Americans \$12 billion in energy costs in 2005 alone. This account funds the programs which license pesticides that control harmful exposures. This account funds programs which protect children, our most precious resource, from indoor air pollutants. With the geographic programs funded through this account, EPA helps to protect the great, and unfortunately threatened, waterways of our Nation.

Madam Chairwoman, I am certainly a great supporter of the parks. I believe the underlying bill is proof of that. But I cannot support an effort to reduce the programs that are the fundamental basis for our Nation's environmental protection.

I urge a no vote on the gentleman's amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. Does the gentleman withdraw his reservation of a point of order?

Mr. DICKS. Madam Chairman, yes, I withdraw my reservation.

The CHAIRMAN. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING).

The question was taken; and the Chairman announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Iowa will be postponed.

The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

#### CENTENNIAL CHALLENGE

For expenses necessary to carry out provisions of section 814(g) of Public Law 104-333 relating to challenge cost share agreements, \$50,000,000, to remain available until expended for Centennial Challenge signature projects and programs: *Provided*, That not less than 50 percent of the total cost of each project or program is derived from non-Federal sources in the form of donated cash, assets, in-kind services, or a pledge of donation guaranteed by an irrevocable letter of credit.

#### NATIONAL RECREATION AND PRESERVATION

For expenses necessary to carry out recreation programs, natural programs, cultural programs, heritage partnership programs, environmental compliance and review, international park affairs, statutory or contractual aid for other activities, and grant administration, not otherwise provided for, \$62,881,000.

#### HISTORIC PRESERVATION FUND (INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)

For expenses necessary in carrying out the Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470), and the Omnibus Parks and Public Lands Management Act of 1996 (Public Law 104-333), \$81,500,000, to be derived from the Historic Preservation Fund and to remain available until September 30, 2009; of which \$20,000,000 shall be for Save America's Treasures for preservation of nationally significant sites, structures, and artifacts and of which \$10,000,000 shall be for Preserve America grants to States, Tribes, and local communities for projects that preserve important historic resources through the promotion of heritage tourism: *Provided*, That any individual Save America's Treasures or Preserve America grant shall be matched by non-Federal funds; individual projects shall only be eligible for one grant; and all projects to be funded shall be approved by the Secretary of the Interior in consultation with the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations: *Provided further*, That Save America's Treasures funds allocated for Federal projects, following approval, shall be available by transfer to appropriate accounts of individual agencies.

#### CONSTRUCTION

For construction, improvements, repair or replacement of physical facilities, including the modifications authorized by section 104 of the Everglades National Park Protection and Expansion Act of 1989, \$201,580,000, to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That funds provided under this heading for implementation of modified water deliveries to Everglades National Park shall be expended consistent with the requirements of the fifth proviso under this heading in Public Law 108-108: *Provided further*, That funds provided under this heading for implementation of modified water deliveries to Everglades National Park shall be available for obligation only if matching funds are appropriated to the Army Corps of Engineers for the same purpose: *Provided further*, That none of the funds provided under this heading for implementation of modified water deliveries to Everglades National Park shall be available for obligation if any of the funds appropriated to the Army Corps of Engineers for the purpose of implementing modified water deliveries, including finalizing detailed engineering and design documents for a bridge or series of bridges for the Tamiami Trail component of the project, becomes unavailable for obligation.

#### LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND (RESCISSION)

The contract authority provided for fiscal year 2008 by 16 U.S.C. 4601-10a is rescinded.

#### LAND ACQUISITION AND STATE ASSISTANCE

For expenses necessary to carry out the Land and Water Conservation Act of 1965, as amended (16 U.S.C. 4601-4 through 11), including administrative expenses, and for acquisition of lands or waters, or interest therein, in accordance with the statutory authority applicable to the National Park Service, \$99,402,000, to be derived from the Land and Water Conservation Fund and to remain available until expended, of which \$50,000,000 is for the State assistance program.

#### ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS

If the Secretary of the Interior considers that the decision of any value determination proceeding conducted under a National Park Service concession contract issued prior to November 13, 1998, misinterprets or misapplies relevant contractual requirements or their underlying legal authority, then the Secretary may seek, within 180 days of any such decision, the de novo review of the value determination by the United States Court of Federal Claims. This court may make an order affirming, vacating, modifying or correcting the determination.

In addition to other uses set forth in section 407(d) of Public Law 105-391, franchise fees credited to a sub-account shall be available for expenditure by the Secretary, without further appropriation, for use at any unit within the National Park System to extinguish or reduce liability for possessory interest or leasehold surrender interest. Such funds may only be used for this purpose to the extent that the benefiting unit anticipated franchise fee receipts over the term of the contract at that unit exceed the amount of funds used to extinguish or reduce liability. Franchise fees at the benefiting unit shall be credited to the sub-account of the originating unit over a period not to exceed the term of a single contract at the benefiting unit, in the amount of funds so expended to extinguish or reduce liability.

A willing seller from whom the Service acquires title to real property may be considered a "displaced person" for purposes of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policy Act and its implementing regulations, whether or not the Service has the authority to acquire such property by eminent domain.

Section 3(f) of the Act of August 21, 1935 (16 U.S.C. 463(f)), related to the National Park System Advisory Board, is amended in the first sentence by striking "2007" and inserting "2009".

Mr. KIRK. Madam Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Madam Chairman, I rise today just to support this legislation which increases funds, provides programs that protect our national forests and parks and enhance our clean water infrastructure. The bill also provides more than \$1.3 billion for Great Lakes restoration and protection programs and an increase of \$32 million over fiscal year 2007.

Providing water, jobs, food and recreation for more than 40 million people, the Great Lakes are one of our Nation's most valuable natural habitats. It is critical that we continue to support programs and provide funds that ensure the restoration and preservation of this National treasure.

Now, in this bill we fund the Great Lakes Legacy Act, which is a critical component of this ecosystems restoration. It provides funds for the cleanup of the most polluted sites in the region. There are 26 of these sites designated

officially as areas of concern located wholly within the United States and then five more inside Canada. From six of the projects that we receive funding since the program's inception, the EPA estimates that over 1.2 million cubic yards of contaminated sediments will be removed.

Madam Chairman, I really want to thank Chairman DICKS and ranking member TIAHRT for working with me to increase funds above the President's request to provide \$37 million for this program, which is an increase of over \$7 million last year.

I also want to thank these gentlemen for providing an increase of roughly \$3 million to the National Great Lakes Program Office to fund additional staff to implement the Legacy Act. The aid will help us to eliminate the backlog in reviewing proposals to speed up the cleanup of polluted sites.

Madam Chairman, I just want to thank the two gentlemen. I am in favor of this legislation.

Mr. DICKS. Madam Chairman, if the gentleman will yield, first of all, I appreciate the gentleman's support for our overall bill, but I want to acknowledge his leadership on the Great Lakes. We have some incredible programs in the Great Lakes. The gentleman has come to us and offered a very positive amendment. We are concerned in my part of the world about Puget Sound. Our vice chairman, Mr. MORAN, is concerned about the Chesapeake Bay. We are concerned about all of our National estuaries. But the Great Lakes are particularly important, and I appreciate the gentleman's input on this issue.

Mr. TIAHRT. Madam Chairman, if the gentleman will yield, I also want to congratulate the gentleman from Illinois for his persistence in pursuing environmental issues in the Illinois area as well as across the United States. It is very important that we have clean air and clean water for our children and grandchildren.

The gentleman's leadership has been excellent. Also I want to acknowledge his special recognition of the Great Lakes and taking care of them. He has been worried about the fish life as well as the quality of the water. I congratulate the gentleman in these efforts there.

Mr. KIRK. Madam Chairman, reclaiming my time, this is a very good bill. I want to thank both these gentlemen. I want everyone who is part of the 40 million Americans that depend on the Great Lakes for their drinking water to know that this appropriations bill is pro-Great Lakes.

The CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will read. The Clerk read as follows:

UNITED STATES GEOLOGICAL SURVEY  
SURVEYS, INVESTIGATIONS, AND RESEARCH

For expenses necessary for the United States Geological Survey to perform surveys, investigations, and research covering topography, geology, hydrology, biology, and the mineral and water resources of the United States, its territories and possessions, and other areas as authorized by 43

U.S.C. 31, 1332, and 1340; classify lands as to their mineral and water resources; give engineering supervision to power permittees and Federal Energy Regulatory Commission licensees; administer the minerals exploration program (30 U.S.C. 641); conduct inquiries into the economic conditions affecting mining and materials processing industries (30 U.S.C. 3, 21a, and 1603; 50 U.S.C. 98g(1)) and related purposes as authorized by law; and to publish and disseminate data relative to the foregoing activities; \$1,032,764,000, to remain available until September 30, 2009, of which \$63,345,000 shall be available only for cooperation with States or municipalities for water resources investigations; of which \$32,150,000 shall remain available until expended for satellite operations; of which \$8,023,000 shall be available until expended for deferred maintenance and capital improvement projects; and of which \$187,114,000 shall be for the biological research activity and the operation of the Cooperative Research Units: *Provided*, That none of the funds provided for the biological research activity shall be used to conduct new surveys on private property, unless specifically authorized in writing by the property owner: *Provided further*, That no part of this appropriation shall be used to pay more than one-half the cost of topographic mapping or water resources data collection and investigations carried on in cooperation with States and municipalities.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS

From within the amount appropriated for activities of the United States Geological Survey such sums as are necessary shall be available for reimbursement to the General Services Administration for security guard services; contracting for the furnishing of topographic maps and for the making of geophysical or other specialized surveys when it is administratively determined that such procedures are in the public interest; construction and maintenance of necessary buildings and appurtenant facilities; acquisition of lands for gauging stations and observation wells; expenses of the United States National Committee on Geology; and payment of compensation and expenses of persons on the rolls of the Survey duly appointed to represent the United States in the negotiation and administration of interstate compacts: *Provided*, That activities funded by appropriations herein made may be accomplished through the use of contracts, grants, or cooperative agreements as defined in 31 U.S.C. 6302 et seq.: *Provided further*, That the United States Geological Survey may enter into contracts or cooperative agreements directly with individuals or indirectly with institutions or nonprofit organizations, without regard to 41 U.S.C. 5, for the temporary or intermittent services of students or recent graduates, who shall be considered employees for the purpose of chapters 57 and 81 of title 5, United States Code, relating to compensation for travel and work injuries, and chapter 171 of title 28, United States Code, relating to tort claims, but shall not be considered to be Federal employees for any other purposes.

MINERALS MANAGEMENT SERVICE  
ROYALTY AND OFFSHORE MINERALS  
MANAGEMENT

For expenses necessary for minerals leasing and environmental studies, regulation of industry operations, and collection of royalties, as authorized by law; for enforcing laws and regulations applicable to oil, gas, and other minerals leases, permits, licenses and operating contracts; for energy-related or other authorized marine-related purposes on the Outer Continental Shelf; and for matching grants or cooperative agreements,

\$153,552,000, to remain available until September 30, 2009, of which \$82,371,000 shall be available for royalty management activities; and an amount not to exceed \$135,730,000, to be credited to this appropriation and to remain available until expended, from additions to receipts resulting from increases to rates in effect on August 5, 1993, from rate increases to fee collections for Outer Continental Shelf administrative activities performed by the Minerals Management Service (MMS) over and above the rates in effect on September 30, 1993, and from additional fees for Outer Continental Shelf administrative activities established after September 30, 1993: *Provided*, That to the extent \$135,730,000 in addition to receipts are not realized from the sources of receipts stated above, the amount needed to reach \$135,730,000 shall be credited to this appropriation from receipts resulting from rental rates for Outer Continental Shelf leases in effect before August 5, 1993: *Provided further*, That not to exceed \$3,000 shall be available for reasonable expenses related to promoting volunteer beach and marine cleanup activities: *Provided further*, That notwithstanding any other provision of law, \$15,000 under this heading shall be available for refunds of overpayments in connection with certain Indian leases in which the Director of MMS concurred with the claimed refund due, to pay amounts owed to Indian allottees or tribes, or to correct prior unrecoverable erroneous payments: *Provided further*, That for the costs of administration of the Coastal Impact Assistance Program authorized by section 31 of the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act, as amended (43 U.S.C. 1456a), MMS in fiscal years 2008 through 2010 may retain up to three percent of the amounts which are disbursed under section 31(b)(1), such retained amounts to remain available until expended.

OIL SPILL RESEARCH

For necessary expenses to carry out title I, section 1016, title IV, sections 4202 and 4303, title VII, and title VIII, section 8201 of the Oil Pollution Act of 1990, \$6,403,000, which shall be derived from the Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund, to remain available until expended.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS

The eighth proviso under the heading of "Minerals Management Service" in division E, title I, of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2005 (Public Law 108-447), is amended by inserting "and Indian accounts" after "States", replacing the term "provision" with "provisions", and inserting "and (d)" after 30 U.S.C. 1721(b).

None of the funds in this Act shall be used to transfer funds from any Federal royalties, rents, and bonuses derived from Federal onshore and offshore oil and gas leases issued under the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act (43 U.S.C. 1331 et seq.) and the Mineral Leasing Act (30 U.S.C. 181 et seq.) into the Ultra-Deepwater and Unconventional Natural Gas and Other Petroleum Research Fund.

Notwithstanding the provisions of section 35(b) of the Mineral Leasing Act, as amended (30 U.S.C. 191(b)), before disbursing a payment to a State, the Secretary shall deduct 2 percent from the amount payable to that State and deposit the amount deducted to miscellaneous receipts of the Treasury.

OFFICE OF SURFACE MINING RECLAMATION AND ENFORCEMENT

REGULATION AND TECHNOLOGY

For necessary expenses to carry out the provisions of the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977, Public Law 95-87, as amended, \$117,337,000, to remain available until September 30, 2009: *Provided*, That the Secretary of the Interior, pursuant to regulations, may use directly or through grants

to States, moneys collected in fiscal year 2008 for civil penalties assessed under section 518 of the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 (30 U.S.C. 1268), to reclaim lands adversely affected by coal mining practices after August 3, 1977, to remain available until expended: *Provided further*, That appropriations for the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement may provide for the travel and per diem expenses of State and tribal personnel attending Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement sponsored training.

#### ABANDONED MINE RECLAMATION FUND

For necessary expenses to carry out title IV of the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977, Public Law 95-87, as amended, \$52,774,000, to be derived from receipts of the Abandoned Mine Reclamation Fund and to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That pursuant to Public Law 97-365, the Department of the Interior is authorized to use up to 20 percent from the recovery of the delinquent debt owed to the United States Government to pay for contracts to collect these debts: *Provided further*, That amounts provided under this heading may be used for the travel and per diem expenses of State and tribal personnel attending Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement sponsored training.

#### ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISION

With funds available for the Technical Innovation and Professional Services program in this Act, the Secretary may transfer title for computer hardware, software and other technical equipment to State and tribal regulatory and reclamation programs.

#### BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS OPERATION OF INDIAN PROGRAMS (INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For expenses necessary for the operation of Indian programs, as authorized by law, including the Snyder Act of November 2, 1921 (25 U.S.C. 13), the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act of 1975 (25 U.S.C. 450 et seq.), as amended, the Education Amendments of 1978 (25 U.S.C. 2001-2019), and the Tribally Controlled Schools Act of 1988 (25 U.S.C. 2501 et seq.), as amended, \$2,093,545,000, to remain available until September 30, 2009 except as otherwise provided herein, of which not to exceed \$80,179,000 shall be for welfare assistance payments: *Provided*, That in cases of designated Federal disasters, the Secretary may exceed such cap, from the amounts provided herein, to provide for disaster relief to Indian communities affected by the disaster; notwithstanding any other provision of law, including but not limited to the Indian Self-Determination Act of 1975, as amended, not to exceed \$149,628,000 shall be available for payments for contract support costs associated with ongoing contracts, grants, compacts, or annual funding agreements entered into with the Bureau prior to or during fiscal year 2008, as authorized by such Act, except that federally-recognized tribes may use their tribal priority allocations for unmet contract support costs of ongoing contracts, grants, or compacts, or annual funding agreements and for unmet welfare assistance costs; of which not to exceed \$487,500,000 for school operations costs of Bureau-funded schools and other education programs shall become available on July 1, 2008, and shall remain available until September 30, 2009; and of which not to exceed \$66,822,000 shall remain available until expended for housing improvement, road maintenance, attorney fees, litigation support, the Indian Self-Determination Fund, land records improvement, and the Navajo-Hopi Settlement Program: *Provided further*, That notwithstanding any other provision of law, including but not

limited to the Indian Self-Determination Act of 1975, as amended, and 25 U.S.C. 2008, not to exceed \$44,060,000 within and only from such amounts made available for school operations shall be available for administrative cost grants associated with ongoing grants entered into with the Bureau prior to or during fiscal year 2007 for the operation of Bureau-funded schools, and up to \$500,000 within and only from such amounts made available for school operations shall be available for the transitional costs of initial administrative cost grants to grantees that enter into grants for the operation on or after July 1, 2007, of Bureau-operated schools: *Provided further*, That any forestry funds allocated to a federally-recognized tribe which remain unobligated as of September 30, 2009, may be transferred during fiscal year 2010 to an Indian forest land assistance account established for the benefit of the holder of the funds within the tribe's trust fund account: *Provided further*, That any such unobligated balances not so transferred shall expire on September 30, 2010.

□ 1315

#### AMENDMENT NO. 30 OFFERED BY MR. SHAYS

Mr. SHAYS. Madam Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

#### Amendment No. 30 offered by Mr. SHAYS:

Page 31, line 11, after the dollar amount, insert "(decreased by \$1,000,000) (increased by \$1,000,000)".

Mr. SHAYS. Madam Chairman, this amendment would designate \$1 million for the Office of Federal Acknowledgment, bringing the total for the office from \$1.9 million to \$2.9 million, enabling the bureau to hire two additional teams of investigators to speed up the review process for petitions. Presently, there are seven active petitions and nine waiting petitions, but there are 79 uncompleted petitions and there are letters of intent for 147.

The fact is in the last 10 years they have granted to only two tribes through the process, and, as I remember, seven tribes were denied, out of a total of nine. This is a long process. It requires individuals with tremendous expertise to evaluate these petitions.

I would note that when we create an Indian tribe, we create a sovereign nation. We create an independent nation within these United States. So this is very serious business.

I would just point out that already this year we have bypassed the Bureau of Indian Affairs in one legislation that created acknowledgment for six tribes, and in a second legislation acknowledging another tribe. The argument was that the Bureau of Indian Affairs simply couldn't act as quickly as it needs to.

Mr. DICKS. Madam Chairman, if the gentleman will yield, the gentleman has raised an important issue here, and we are prepared to accept his amendment.

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Chairman, if the gentleman will yield, I want to thank the gentleman from Connecticut for working with the committee on this very important issue. Truly they have

a backlog. Without your looking into this issue, we never would have made the kind of progress that is going to be made because of your efforts. So I want to congratulate the gentleman, and I have no objection to the amendment.

Mr. SHAYS. Madam Chairman, reclaiming my time, I just want to acknowledge the good work of both the chairman and ranking member, not just on accepting this amendment, obviously, but the tremendous work in terms of the arts, in terms of our natural resources.

The CHAIRMAN. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SHAYS).

The amendment was agreed to.

The CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

#### CONSTRUCTION

##### (INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For construction, repair, improvement, and maintenance of irrigation and power systems, buildings, utilities, and other facilities, including architectural and engineering services by contract; acquisition of lands, and interests in lands; and preparation of lands for farming, and for construction of the Navajo Indian Irrigation Project pursuant to Public Law 87-483, \$207,983,000, to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That such amounts as may be available for the construction of the Navajo Indian Irrigation Project may be transferred to the Bureau of Reclamation: *Provided further*, That not to exceed 6 percent of contract authority available to the Bureau of Indian Affairs from the Federal Highway Trust Fund may be used to cover the road program management costs of the Bureau: *Provided further*, That any funds provided for the Safety of Dams program pursuant to 25 U.S.C. 13 shall be made available on a nonreimbursable basis: *Provided further*, That for fiscal year 2008, in implementing new construction or facilities improvement and repair project grants in excess of \$100,000 that are provided to grant schools under Public Law 100-297, as amended, the Secretary of the Interior shall use the Administrative and Audit Requirements and Cost Principles for Assistance Programs contained in 43 CFR part 12 as the regulatory requirements: *Provided further*, That such grants shall not be subject to section 12.61 of 43 CFR; the Secretary and the grantee shall negotiate and determine a schedule of payments for the work to be performed: *Provided further*, That in considering applications, the Secretary shall consider whether such grantee would be deficient in assuring that the construction projects conform to applicable building standards and codes and Federal, tribal, or State health and safety standards as required by 25 U.S.C. 2005(b), with respect to organizational and financial management capabilities: *Provided further*, That if the Secretary declines an application, the Secretary shall follow the requirements contained in 25 U.S.C. 2504(f): *Provided further*, That any disputes between the Secretary and any grantee concerning a grant shall be subject to the disputes provision in 25 U.S.C. 2507(e): *Provided further*, That in order to ensure timely completion of replacement school construction projects, the Secretary may assume control of a project and all funds related to the project, if, within eighteen months of the date of enactment of this Act, any grantee receiving funds appropriated in this Act or in any prior Act, has not completed the planning and design phase of the project and commenced construction of the replacement

school: *Provided further*, That this Appropriation may be reimbursed from the Office of the Special Trustee for American Indians Appropriation for the appropriate share of construction costs for space expansion needed in agency offices to meet trust reform implementation.

INDIAN LAND AND WATER CLAIM SETTLEMENTS  
AND MISCELLANEOUS PAYMENTS TO INDIANS

For payments and necessary administrative expenses for implementation of Indian land and water claim settlements pursuant to Public Laws 99-264, 100-580, 101-618, 107-331, 108-447, 109-379, 109-429, and 109-479, and for implementation of other land and water rights settlements, \$39,136,000 to remain available until expended.

INDIAN GUARANTEED LOAN PROGRAM ACCOUNT

For the cost of guaranteed and insured loans, \$6,276,000, of which \$700,000 is for administrative expenses, as authorized by the Indian Financing Act of 1974, as amended: *Provided*, That such costs, including the cost of modifying such loans, shall be as defined in section 502 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974: *Provided further*, That these funds are available to subsidize total loan principal, any part of which is to be guaranteed, not to exceed \$85,506,098.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS

The Bureau of Indian Affairs may carry out the operation of Indian programs by direct expenditure, contracts, cooperative agreements, compacts and grants, either directly or in cooperation with States and other organizations.

Notwithstanding 25 U.S.C. 15, the Bureau of Indian Affairs may contract for services in support of the management, operation, and maintenance of the Power Division of the San Carlos Irrigation Project.

Appropriations for the Bureau of Indian Affairs (except the revolving fund for loans, the Indian loan guarantee and insurance fund, and the Indian Guaranteed Loan Program account) shall be available for expenses of exhibits.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no funds available to the Bureau of Indian Affairs for central office oversight and Executive Direction and Administrative Services (except executive direction and administrative services funding for Tribal Priority Allocations and regional offices) shall be available for contracts, grants, compacts, or cooperative agreements with the Bureau of Indian Affairs under the provisions of the Indian Self-Determination Act or the Tribal Self-Governance Act of 1994 (Public Law 103-413).

In the event any federally-recognized tribe returns appropriations made available by this Act to the Bureau of Indian Affairs, this action shall not diminish the Federal Government's trust responsibility to that tribe, or the government-to-government relationship between the United States and that tribe, or that tribe's ability to access future appropriations.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no funds available to the Bureau, other than the amounts provided herein for assistance to public schools under 25 U.S.C. 452 et seq., shall be available to support the operation of any elementary or secondary school in the State of Alaska.

Appropriations made available in this or any other Act for schools funded by the Bureau shall be available only to the schools in the Bureau school system as of September 1, 1996. No funds available to the Bureau shall be used to support expanded grades for any school or dormitory beyond the grade structure in place or approved by the Secretary of the Interior at each school in the Bureau school system as of October 1, 1995. Funds

made available under this Act may not be used to establish a charter school at a Bureau-funded school (as that term is defined in section 1146 of the Education Amendments of 1978 (25 U.S.C. 2026)), except that a charter school that is in existence on the date of the enactment of this Act and that has operated at a Bureau-funded school before September 1, 1999, may continue to operate during that period, but only if the charter school pays to the Bureau a pro rata share of funds to reimburse the Bureau for the use of the real and personal property (including buses and vans), the funds of the charter school are kept separate and apart from Bureau funds, and the Bureau does not assume any obligation for charter school programs of the State in which the school is located if the charter school loses such funding. Employees of Bureau-funded schools sharing a campus with a charter school and performing functions related to the charter school's operation and employees of a charter school shall not be treated as Federal employees for purposes of chapter 171 of title 28, United States Code.

Notwithstanding 25 U.S.C. 2007(d), and implementing regulations, the funds reserved from the Indian Student Equalization Program to meet emergencies and unforeseen contingencies affecting education programs appropriated herein and in Public Law 109-54 may be used for costs associated with significant student enrollment increases at Bureau-funded schools during the relevant school year.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, including section 113 of title I of appendix C of Public Law 106-113, if in fiscal year 2003 or 2004 a grantee received indirect and administrative costs pursuant to a distribution formula based on section 5(f) of Public Law 101-301, the Secretary shall continue to distribute indirect and administrative cost funds to such grantee using the section 5(f) distribution formula.

DEPARTMENTAL OFFICES  
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
SALARIES AND EXPENSES

For necessary expenses for management of the Department of the Interior, \$136,413,000, of which \$35,262,000 for activities related to the Financial and Business Management System shall remain available until expended, and of which not to exceed \$15,000 may be for official reception and representation expenses, and of which up to \$1,000,000 shall be available for workers compensation payments and unemployment compensation payments associated with the orderly closure of the United States Bureau of Mines.

AMENDMENT NO. 14 OFFERED BY MR. DICKS

Mr. DICKS. Madam Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Amendment No. 14 offered by Mr. DICKS:

Page 39, line 17, after each dollar amount, insert "(reduced by \$5,000,000)".

Page 55, line 22, after the second dollar amount, insert "(reduced by \$5,000,000)".

Page 58, line 3, after the dollar amount, insert "(reduced by \$5,000,000)".

Page 60, line 24, after the dollar amount, insert "(increased by \$15,000,000)".

Page 61, line 16, after the dollar amount, insert "(increased by \$15,000,000)".

Mr. DICKS. Madam Chairman, I offer this amendment on behalf of myself and a number of distinguished Members from the Border Caucus. The committee has supported EPA's Mexican Border Program since its inception in

1995. Since that time, we have provided over \$800 million for infrastructure projects along the border. I am proud of that and believe this program is an important one.

The bill as reported by the committee included \$10 million for water and waste water infrastructure projects along the U.S.-Mexican border. This is the amount requested by the President, but \$40 million below the level provided last year. Our committee took this action because of concerns about a slow spending rate in the program. Since that time, a number of Members, including a distinguished member of the committee, Mr. RODRIGUEZ of Texas, have provided new information on this program.

Specifically, the reforms recently made to the design, approval, and construction process will ensure the funds are spent more quickly. Because of that information, I am pleased to offer this amendment on their behalf, which provides an additional \$15 million for this program, for a total program of \$25 million in fiscal year 2008.

It is never easy to find offsets for these types of amendments. That said, my amendment includes three programs in order to provide the necessary increases for the border program. The reductions are as follows:

Within the Department of Interior Salaries and Expense Account, \$5 million from the Financial and Business Management System, which has been delayed by the Department.

Within EPA's Science and Technology Account, \$5 million from the New Water Technologies Breakthrough Fund.

Within EPA's Environmental Programs and Management Account, \$5 million from Operations and Administration.

With this additional funding, I hope we will see many new water and waste water infrastructure projects along the border. This committee has been and will continue to be very supportive of this important program.

Again, I thank the Members from the border States, especially Mr. RODRIGUEZ, a member of the full committee, for bringing this issue to my attention. I urge a "yes" vote on this amendment.

Mr. TIAHRT. Madam Chairman, if the gentleman will yield, I do not have any objection to this amendment, and I would commend the chairman on his leadership in this area.

Mr. HINOJOSA. Madam Chairman, I rise today in support of the amendment offered by my friend, Chairman NORMAN DICKS. I want to commend him for the wonderful job he did in putting this bill together. I also want to thank him for his willingness to work with me and the other members of the House Border Caucus to address a serious need in the border region.

This amendment would increase funding for the U.S.-Mexico Border program to \$25 million. This program was created under the NAFTA treaty to



help border communities cope with the environmental effects of the treaty. Since its inception, the fund has been used to improve wastewater and drinking water infrastructure. It has provided technical assistance to 130 communities. It has eliminated 300 million gallons per day of untreated or inadequately treated discharges, equivalent to that of 6.8 million persons. A recent audit found that for every dollar placed into the BEIF fund, \$1.85 has been leveraged from other sources. Every dollar used under the fund by the U.S. is matched dollar for dollar by Mexico.

This funding is desperately needed to begin the planning for new water and wastewater projects along the U.S.-Mexico border. Most of the communities in my district are very small with the majority of residents living below the poverty level. They don't have the financial means to build water and wastewater infrastructure on their own. The U.S.-Mexico Border program is their only avenue to protect the health of their citizens and bring economic development projects to their community.

While the U.S.-Mexico Border program has had some institutional problems, which have hindered its ability to release funds to these communities, Congress has made reforms to the program and funds are finally flowing to communities. All of the funds currently in the program are allocated to projects and by the end of 2008 all of the money will have been disbursed. Without the funds in this amendment, new communities would not be able to begin the 5-year process.

In my district, several communities like Mercedes, Donna, Weslaco, Pharr, and others have received help from the U.S.-Mexico program to build and modernize their wastewater systems. As a result, large economic development projects are underway because the communities finally have the infrastructure to provide services to new employers.

Again, I want to thank Chairman DICKS for offering this amendment and urge all of my colleagues to support it.

Mr. ORTIZ. Madam Chairman, I rise in support of the Interior Appropriations bill before us today which includes money for South Texas to address water and wastewater issues along the Border.

I particularly thank Chairman NORM DICKS—who, on behalf of the Congressional Border Caucus, offered to increase funding for the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Mexican Border program for safe drinking water grants by \$15 million, providing a total of \$25 million for these important grants.

NAFTA brought both challenges and windfalls to South Texas. As South Texas became the front door for international trade, the unemployment rate—at that time in double digits—fell to its present rate as jobs and opportunities became more widely available.

NAFTA also brought about greater growth and entire new industries, some cross-border industries. Congress' concerns about the border infrastructure for water and wastewater brought about the Border Environment Co-

operation Commission (BECC) as part of the North American Development Bank. BECC funding has become a resource for border communities, whose infrastructure now bears the national burden of NAFTA; and NAFTA benefits the entire national economy.

These funds added to the Interior Appropriations bill today assist communities in addressing public health and environmental conditions along the U.S.-Mexico border. This money has been instrumental in getting almost seven million people connected to improved water and wastewater systems, ensuring improved living conditions for the residents of Texas, as well as other border states. Through these funds, 54 wastewater projects and 16 drinking water projects have been built.

In my South Texas district the City of San Benito, the Brownsville Public Utilities Board, Olmito Water Supply, El Jardin Water Supply Corporation and the City of Los Fresnos have benefited from these funds.

Mr. CUPELLAR. Madam Chairman, I commend Chairman NORM DICKS and Ranking Member TODD TIAHRT for putting forward a good piece of legislation.

I want to especially thank Chairman DICKS for offering his amendment to increase funds for Border Environment Infrastructure Fund (BEIF).

Since 1997, this important program has provided essential funding support for drinking water and wastewater infrastructure in the U.S.-Mexico border region.

Every project receiving BEIF, whether located in the U.S. or Mexico, has provided an environmental and human health benefit for American citizens.

\$491 million of BEIF, 54.2 percent to U.S. projects and 45.7 percent to projects in Mexico, for the implementation of 54 certified projects valued at \$1.4 billion, many of which are located in rural communities and designated colonias.

The need in these communities is great.

The projects resulting from the BEIF allocations have provided a direct benefit to around 7.5 million people.

Even with such significant accomplishments, the need for water and wastewater infrastructure continues to exist along the U.S.-Mexico border.

Nearly \$1 billion of existing water infrastructure needs have been documented.

Even with the leveraging strength of BEIF, which has historically brought \$1.85 to each BEIF \$1.00, we anticipate that less than 5 percent of these eligible needs will have an opportunity for funding without this amendment.

Without the opportunity to access these sources of funding, the health and environment of our communities will continue to suffer.

I want to once again thank Chairman DICKS for offering this amendment, and urge my colleagues to support his action.

The CHAIRMAN. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Washington (Mr. DICKS).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. CANNON

Mr. CANNON. Madam Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment offered by Mr. CANNON:

Page 39, line 17, insert "(decreased by \$23,000,000)" after the first dollar amount.

Page 44, line 23, insert "(increased by \$20,148,000)" after the first dollar amount.

Mr. DICKS. Madam Chairman, I reserve a point of order on this amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. A point of order is reserved.

Mr. CANNON. Madam Chairman, I rise in support of this amendment that I offered on behalf of myself, Mr. MARK UDALL, Mr. ROB BISHOP, Mr. MATHESON, Mr. HELLER, Mr. SALAZAR, and Mrs. MUSGRAVE. This bipartisan amendment will redirect roughly \$20 million in departmental salaries and expenses to the Payment in Lieu of Taxes program to bring the total appropriation to nearly \$253 million.

I am pleased to be working with this bipartisan group and thank my colleagues for their support. All of us have something in common. We represent some of the 1,900 counties spread across every State but Rhode Island that have public lands that rely on the Payment in Lieu of Taxes program to mitigate the impact of the lost tax revenue resulting from Federal land ownership.

The Federal Government owns nearly 650 million acres of land, mostly in the West. We have a map here that shows all the land owned or held in the trust by the government in red. It is important to see exactly how much of the land in the West is owned by the Federal Government. In fact, the amount of land owned by the Federal Government is amazing.

This is an amazing amount of Federal ownership and control by the Federal Government. That means that we do not tax those lands and that means that in the Western United States we pay less per child for education, but we tax our people more per family because we are supporting the Federal Government. In other words, we don't tax these lands; we tax ourselves more.

As the chairman of the Western Caucus, I know all too well that my fellow colleagues throughout the West are struggling with these issues, and also in many districts in the East, where there is a great deal of public lands.

It is only fair that we pay a reasonable amount in lieu of taxes to cover this shortfall. The Payment in Lieu of Taxes program was created in 1976 to provide payments to counties to make up for property taxes they were prevented from collecting on Federal lands located within their boundaries.

This year, the administration's budget proposal proposed to cut PILT by \$34 million, to a paltry 56 percent of the authorized level. The past few years have seen Congress achieve historic levels of PILT funding. We are grateful to Chairman DICKS and Ranking Member TIAHRT for their efforts to restore PILT to the fiscal year 2007 enacted level.

While the appropriation currently in the bill is significantly above the administration's recommendation, it is far from what it should be, and our counties are bearing the brunt of it. While the Department's administrative budget has nearly doubled since 2001, PILT funding levels have not kept pace, and this is not acceptable.

It is imperative that we raise funding so that our rural counties won't have to continue to foot the bill for lands owned by the Federal Government. I urge all my colleagues to support this bipartisan amendment to bring PILT funding levels to nearly 70 percent of the authorized amount and to support the counties that host public lands.

Although I will continue to fight for full funding for PILT, this amendment is a step in the right direction and adds a modest sum to the PILT program, a sum that is important to Americans who live in public lands communities, as well as to all the visitors who visit our public lands.

Mr. DICKS. Madam Chairman, if the gentleman will yield, I rise to say that we will be willing to accept this amendment.

I do want to point out to the gentleman, though, this bill already funds PILT \$43 million above the level requested by the President. We have heard over and over again from various speakers on your side of the aisle that we have to get this bill down, not up.

But this is a very important program in the West, and therefore I am willing to accept it. But I want the gentleman to think about this in that context.

Mr. CANNON. Madam Chairman, reclaiming my time, I very much appreciate the gentleman's point. The fact is, this is much higher than the President's proposal. I appreciate that. Our job here is to balance how we fund these various programs. The inequity that has been perpetrated on Western counties, where you see these massive amounts, including in your State, of public lands that are not adequately supported by a tax base is very important.

I thank the gentleman very much for his support thus far.

Mr. TIAHRT. Madam Chairman, if the gentleman will yield, I want to thank the gentleman from Utah and also the gentleman from Washington, Mr. DICKS, the chairman of this subcommittee, for understanding the depth of this problem. We do need to put additional funds into PILT, because the Payment in Lieu of Taxes has created shortfalls for school systems, for local municipalities and for counties.

I want to commend the gentleman from Utah for his effort. We have no objections to his amendment.

Mr. CANNON. Madam Chairman, I thank the gentleman, and urge support of my amendment.

Mr. DICKS. Madam Chairman, I withdraw my reservation.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Madam Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Madam Chairman, I appreciate the opportunity of just saying a word on this particular amendment. I am also very grateful to both the ranking member as well as the chairman of the subcommittee for understanding the significance of this important amendment.

Let me say that this is another map that is similar to the one that was al-

ready done, except this time I chose the blue color. Everything that is in blue is the amount of land owned and controlled by the Federal Government in each State. You will notice that there is a proclivity of this kind of blue color in the West.

Some of those that don't live in the West don't really understand what the significance or the problem is in dealing with the Federal Government on so much particular land.

I also want you to know that this was not necessarily the way it was supposed to be. When every one of these Western States entered the Union, their enabling act said the land would go to the Federal Government until such time as it shall be disposed and each State was supposed to get a cut of the amount of money gotten by the Federal Government. So this is not the way it was supposed to be.

But it was changed in the 1970s when the Federal Land Management Policy Act was produced. The trade-off in that was for Payment in Lieu of Taxes. So this land would be compensated, in exchange for the Federal Government keeping those lands, without having to go back through the States to deal with it.

Now, we would actually be more happy if we had all the lands. If indeed these Western States that have their lands controlled by the Federal Government could tax them at even the cheapest open value space, this is the amount of money that we would be able to accommodate for ourselves and solve our own problems.

This bill has \$232 million for PILT, Payment in Lieu of Taxes right now. So you look at it. If Idaho was simply able to put a tax on the Federal land in their State, they would create more than that money by themselves. Utah could get \$116 million every year by ourselves, Nevada \$118 million every year by themselves; and that is only for public education. It would be even more for general taxes. So the States could actually handle it themselves.

What I am trying to say is I appreciate everyone finally realizing that PILT money is not free, it is not loans, it is simply not welfare for the West. It is money that was really owed to these particular States and that our goal should not be simply the \$22 million more in this particular amendment, but to fully fund PILT, which should be \$375 million in the first place, or allow the States to have the flexibility to actually go after the true value of these types of lands that happen to be there.

So I appreciate everyone recognizing the significance of this, and I appreciate everyone realizing that this is money that is owed to the States so they can control and they can actually pay for the services they have to provide, even though they don't have the land resources to deal with it.

Mr. HELLER of Nevada. Madam Chairman, I rise in support of this important bipartisan amendment.

The PILT program compensates counties for the loss of income resulting from Federal lands.

This is something my constituents know a lot about because nearly 85 percent of Nevada's land mass is owned by the Federal Government.

PILT funds are used for critical services on public lands counties such as search and rescue on public lands, infrastructure, education, and many other important functions.

For many years the PILT program has been woefully underfunded.

Again this year, the administration requested a paltry \$198 million for this program, which is more than \$150 million less than the authorized level.

While the \$20 million we are seeking to raise PILT funding by will not entirely make up for the funding shortfall, every penny counts to the counties and families that live in public lands States.

I urge my colleagues to support this amendment, prioritize the PILT program, and take a step towards adequately compensating the communities that host public lands.

The CHAIRMAN. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Utah (Mr. CANNON).

The amendment was agreed to.

The CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will read. The Clerk read as follows:

#### INSULAR AFFAIRS

##### ASSISTANCE TO TERRITORIES

For expenses necessary for assistance to territories under the jurisdiction of the Department of the Interior, \$78,292,000, of which: (1) \$69,816,000 shall be available until expended for technical assistance, including maintenance assistance, disaster assistance, insular management controls, coral reef initiative activities, and brown tree snake control and research; grants to the judiciary in American Samoa for compensation and expenses, as authorized by law (48 U.S.C. 1661(c)); grants to the Government of American Samoa, in addition to current local revenues, for construction and support of governmental functions; grants to the Government of the Virgin Islands as authorized by law; grants to the Government of Guam, as authorized by law; and grants to the Government of the Northern Mariana Islands as authorized by law (Public Law 94-241; 90 Stat. 272); and (2) \$8,476,000 shall be available until September 30, 2009 for salaries and expenses of the Office of Insular Affairs: *Provided*, That all financial transactions of the territorial and local governments herein provided for, including such transactions of all agencies or instrumentalities established or used by such governments, may be audited by the Government Accountability Office, at its discretion, in accordance with chapter 35 of title 31, United States Code: *Provided further*, That Northern Mariana Islands Covenant grant funding shall be provided according to those terms of the Agreement of the Special Representatives on Future United States Financial Assistance for the Northern Mariana Islands approved by Public Law 104-134: *Provided further*, That of the amounts provided for technical assistance, sufficient funds shall be made available for a grant to the Pacific Basin Development Council: *Provided further*, That of the amounts provided for technical assistance, sufficient funding shall be made available for a grant to the Close Up Foundation: *Provided further*, That the funds for the program of operations and maintenance improvement are appropriated to institutionalize routine operations and maintenance improvement of capital infrastructure with territorial participation and cost

sharing to be determined by the Secretary based on the grantee's commitment to timely maintenance of its capital assets: *Provided further*, That any appropriation for disaster assistance under this heading in this Act or previous appropriations Acts may be used as non-Federal matching funds for the purpose of hazard mitigation grants provided pursuant to section 404 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170c).

Mr. BOREN. Madam Chairman, I move to strike the last words.

Madam Chairman, I would like to engage in a colloquy on the subject of community tribal schools.

In 1969, Congress declared that Indian education programs run by the Bureau of Indian Affairs were a national tragedy and a national challenge. No one could dispute the fact that decades of neglect had left both programs and facilities in shambles.

Starting with the Self-Determination Act of 1975 and tribal local control of programs, the extent of the problem became apparent. Congress, to its credit, stepped up with increased facilities programs for schools serving Indians.

To ensure objective distribution of scant resources and to better serve students, Congress directed BIA to create a priority-based ranking system. BIA did so, but only with a facilities program which assessed then-current programs and looked to the adequacy and safety of facilities. Failure in either area meant an unhoused student ranking and a priority ranking on the list.

After the Tribal Schools Grant Act in 1988, tribes began taking over BIA schools and reworking their programs. They expanded services and also added new attendance areas. These changes had an unanticipated effect. They impacted the BIA ranking system, as the formula did not properly account for new students, listing them as unhoused students and skewing the BIA ranking system.

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In 1995, Congress instituted a temporary moratorium on new programs in order to freeze current rankings and to allow the BIA time to catch up to the increasing demand for repairs. The moratorium was to last just one Congress with the BIA making policy recommendations on how to address this growing problem.

The BIA, unfortunately, never made the recommendations and the moratorium preventing modified tribally run academic programs has continued for over a decade.

Madam Chairman, Indian country remains concerned that public school academic programs are not enough for many Native American children who so often have special needs due to family, social, academic, and other problems. There are numerous cases where a tribe is in better condition to operate a school, providing first-class education while also meeting the cultural sensitivity needs these students may have.

But even if the tribe is willing to fund all construction and maintenance

costs for a first-class facility, the moratorium prohibits them from being able to operate as a Federal grant school. The BIA has also interpreted the moratorium language as prohibiting the reestablishment of a pre-existing program.

Chairman DICKS, children are the future of any nation, including tribal nations, and community tribal schools are an important step for a tribe's successful future. I ask that you would work with me to address this problem and that Congress require BIA to adhere to the fiscal year 2006 Interior Appropriations bill directive to develop recommendations to adjust the ranking system to allow for new schools, new students, and expanded programs.

Mr. DICKS. Madam Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. BOREN. I yield to the gentleman from Washington.

Mr. DICKS. I appreciate the gentleman's interest in improving Indian education. This is an issue that both Mr. TIAHRT and I have great interest in, and we have made a special effort to increase funding for education programs in this bill.

I would be happy to work with the gentleman on the issue that he has raised here today, and thank him for his dedication to Indian country and better education for young students.

Mr. BOREN. I thank the chairman.

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Madam Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Chairman DICKS, I am very appreciative of your willingness to address in the conference report for the fiscal year 2008 appropriations bill a concern that you share with me for the humane treatment and preventive management of wild horses and the condition of western range lands.

I yield to the gentleman from Washington.

Mr. DICKS. Yes, the gentleman is correct, I share his concern.

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. As you know, Mr. Chairman, there have been significant advancements in the development of technologies that allow safe and effective application of contraceptive medicines to wild horses to allow wild horse populations to be maintained at sustainable levels. I believe these medicines have been used in pilot programs running for years as a result of the partnering of private organizations like the Humane Society of the United States with the Bureau of Land Management.

Mr. DICKS. The gentleman is correct.

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. I believe that contraceptives could potentially be effective and also would be a more humane approach to managing wild horses than the current strategy that relies primarily on rounding up wild horses and placing them in pastures where they must be fed for years until they die of old age at a cost of over \$20 million a year.

It is also my understanding that the BLM signed a memorandum of under-

standing in October of 2006 outlining a large scale pilot program that will expand the pilot wild horse management effort.

I would like to thank you for working with me to see that the Wild Horse and Burro Management Program does not get such a large budget cut as was proposed by the administration. It is my understanding that BLM will be able to move forward with that pilot program under this act; is that correct, Mr. Chairman?

Mr. DICKS. Yes, the gentleman is correct.

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. I wish to thank you again, Mr. Chairman, for your help in clarifying these points and for your willingness to address this in conference to ensure more humane and effective management of our treasured wild horse herds, while maintaining our public range lands in a sustainable manner which protects watersheds and native plants and wildlife.

Mr. DICKS. Again, I want to thank the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. MORAN) who is the vice chairman of our committee and very valued and esteemed member and someone whom I have enjoyed working with for many years, going back to our staff days in the other body.

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. The enjoyment is mutual, and I learned so much when you were chief of staff to the chair of the full committee of the Senate, and I could not be more pleased that you are chairing this bill.

Mr. TIAHRT. Madam Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Madam Chairman, I understand the gentleman from Virginia's concern about Northern Virginia being overrun by horses, but there are those of us in Kansas who do enjoy seeing those flowing manes and hearing those pounding hooves across the plains. So in your attempt to move towards horse contraception, I hope you are not going to be horsing around too much with the population so that we can still have those beautiful animals running across the plains of Kansas.

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Madam Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. TIAHRT. I yield to the gentleman from Virginia.

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. The gentleman's wit is deeply appreciated by the Member from Virginia. I don't think we have a current problem with being overtaken by wild horses in Northern Virginia; but I appreciate your support as well for this humane approach in dealing with the wild horse and burro population.

Mr. TIAHRT. Madam Chairman, reclaiming my time, I am looking forward to working with the gentleman from Virginia in satisfying the needs of controlling our wild horse population.

Mr. SIMPSON. Madam Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

I wish to enter into a colloquy with the chairman of the Interior Appropriations Subcommittee.

Mr. Chairman, I am very pleased that this legislation increases the funding

for loan repayment for health professionals within the Indian Health Service. As a dentist, I am keenly aware that the IHS dental program has the highest vacancy rate at 34 percent. The loan repayment program has proven to be a successful recruiting and retention tool for dentists and others. However, there is a related issue that I would like to discuss.

Within the next few years, 65 percent of the IHS dental specialists, including pediatric dentists and oral surgeons, will be eligible for retirement. These dentists are in great demand because Indian people have some of the highest oral disease rates in the world. A 1999 IHS survey found that 79 percent of Indian children 2-4 years old had a history of dental decay; 68 percent of adults had untreated dental decay; and 61 percent of elders had periodontal disease.

The dental specialists are a vital component in the IHS dental program. In addition to treating patients, they also train the general dentists for treating complex cases that arise daily in IHS hospitals and clinics.

I hope it is possible to provide additional support for the dental residency program so they can fill these vacancies before reaching crisis proportions.

Mr. DICKS. Madam Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. SIMPSON. I yield to the gentleman from Washington.

Mr. DICKS. I thank the gentleman for highlighting the issue and for his concern for improving Indian health care. We agree this is an important issue, and we will work with you to address it.

I might mention that one of the programs over the years that I have been a big supporter of is the National Health Service Corps, which allows people to be trained and work in rural areas. I think there is a multitude of ways to attack this problem, and I appreciate the gentleman's leadership on this issue and guarantee him that we will work hard to do as much as we can because we agree with you that the need for dental care is a very high priority in Indian country.

Mr. SIMPSON. I thank the chairman of the subcommittee.

Mr. TIAHRT. Madam Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. SIMPSON. I yield to the gentleman from Kansas.

Mr. TIAHRT. I want to thank the gentleman from Idaho for hitting on a topic that was very important in our hearing process because we heard from not only dentists, but also the medical community that we have a shortage in many other parts of the medical industry including nurses, anesthesiologists, et cetera. But dentistry is one area where they had an acute shortage. And so your leadership is very important in this area. We want to work with you in support of these efforts to make sure that we have enough medical providers in Indian country.

Mr. SIMPSON. I thank the ranking member and the subcommittee.

Mr. DINGELL. Madam Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Madam Chairman, I rise in strong support of the legislation. I want to commend and congratulate and thank my two good friends, Chairman DICKS and OBEY for their extraordinary leadership. They have produced the finest Interior Appropriations bill I have seen in years, and we owe our two colleagues a great debt of gratitude.

First of all, there is a large increase in the Fish and Wildlife Service to address problems like staffing of refuges of which 221 of the 547 have no staff whatsoever. It will provide \$56 million which will give our refuges the staff necessary to keep this wonderful system the national treasure it is.

It is also a wonderful piece of legislation by giving \$223 million more to the Park Service, a desperately needed situation. The Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund is funded at \$1.1 billion over the President's request, desperately needed in a time when our Nation is seeing our waters get dirtier and less safe and less enjoyable for our people.

The bill reverses years of budget neglect, and provides much-needed increases for public health programs administered by EPA. It increases funding for Superfund toxic waste cleanups, something which is a massive problem to our people, both in terms of safety and the environment. It brings forward brownfield revitalization efforts and addresses the problem of leaking underground storage tanks and will protect the health and environment of the American people.

I want to tell my good friend how grateful we are and thank him for what he has done. I would also like to express my support for EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON's amendment to prevent EPA from finalizing a proposed change in existing rules limiting toxic air pollution.

This is a great bill and I salute the gentleman from Washington (Mr. DICKS) for his extraordinary ability, remarkable hard work, and great service.

Mr. DICKS. Madam Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. DINGELL. I yield to the gentleman from Washington.

Mr. DICKS. I want to thank the gentleman for his extremely kind words. I just want to say to him that I have appreciated working with him over the years; and we in the Pacific northwest appreciate his great efforts on behalf of the salmon recovery initiatives and our Northwest Power Act and all of the other major environmental legislation that the gentleman from Michigan, the dean of the House, has enacted during his long and illustrious career. I am proud to work with him and with anyone else who wants to make the environment of the United States better for all of our citizens. I thank him for his great leadership.

Mr. DINGELL. I thank the gentleman for his kind words.

Mr. TIAHRT. Madam Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. DINGELL. I yield to the gentleman from Kansas.

Mr. TIAHRT. I would like to thank the grand gentleman from Michigan for coming down here and talking about the importance of this bill; and also acknowledge what a leader you have been on environmental issues over the years and we appreciate your service to the country and your leadership here on the floor.

Mr. DINGELL. I thank the gentleman for those kinds words, and I want to utter in return the great respect and affection I have for the distinguished gentleman and for the outstanding work he does here. I am proud he is my friend.

The CHAIRMAN. The Committee will rise informally.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. CAS-TOR) assumed the chair.

#### MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed with amendments in which the concurrence of the House is requested, a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 6. An act to reduce our Nation's dependency on foreign oil by investing in clean, renewable, and alternative energy resources, promoting new emerging energy technologies, developing greater efficiency, and creating a Strategic Energy Efficiency and Renewables Reserve to invest in alternative energy, and for other purposes.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Committee will resume its sitting.

#### DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2008

The Committee resumed its sitting.  
The CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will read.  
The Clerk read as follows:

##### COMPACT OF FREE ASSOCIATION

For grants and necessary expenses, \$5,362,000 to remain available until expended, as provided for in sections 221(a)(2), 221(b), and 233 of the Compact of Free Association for the Republic of Palau; and section 221(a)(2) of the Compacts of Free Association for the Government of the Republic of the Marshall Islands and the Federated States of Micronesia, as authorized by Public Law 99-658 and Public Law 108-188.

##### OFFICE OF THE SOLICITOR

##### SALARIES AND EXPENSES

For necessary expenses of the Office of the Solicitor, \$59,250,000.

##### OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

##### SALARIES AND EXPENSES

For necessary expenses of the Office of Inspector General, \$43,822,000.

##### OFFICE OF SPECIAL TRUSTEE FOR AMERICAN INDIANS

##### FEDERAL TRUST PROGRAMS

For the operation of trust programs by direct expenditure, contracts, cooperative agreements, compacts, and grants, \$182,542,000, to remain available until expended, of which not to exceed \$56,384,000 from this or any other Act, shall be available for historical accounting: *Provided*, That