

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. CASTOR) 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

funds for trust management improvements and litigation support may, as needed, be transferred to or merged with the Bureau of Indian Affairs, "Operation of Indian Programs" account; the Office of the Solicitor, "Salaries and Expenses" account; and the Office of the Secretary, "Salaries and Expenses" account: *Provided further*, That funds made available through contracts or grants obligated during fiscal year 2008, as authorized by the Indian Self-Determination Act of 1975 (25 U.S.C. 450 et seq.), shall remain available until expended by the contractor or grantee: *Provided further*, That, notwithstanding any other provision of law, the statute of limitations shall not commence to run on any claim, including any claim in litigation pending on the date of the enactment of this Act, concerning losses to or mismanagement of trust funds, until the affected tribe or individual Indian has been furnished with an accounting of such funds from which the beneficiary can determine whether there has been a loss: *Provided further*, That, notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary shall not be required to provide a quarterly statement of performance for any Indian trust account that has not had activity for at least 18 months and has a balance of \$15.00 or less: *Provided further*, That the Secretary shall issue an annual account statement and maintain a record of any such accounts and shall permit the balance in each such account to be withdrawn upon the express written request of the account holder: *Provided further*, That not to exceed \$50,000 is available for the Secretary to make payments to correct administrative errors of either disbursements from or deposits to Individual Indian Money or Tribal accounts after September 30, 2002: *Provided further*, That erroneous payments that are recovered shall be credited to and remain available in this account for this purpose.

INDIAN LAND CONSOLIDATION

For consolidation of fractional interests in Indian lands and expenses associated with redetermining and redistributing escheated interests in allotted lands, and for necessary expenses to carry out the Indian Land Consolidation Act of 1983, as amended, by direct expenditure or cooperative agreement, \$10,000,000, to remain available until expended, and which may be transferred to the Bureau of Indian Affairs and Office of the Secretary accounts.

DEPARTMENT-WIDE PROGRAMS

PAYMENTS IN LIEU OF TAXES

For expenses necessary to implement the Act of October 20, 1976, as amended (31 U.S.C. 6901–6907), \$232,528,000, of which not to exceed \$400,000 shall be available for administrative expenses: *Provided*, That no payment shall be made to otherwise eligible units of local government if the computed amount of the payment is less than \$100.

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AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. LAMBORN

Mr. LAMBORN. Madam Chair, I offer an amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment offered by Mr. LAMBORN:

On page 44, line 23, after the dollar amount, insert "(increased by \$160,000,000)".

On page 96, line 14, after the dollar amount, insert "(reduced by \$60,000,000)".

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

The CHAIRMAN. The point of order is reserved.

Mr. LAMBORN. Madam Chairwoman, this amendment would eliminate fund-

ing for the National Endowment for the Arts and increase the funding for the Payment in Lieu of Taxes, or PILT program. This amendment recognizes the difficult fiscal situation that our government is facing. Many of my colleagues and I are finding opportunities to reduce funding in areas to offset increases in others, and we are working to trim Federal spending wherever possible. The Interior appropriations bill has the largest increase over the President's request of any of these appropriations bills, and I will support efforts to bring the cost down as they arise.

Now, the opposition to the NEA should not be perceived as opposition to the arts. True art can survive in the private sector without Federal handouts. The NEA did not even exist before 1965, and look at all the wonderful artists in American history who survived and thrived before that time. Artists have a constitutional right to be creative, but free speech does not mean that the taxpayer has to fund it. Even if I did support the NEA agenda, at a time when fiscal restraint is crucial, we must closely examine how and where we are spending taxpayer money. As such, I feel it is not only appropriate but necessary to question some of the funding in this bill and see if it can be either reduced or redirected to more worthwhile programs.

Much of the land contained in the rural counties in Colorado and out west, including much of my congressional district in Colorado, is largely owned by the Federal Government. In fact, more than one-third of Colorado, 24 million acres, is owned by the Federal Government. This removes much of the land in these counties from any ability to generate revenue to pay for basic government services like law enforcement or fighting fires. At a time when we are facing record spending, this commonsense amendment simply lets Americans know that we are willing to make tough choices.

My amendment would reduce all of the \$160 million in funding for the NEA while offering a modest \$52 million increase to this much-needed PILT program. This still reduces the overall cost of this spending bill by over \$100 million and sends a message that in this budget environment we are willing to tighten our belts as any American family or business would.

I know many of my colleagues support the NEA. I simply believe the government has no business funding art with taxpayer dollars, especially in light of our difficult budget circumstances. My colleagues that support the NEA should put their money where their mouth is by making private donations instead of doing so with the hard-earned tax dollars of working men and women.

With that, Madam Chairman, I offer this amendment and I ask for support on it.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. DICKS. Madam Chair, I insist on my point of order.

The amendment may not be considered en bloc under clause 2(f) of rule XXI because the amendment proposes to increase the level of outlays by \$140 million in the bill.

The CHAIRMAN. Does the gentleman wish to withdraw his amendment?

Mr. LAMBORN. Madam Chair, I would ask unanimous consent to withdraw this amendment and offer another one in lieu which I hope would satisfy that point of order.

The CHAIRMAN. Without objection, the amendment is withdrawn.

There was no objection.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. LAMBORN

Mr. LAMBORN. Madam Chairwoman, I offer an amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment offered by Mr. LAMBORN:

On page 44, line 23, after the dollar amount, insert "(increased by \$52,000,000)".

On page 96, line 14, after the dollar amount, insert "(reduced by \$160,000,000)".

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

The CHAIRMAN. The point of order is reserved.

Mr. LAMBORN. Madam Chairwoman, I won't repeat the points that I just made a moment ago, other than to say that the dollar amounts have been changed in this subsequent amendment and I believe they answer the gentleman's point of order. It is offered for the same reason. Let's take NEA money that can be privately funded through the private sector and put it into the counties that are sometimes losing dollars when so much land is federally owned and let's improve the PILT program by \$52 million.

Mr. DICKS. Madam Chairwoman, I rise in very strong opposition to this amendment. The principal purpose of this amendment is to block the long overdue increase in funding for the National Endowment for the Arts provided in the bill. The gentleman is correct that the bill reported by the committee provides \$160 million for the NEA, an increase of \$35 million over the 2007 enacted level. I am very proud of that increase which I think is fully justified and broadly supported by the Members of this body.

It is important for Members to realize as they consider the committee's action that the \$160 million recommended only partially restores cuts made to this agency a decade ago. In fact, the amount in this bill is still \$16 million below the level provided in 1993. After adjusting for inflation, the amount recommended is \$100 million below the level in 1993, as displayed on the chart in front of the Members.

As we debate the amendment, Members should also note that the National Endowment for the Arts has been transformed since the arts funding debate of the 1990s. Two gifted chairmen have reinvigorated the NEA into an agency with broad support. Chairman Bill Ivey, appointed by President Clinton, negotiated and then implemented bipartisan reforms in NEA's grant structure to ensure that funds go to activities for which public funding is appropriate. Dana Gioia, the current

chairman, then energized the agency with many new programs and a commitment to reach beyond the cultural centers of our major cities. Last year every single congressional district received NEA support through innovative programs such as American Masterpieces, Operation Homecoming and the Big Read. Today, NEA is truly a national program with outreach efforts to every corner of America and every segment of our society.

Each of us has different reasons to support the arts. Some will describe their support in terms of the inherent joy of the arts as a personally enriching experience. Others support the arts as engines of job development and economic growth. It is equally important to emphasize that except for a few members of the Flat Earth Society, there is little opposition to Federal funding for the arts and for the humanities. The culture wars are over. For each of the last 7 years, with the help of many Members in this Chamber, a bipartisan majority of the House has voted to increase funding for the NEA. During the last 2 years, Ms. SLAUGHTER's and my amendments to add funds were adopted by voice vote without opposition.

Mr. Chairman, I do not normally include quotes in my floor remarks, but I was struck in preparing for this year's arts debate by a quote attributed to actor Richard Dreyfus at the Grammy awards ceremony:

"Perhaps we've all misunderstood the reason we learn music and all the arts in the first place. It is that for hundreds of years, it has been known that teaching the arts helps to create the well-rounded mind that Western civilization, and America, have been grounded on. America's greatest achievements in science, in business, in popular culture, would simply not be obtainable without an education that encourages achievement in all fields. It is from that creativity and imagination that the solutions to our political and social problems will come. We need that well-rounded mind now. Without it, we simply make more difficult the problems we face."

I believe Mr. Dreyfus is right, and the committee has acted to provide the funding so arts can reach even more broadly into American communities with a richer variety of programs.

I urge defeat of the gentleman's amendment.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. DICKS. I want to insist on my point of order.

The amendment may not be considered en bloc under clause 2(f) of rule XXI because the amendment proposes to increase the level of outlays in the bill.

The CHAIRMAN. Does any other Member wish to be heard on the point of order? Or the amendment?

Mr. LAMBORN. Madam Chairwoman, I would ask for a ruling from the Chair because I believe that it is in order.

The CHAIRMAN. The Chair will rule.

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 Colorado 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:

CENTRAL HAZARDOUS MATERIALS FUND

For necessary expenses of the Department of the Interior and any of its component offices and bureaus for the remedial action, including associated activities, of hazardous waste substances, pollutants, or contaminants pursuant to the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act, as amended (42 U.S.C. 9601 et seq.), \$9,954,000, to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That hereafter, notwithstanding 31 U.S.C. 3302, sums recovered from or paid by a party in advance of or as reimbursement for remedial action or response activities conducted by the Department pursuant to section 107 or 113(f) of such Act, shall be credited to this account, to be available until expended without further appropriation: *Provided further*, That hereafter such sums recovered from or paid by any party are not limited to monetary payments and may include stocks, bonds or other personal or real property, which may be retained, liquidated, or otherwise disposed of by the Secretary and which shall be credited to this account.

NATURAL RESOURCE DAMAGE ASSESSMENT AND RESTORATION

NATURAL RESOURCE DAMAGE ASSESSMENT FUND

To conduct natural resource damage assessment and restoration activities by the Department of the Interior necessary to carry out the provisions of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act, as amended (42 U.S.C. 9601 et seq.), Federal Water Pollution Control Act, as amended (33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq.), the Oil Pollution Act of 1990 (33 U.S.C. 2701 et seq.), and Public Law 101-337, as amended (16 U.S.C. 19jj et seq.), \$6,224,000, to remain available until expended.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS

There is hereby authorized for acquisition from available resources within the Working Capital Fund, 15 aircraft, 10 of which shall be for replacement and which may be obtained by donation, purchase or through available excess surplus property: *Provided*, That existing aircraft being replaced may be sold, with proceeds derived or trade-in value used to offset the purchase price for the replacement aircraft.

GENERAL PROVISIONS, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

(INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)

SEC. 101. Appropriations made in this title shall be available for expenditure or transfer (within each bureau or office), with the approval of the Secretary, for the emergency reconstruction, replacement, or repair of aircraft, buildings, utilities, or other facilities or equipment damaged or destroyed by fire, flood, storm, or other unavoidable causes: *Provided*, That no funds shall be made available under this authority until funds specifically made available to the Department of the Interior for emergencies shall have been exhausted: *Provided further*, That all funds

used pursuant to this section must be replenished by a supplemental appropriation which must be requested as promptly as possible.

SEC. 102. The Secretary may authorize the expenditure or transfer of any no year appropriation in this title, in addition to the amounts included in the budget programs of the several agencies, for the suppression or emergency prevention of wildland fires on or threatening lands under the jurisdiction of the Department of the Interior; for the emergency rehabilitation of burned-over lands under its jurisdiction; for emergency actions related to potential or actual earthquakes, floods, volcanoes, storms, or other unavoidable causes; for contingency planning subsequent to actual oil spills; for response and natural resource damage assessment activities related to actual oil spills; for the prevention, suppression, and control of actual or potential grasshopper and Mormon cricket outbreaks on lands under the jurisdiction of the Secretary, pursuant to the authority in section 1773(b) of Public Law 99-198 (99 Stat. 1658); for emergency reclamation projects under section 410 of Public Law 95-87; and shall transfer, from any no year funds available to the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement, such funds as may be necessary to permit assumption of regulatory authority in the event a primacy State is not carrying out the regulatory provisions of the Surface Mining Act: *Provided*, That appropriations made in this title for wildland fire operations shall be available for the payment of obligations incurred during the preceding fiscal year, and for reimbursement to other Federal agencies for destruction of vehicles, aircraft, or other equipment in connection with their use for wildland fire operations, such reimbursement to be credited to appropriations currently available at the time of receipt thereof: *Provided further*, That for wildland fire operations, no funds shall be made available under this authority until the Secretary determines that funds appropriated for "wildland fire operations" shall be exhausted within 30 days: *Provided further*, That all funds used pursuant to this section must be replenished by a supplemental appropriation which must be requested as promptly as possible: *Provided further*, That such replenishment funds shall be used to reimburse, on a pro rata basis, accounts from which emergency funds were transferred.

SEC. 103. Appropriations made to the Department of the Interior in this title shall be available for services as authorized by 5 U.S.C. 3109, when authorized by the Secretary, in total amount not to exceed \$500,000; purchase and replacement of motor vehicles, including specially equipped law enforcement vehicles; hire, maintenance, and operation of aircraft; hire of passenger motor vehicles; purchase of reprints; payment for telephone service in private residences in the field, when authorized under regulations approved by the Secretary; and the payment of dues, when authorized by the Secretary, for library membership in societies or associations which issue publications to members only or at a price to members lower than to subscribers who are not members.

SEC. 104. No funds provided in this title may be expended by the Department of the Interior for the conduct of offshore preleasing, leasing and related activities placed under restriction in the President's moratorium statement of June 12, 1998, in the areas of northern, central, and southern California; the North Atlantic; Washington and Oregon; and the eastern Gulf of Mexico south of 26 degrees north latitude and east of 86 degrees west longitude.

SEC. 105. No funds provided in this title may be expended by the Department of the

Interior to conduct oil and natural gas preleasing, leasing and related activities in the Mid-Atlantic and South Atlantic planning areas.

SEC. 106. Appropriations made in this Act under the headings Bureau of Indian Affairs and Office of Special Trustee for American Indians and any unobligated balances from prior appropriations Acts made under the same headings shall be available for expenditure or transfer for Indian trust management and reform activities, except that total funding for historical accounting activities shall not exceed amounts specifically designated in this Act for such purpose.

SEC. 107. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary of the Interior is authorized to redistribute any Tribal Priority Allocation funds, including tribal base funds, to alleviate tribal funding inequities by transferring funds to address identified, unmet needs, dual enrollment, overlapping service areas or inaccurate distribution methodologies. No federally-recognized tribe shall receive a reduction in Tribal Priority Allocation funds of more than 10 percent in fiscal year 2008. Under circumstances of dual enrollment, overlapping service areas or inaccurate distribution methodologies, the 10 percent limitation does not apply.

SEC. 108. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, in conveying the Twin Cities Research Center under the authority provided by Public Law 104-134, as amended by Public Law 104-208, the Secretary may accept and retain land and other forms of reimbursement: *Provided*, That the Secretary may retain and use any such reimbursement until expended and without further appropriation: (1) for the benefit of the National Wildlife Refuge System within the State of Minnesota; and (2) for all activities authorized by 16 U.S.C. 460zz.

SEC. 109. The Secretary of the Interior may hereafter use or contract for the use of helicopters or motor vehicles on the Sheldon and Hart National Wildlife Refuges for the purpose of capturing and transporting horses and burros. The provisions of subsection (a) of the Act of September 8, 1959 (18 U.S.C. 47(a)) shall not be applicable to such use. Such use shall be in accordance with humane procedures prescribed by the Secretary.

SEC. 110. None of the funds in this or any other Act can be used to compensate the Special Master and the Special Master-Monitor, and all variations thereto, appointed by the United States District Court for the District of Columbia in the Cobell v. Kempthorne litigation at an annual rate that exceeds 200 percent of the highest Senior Executive Service rate of pay for the Washington-Baltimore locality pay area.

SEC. 111. The Secretary of the Interior may use discretionary funds to pay private attorney fees and costs for employees and former employees of the Department of the Interior reasonably incurred in connection with Cobell v. Kempthorne to the extent that such fees and costs are not paid by the Department of Justice or by private insurance. In no case shall the Secretary make payments under this section that would result in payment of hourly fees in excess of the highest hourly rate approved by the District Court for the District of Columbia for counsel in Cobell v. Kempthorne.

SEC. 112. The United States Fish and Wildlife Service shall, in carrying out its responsibilities to protect threatened and endangered species of salmon, implement a system of mass marking of salmonid stocks, intended for harvest, that are released from federally-operated or federally-financed hatcheries including but not limited to fish releases of coho, chinook, and steelhead species. Marked fish must have a visible mark that can be readily identified by commercial and recreational fishers.

SEC. 113. Notwithstanding any implementation of the Department of the Interior's trust reorganization or reengineering plans, or the implementation of the "To Be" Model, funds appropriated for fiscal year 2008 shall be available to the tribes within the California Tribal Trust Reform Consortium and to the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community, the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Reservation and the Chippewa Cree Tribe of the Rocky Boys Reservation through the same methodology as funds were distributed in fiscal year 2003. This Demonstration Project shall continue to operate separate and apart from the Department of the Interior's trust reform and reorganization and the Department shall not impose its trust management infrastructure upon or alter the existing trust resource management systems of the above referenced tribes having a self-governance compact and operating in accordance with the Tribal Self-Governance Program set forth in 25 U.S.C. 458aa-458hh: *Provided*, That the California Trust Reform Consortium and any other participating tribe agree to carry out their responsibilities under the same written and implemented fiduciary standards as those being carried by the Secretary of the Interior: *Provided further*, That they demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Secretary that they have the capability to do so: *Provided further*, That the Department shall provide funds to the federally-recognized tribes in an amount equal to that required by 25 U.S.C. 458cc(g)(3), including funds specifically or functionally related to the provision of trust services to the federally-recognized tribes or their members.

SEC. 114. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary of the Interior is authorized to acquire lands, waters, or interests therein including the use of all or part of any pier, dock, or landing within the State of New York and the State of New Jersey, for the purpose of operating and maintaining facilities in the support of transportation and accommodation of visitors to Ellis, Governors, and Liberty Islands, and of other program and administrative activities, by donation or with appropriated funds, including franchise fees (and other monetary consideration), or by exchange; and the Secretary is authorized to negotiate and enter into leases, subleases, concession contracts or other agreements for the use of such facilities on such terms and conditions as the Secretary may determine reasonable.

SEC. 115. None of the funds made available in this Act may be used to issue any new lease that authorizes production of oil or natural gas under the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act (43 U.S.C. 1331 et seq.) to any lessee under an existing lease issued by the Department of the Interior pursuant to the Outer Continental Shelf Deep Water Royalty Relief Act (43 U.S.C. 1337 note), where such existing lease is not subject to limitations on royalty relief based on market price.

Mr. DICKS (during the reading). Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent that the remainder of title I be considered as read, printed in the RECORD and open to amendment at any point.

The Acting CHAIRMAN (Mr. DAVIS of Alabama). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Washington?

There was no objection.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. PETERSON OF PENNSYLVANIA

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment offered by Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania:

Page 50, line 3, after the period, insert "The preceding sentence shall not apply with respect to natural gas offshore preleasing, leasing, and related activities beyond 25 miles from the coastline":

Page 50, line 7, after the period, insert "The preceding sentence shall not apply with respect to natural gas offshore preleasing, leasing, and related activities beyond 25 miles from the coastline"

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

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

There was no objection.

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. This amendment, I believe, is one of the most important issues that we will deal with in this Congress. It's about having affordable, available, clean, green natural gas, the fuel that we take for granted. It's the fuel that heats about 60 percent of our homes, 70 percent of our businesses, and is the major building block to all the industries that are left in this country.

The petrochemical industry, 55 percent of their operating cost is natural gas. The polymers and plastic industry, 45 percent of their operational cost is natural gas. And fertilizer can be as high as 70 percent of their cost is natural gas because they use it as a fuel and they use it as an ingredient to make their product. It's an ingredient in all those products.

Clean, green natural gas now generates about 20 percent of our electricity. That didn't used to be. Biodiesel consumes huge amounts of natural gas in the production cost. Ethanol, 96 percent of the plants that make ethanol use huge amounts of natural gas in this country than we're able to produce.

The chart on the left with the red, that's the gap that's growing, because we as a country, 26 years ago, Congress decided that we shouldn't produce energy offshore. Every country in the world produces both oil and gas offshore. Now, they have setbacks. But they all use offshore production because it's the cleanest, best, safest way to produce energy, and there's huge amounts out there.

Now, for this country to have the highest natural gas prices in the world almost is insanity, because we have lots of it, but we have chosen to lock it up and not produce it. This is the clean, green fuel. It's greener than biofuels. It's what we use to generate electricity when the wind doesn't blow. It's what we use to generate electricity when the sun doesn't shine for solar. It's what we use to make hydrogen for the hydrogen vehicles that are oncoming. It's the bridge to our future because it's clean, it's green. No NO_x, SO_x and a third of the CO₂ that all other energies project. For this country not to open up its Outer Continental Shelf to natural gas, my amendment opens it up from 25 miles on out.

That doesn't mean it's going to be drilled. It would still have to be in the 5-year plan, but it would open it up.

Let me tell you, folks, we're going to do this sometime. It depends on whether we do it in time to save the millions of jobs that are leaving. Dow Chemical's energy bill went from \$8 billion in '02, natural gas bill, to \$22 billion in '06. They came to our committee the last 2 years and begged for release. Produce natural gas. We didn't. They just invested \$30 billion that they wanted to invest in America for working men in America and working women in America to have a good job. They're putting it in Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Libya, because natural gas is a fraction there of what it is here. It is absolute insanity for America to starve itself of the clean, green fuel that has never foiled a beach.

California, New Jersey and Florida will protest the most. It will never foil a beach. A gas well has never foiled a beach. It has never washed up on a shore. It's a gas. And they are the three States that are the largest consumers and who have switched their electric generation to gas and helped cause the problem that have protested the production of clean, green natural gas.

My amendment is the amendment that can keep America competitive. It can keep us strong as a nation. It can keep American working people working in their jobs, in their factories. But if we don't pass my amendment, we will lose millions of jobs in this country; in fact, all of the manufacturing jobs. I lost a plant this year that made clay tile. Natural gas prices. I got a letter the other day from a guy who reformed steel, and he said if it continues to go up, it has went up three times in the last 2 years, 300 percent.

□ 1400

He said, if it goes up any further, I am out of business. I can't make sign posts. I can't make bed rail anymore out of recycled steel rail.

Folks, clean, green natural gas is more America's fuel that can keep this country strong and growing and environmentally green.

Mrs. CAPPES. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to this amendment.

I rise in very strong opposition to both amendments by my colleague from Pennsylvania (Mr. PETERSON) which eliminate current protections for sensitive, coastal marine areas for new offshore drill for oil and gas.

Under these amendments, we could literally see the push for new drilling off our coast begin almost immediately. Though oil and gas companies awash in profits from our open constituents profits would have us believe that all the offshore resources are off limits today, that we are only talking about drilling for natural gas and not oil, and also that today's high gas prices demand this new drilling, these arguments don't hold up under scrutiny.

First, the industry already has access to the vast majority of natural gas in

the Outer Continental Shelf, already has access to it. Indeed, according to the Bush administration, about 80 percent of the known reserves are located in areas where this drilling is already allowed. Furthermore, the oil and gas industry already owns the drilling rights to more than 4,000 untapped leases in the Gulf of Mexico alone.

Second, there is no such thing as natural gas-only drilling. Drilling for gas, natural gas, means drilling for oil.

Even the Bush administration and the energy industry have dismissed so-called gas-only drilling as unworkable. This is what the American Association of Petroleum Geologists has to say about gas only drilling. This is a quote, "There are a lot of times when you drill for oil, and find gas instead—and the other way around. You never know for sure what you're going to find until you're in there."

Here is another quote from the former head of Minerals Management Service. "While gas-only leasing sounds appealing, as a practical matter, it may remain difficult to implement in a manner that reflects sound public policy."

Now, finally, new drilling off our coast is not going to lower gas prices today or any time in the near future. It would take an estimated 7 years for natural gas from new leases to come online, 7 years. Serious energy efficiency measures, and more use of renewables, this would reduce demand and bring down prices much faster.

Mr. Chairman, President Bush has promised to end our oil addiction. Yet, energy prices and industry profits are at record highs. The predictable result of a strategy of focusing on supply and ignoring demand. The Peterson amendment to drill within miles off Florida, California and other coastal States is just more of the same. With 3 percent of the world's resources, 25 percent of the world's demand, it should be obvious there is no way we are going to drill our way out of this problem.

We need to use energy in smarter ways to improve fuel efficiency of our cars and trucks, invest more of the development of new, cleaner technology. In doing so, we would be generating way more jobs, the kinds of jobs and growth that will ensure our continued preeminence in among the world's economies. Let us not sacrifice our most important treasures, our coastal economies, in a hopeless way to drill our way to energy security. It doesn't work.

I urge all my colleagues to protect our coasts by defeating both Peterson amendments.

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

Mr. Chairman, America needs to secure its own sources of energy, be it from oil, natural gas, coal, nuclear renewable or other sources. A strong, vibrant economy with well-paying jobs goes along with it. It's inextricably linked with reliable and preferably inexpensive energy sources.

Sadly, as Mr. PETERSON points out, we pay more now for natural gas than we ever have before in the history of this Nation. If we want to help workers and businesses that employ workers, we must continue to build and strengthen our economy and provide them with reliable energy resources.

If we want to have high-quality, high-paying jobs in America, and I think we all do, then we are going to need additional energy, and we are going to need additional natural gas. Do we have the resources? Yes, we have the resources. Can we produce it safely? Yes, we can produce it safely.

We have been producing gas, natural gas, in Kansas for over 100 years. Natural gas is very versatile. You can make so much from it. You can make fertilizer, you can make make-up, clothing, plastics, ethanol. But we mostly use it to produce energy or electricity, energy in the form of electricity.

I think when we look at this issue, we have to figure out, are we going to make energy available inexpensively, and, if we are, we are going to have to go to where the reserves are. This amendment opens up an area for us to produce natural gas, or it can be produced safely, and it's going to be essential if we are going to continue to grow our economy.

So I urge the adoption of Mr. PETERSON's amendment, because I think we know that we have proven reserves that can produce safely, natural gas. This is the time for us to send this message to America, that we are going to continue to build a strong economy, and we are going to give our economy the tools necessary to produce the jobs we need to continue to provide the hope and a source for continuing to complete dreams here at home.

I urge strong support of this amendment.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word in opposition to the amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I have heard many times from the gentleman from Pennsylvania the suggestion that drilling for natural gas is low impact compared to oil drilling. In fact, he even called it clean on the floor today. Unfortunately, this opinion runs contrary to scientific findings on the matter. There are drastic and devastating environmental and economic repercussions that come with drilling into the ocean floor, drilling into the ocean floor.

Mr. PETERSON refers to the use of natural gas as a clean fuel, and that may well be true. But what we are talking about here is drilling into the ocean floor so close to our beaches, that is a problem for both my home State of Florida, as well as the rest of the Nation.

According to the Minerals Management Service, once exploratory drilling begins, the toxic impacts are similar for either oil or gas exploration or development. Drilling operations produce hundreds of thousands of gallons of

drilling muds that routinely discharge toxic metals such as lead, mercury and cadmium. None of those seem clean to me.

Water discharged from drilling and exploratory operations often contain dangerous levels of carcinogens and radioactive materials such as benzene, toluene and arsenic. None of those seem clean to me either. The impact is not just limited to the off-shore platform. Natural gas drilling requires on-shore storage and processing facilities, including miles of pipelines, roads, ports, helipads and dorms.

The gentleman from Pennsylvania seeks to minimize the perception of the impact of drilling for natural gas, when the reality is that it would generate toxic poisons seeping into our oceans, have a significant impact environmentally on our coastline, and be a significant danger to opening the door, not just to gas drilling, but oil drilling as well.

I urge my colleagues to protect the oceans and breaches of the United States and oppose the Peterson amendment, both this one and the next one that is offered.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIRMAN

The Acting CHAIRMAN. Members are reminded that when multiple Members rise for recognition, priority is given, by custom, to Members who serve on the committee.

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the passion of the introducer of this amendment. I understand his arguments. I should. We have talked about them at least twice a week for the last 3 or 4 years.

I agree with a lot of his argument, but the problem is that this amendment wouldn't solve most of those problems. It really isn't directed at those problems.

In the outer continental shelf, there are vast areas of the outer continental shelf that are available for drilling for oil and for gas.

But in the Gulf of Mexico, for example, there are some very environmentally sensitive areas that have been protected by this Congress since 1983. This amendment would undo those protections. In recent years, something very important has come about, and this is the military mission line. The Defense Department, the Air Force and the military who exercise and train in areas of the Gulf of Mexico tell us that east of the military mission line it would be disastrous for their training if we allowed drilling for oil or for gas.

Congress spent a lot of time this last year on this very subject, and Mr. PETERSON was part of the effort to come to a compromise. We came to a compromise finally. It wasn't easy.

Mr. PETERSON didn't really like the compromise, and I give him credit for standing up for that, but he agreed to it.

Now, this amendment would undo the compromise that Congress worked so

hard on last year. This amendment is not going to solve the problems that the introducer of this amendment suggests exists today, problems that we are all pretty much aware of.

But this amendment could be a disaster for environmentally sensitive areas of the Gulf of Mexico and certainly would cause the degradation of necessary military training east of the military mission line in the Gulf of Mexico.

So I think that while Mr. PETERSON is very passionate, and he certainly understands the issue of natural gas, and the benefits of natural gas, I don't think that he really understands the need to protect certain areas from drilling for oil and for natural gas.

So I would hope that the Congress would once again step up to the plate on this issue, defeat this amendment, and let's get on with this good bill.

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

Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to this amendment. I have no doubt that the gentleman who has offered it is well intentioned, and he is clearly becoming a leader in moving our country to greater energy independence. But we will not get there by lifting the moratorium on drilling off the Atlantic and Pacific coasts. We will, however, invite great harm to established fishing and tourism industries, as well as the environment.

Off the coast of Virginia, we will interfere with the U.S. Navy's Virginia Cape Operations area in a way that the Department of Defense has warned us in unequivocal terms would be totally unacceptable and utterly incompatible with the operations that they are currently conducting. They could not conduct very sensitive essential operations off the coast of Virginia that are ongoing if we were to pass this amendment.

While it's technically feasible to drill for natural gas, there are also some fundamental, legal and economic questions about whether any drilling offshore could be limited to just natural gas.

But I want to focus particularly on the fact that this amendment can't possibly solve our energy problem.

The natural gas and oil estimated to be recoverable from the outer continental shelf will not result in lower natural gas prices. It simply takes too long to develop a natural gas field to affect prices in the short term. We are talking 1 to 3 years at least to develop a field. Natural gas from areas currently off limits to drilling won't reduce prices in the long term either, since there is not enough gas there compared to either annual U.S. production or consumption.

A Department of Energy study compared the price of natural gas with the OCS moratorium areas that are kept out of production, versus the price of natural gas, if all of the moratorium areas were opened for drilling in the 2007-2012 5-year plan.

□ 1415

With all of its supply and demand information, the Department of Energy's model modeling system predicted that the price of natural gas would be \$3.26 per thousand cubic feet in the year 2020, without the gas under moratoria, and \$3.22 per thousand if we eliminate the moratorium. In other words, we could only save 4 cents if this amendment were implemented.

Moreover, the vast majority, over 80 percent of the Nation's undiscovered but technically recoverable Outer Continental Shelf gas is already located in areas that are open to drilling. And that's according to the Interior Department's 2006 report to Congress.

According to the same report, there is an estimated 86 trillion cubic feet of undiscovered, technically recoverable resources in all the Outer Continental Shelf areas that have been withdrawn from leasing, compared to 479 trillion cubic feet of reserve appreciation undiscovered technically recoverable resources within the total Outer Continental Shelf belonging the United States.

These are technical words and statistics. What it says is that, at best, you can open up 20 percent, and the fact is, it wouldn't make but a pittance of difference in the cost of natural gas. Eighty percent of the Nation's undiscovered natural gas is already open to drilling.

The other thing that we're very much concerned about is what the drilling operations do to our environment. They discharge hundreds of thousands of gallons of what's called "produced water" that contain a variety of toxic pollutants, including benzene, arsenic, lead, naphthalene, zinc and toluene, and can contain varying amounts of radioactive material. And tons of air pollutants are emitted. It will also trigger the uncontrolled release of methane hydrates, a greenhouse gas that's 20 times more potent than carbon dioxide.

And then if you look at what drilling has done to the Gulf Coast, you will recognize that it's destroyed hundreds of miles of wetlands and sensitive coastal habitats. When they bring the channel transporting the oil or gas into the shore, it brings the saltwater into the fresh water and destroys the plant life which reduces erosion. Thus we lose several football fields of shoreline every day along the Gulf Coast.

Mr. Chairman, there are a host of reasons this amendment is a bad amendment. It should be defeated. We should follow the lead of the chairman of the subcommittee.

Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, I greatly appreciate and respect, frankly, the passion and the consistent passion of the sponsor of this amendment. He's been very consistent and passionate to try to make sure that the United States is as independent from foreign sources of energy as possible.

However, I think we can do that without this amendment because there are many areas that are available for oil and gas exploration without this amendment. And this amendment overturns a longstanding bipartisan moratorium on new natural gas drilling in areas, in certain areas that are too close to sensitive coastlines.

Congress addressed this issue, as the gentleman from Florida had said a little while ago, Mr. YOUNG, year after year, and last year we had a huge battle and, I think, a compromise, which none of us thought was great, but it was a compromise, which I think kind of hopefully settled this issue at least for a while in that compromise.

This amendment would, unfortunately, allow for natural gas drilling way too close to our precious coastlines. It can potentially damage sensitive habitats. Just the byproducts of drilling itself can be potentially damaging, and it can be very damaging to the ecosystem and particularly, for example, to the economy of the State of Florida.

Mr. Chairman, tourism alone accounts for \$57 billion to the economy of the State of Florida. Imagine what an impact if we were to do something that jeopardizes that vital industry for Florida, but also for the national economy.

And, again, there are many other areas that are available for oil and gas drilling without this amendment. So I would respectfully, and understanding the passion and where it comes, and obviously I understand that he's trying to do what he believes is right for the country, but I think we can do it in a way that also balances the coastlines' sensitivity to the environment that this will be close to.

I think the bipartisan arrangement compromise that we did last year does that and therefore, very respectfully I would ask for a "no" vote on this amendment.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I move to strike the requisite number of words.

Mr. Speaker, before I get into my remarks, let me talk about some of the remarks and the comments that have been made. I know we've heard a study quoted about \$3.50 natural gas. Right now if you can find \$3.50 natural gas anywhere, we ought to buy it because now it's \$6 to \$7 per million cubic feet for natural gas right now. And so whatever studies talk about \$3, \$3.30, whatever, is really not relevant.

I represent a district that we actually have zero emitting natural gas wells in the Gulf of Mexico. Zero emitting for air pollution, zero emitting for water pollution. And I've offered many times to take colleagues who've never been to a natural gas offshore well to just come to the Gulf of Mexico, either off of Texas or Louisiana or maybe Mississippi or Alabama where folks also drill off the coast.

Natural gas is one of the cleanest producing fuels we can use. I'm a

strong supporter of this Peterson amendment to allow the Department of the Interior to issue new leases for offshore natural gas in areas 25 miles off the coast. We're not talking about 3 miles off the coast. We're not talking about 10 miles. We're talking about 25 miles.

This amendment has less to do with fossil fuels and everything to do with helping Congress address our climate change and transition America to a clean energy future. If you are for renewables, if you're for cleaner power, if you're for low-emitting vehicles, if you're for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, then you should be increasing the access to the domestic natural gas supplies.

Demand for natural gas is already building across our economy, and proposals pushing cleaner energy will only accelerate the demand. That's because it takes a lot of natural gas to make the materials for our economy that make it more energy efficient. Insulation, weatherization materials, thermal windows, appliances, lightweight vehicle parts, low-resistance tires, compact fluorescent light bulbs, heat reflecting coatings, house wrap, the list goes on and on. All are made from materials that are directly made from natural gas.

It also takes natural gas to make materials that make wind turbine blades and solar panels to run biomass facilities and to run cleaner burn power plants.

One example is right here in the Capitol where our Speaker and majority leader directed the Chief Administrative Officer, our CAO of the House, to develop a green Capitol initiative. The CAO officer announced last week that his strategy to reduce CO₂ emissions from the Capitol power plant was to use natural gas instead of coal, which will lower CO₂ emissions by 30 percent from 2006 level. This is equivalent to taking 1,900 cars off the road each year.

Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to back up their support for addressing both climate change and by supporting domestically produced natural gas in the environmentally responsible Peterson amendment.

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

Mr. Chairman, and my colleagues, this debate is a perfect example of why we have an energy crisis in the United States, a lot of people talking about energy and not using many facts.

I rise in strong support of the gentleman from Pennsylvania's amendment here to open up gas exploration and extraction of natural gas wells up to 25 miles, I guess would be the limit he proposes.

Let's just go back in history. I was in the Florida legislature on the Select Energy Committee in the State House when we had gasoline shortages and cars lined up. I voted to drill in the Everglades. My opponents remind me about that all the time.

Did you know we still drill in the Everglades? We do it safely, and we're

taking oil out of the Everglades without any harmful effects on the Everglades or the environment.

You hear fear, not facts, being proposed here. Damage to the economy. Well, back in the 1990s I participated in a 100-mile set off, and we set that as the policy. That's back in the 1990s.

The technology we have today in extracting natural gas and oil, and this is about natural gas. It's not about oil, but the same holds true. We won't even go into the oil extraction.

But we have technology today they didn't even dream about a decade ago. Off the coast of Scandinavia, they're taking out oil and natural gas. They're using technology. There's nothing above the surface of the water. Twenty-five miles, you won't see that.

Some of the proposals for wind, I challenge you to go to Scandinavia, to some of the other places where they have these huge windmills and see the visual pollution that is created. So it can be done. We have the technology to extract it.

Let me give you the irony of Florida and the history again. So we came back here, and this isn't just a Republican, Democrat issue, people talking about something they know nothing about. We had a Governor Bush, we had a President Bush, and they argued over it and we changed the areas that were eligible for extraction. When you drill for oil, or in this case, gas, it costs you hundreds of millions or billions of dollars to drill.

Are you going to drill when you're playing this hokey-pokey, first we put our right foot out then we put our left foot out. It's going to be 100, it's going to be a 120, it's going to be 150 or you can't do it.

No. It's absolutely incredible that we have a vast supply of natural gas right off of Florida. We can do it; we have the technology to extract it. We built a billion-dollar pipeline, a billion-dollar pipeline. We can't hook up to it. We have the supply.

The trade deficit, nobody's even talked about the trade deficit. Most of the trade deficit is importing oil. Look at the huge part of it. So we're bankrupting the United States, sending our resources overseas.

We've got this in our back yard. It's clean. In Florida, during the 1990s, the Clinton policy for the country was to go to natural gas for energy production for our power plants. Twenty-eight of 34 electrical power plants planned from Florida are designed for natural gas. Now we're switching back to coal and oil. What a crazy, mixed-up policy.

And here the gentleman from Pennsylvania offers us an opportunity to tap into a clean resource that doesn't emit these gas emissions that are detrimental to the environment and, again, this nonsensical debate that takes place.

Stop the politics. We had the gentleman from Florida a few minutes ago. Cuba, 90 miles. Within 45 miles the Chinese will soon be drilling for energy

resources. What a goofed-up debate and policy.

Shame on us. And the American people are paying. Wait till they get their bills. It's not going to get better, folks.

They said, well, we'll just wait for some other technology. We have this here. Solar and wind and all these other things are necessary, and we should use them. I'm a big fan of nuclear, but we have a proposal before us that makes sense. Let's adopt it.

Ms. CASTOR. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word in opposition to the amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong opposition to the Peterson amendment and in defense of Florida's economy and natural environment. New, off-shore oil and gas drilling so close to the beautiful Florida coastline and all of our Nation's waters must be voted down today, as it threatens our economy, our natural environment, and our strategy for a new energy policy.

Our economy, in Florida, and many of you know, Mr. Chairman, because so many take the time out of their vacation plans to come down to the State of Florida, enjoy their time away on our beautiful beaches. Our tourism economy in Florida is a multibillion dollar industry. It goes hand in hand with our multibillion dollar fishing industry. And it is absolutely worth protecting here today.

Our beaches, our coastal environment, our marine resources, in addition to our fragile ecosystems, all of this will be put at risk by these amendments here today if they are successful.

□ 1430

I am fortunate in my district to have a wonderful Department of Oceanography located at the University of South Florida. Here is what those researchers have warned:

It would only take 24 hours after a petroleum spill in the eastern Gulf of Mexico for oil to "sully Florida's Panhandle beaches if the spill was swept up by the gulf's powerful Loop Current. This spill could travel around the Florida Keys and contaminate estuaries and beaches from the Everglades to Cape Canaveral." That is from the University of South Florida Department of Oceanography.

In addition to that, one only has to look back a couple of years to know that it is completely unwise to put these types of facilities in hurricane alley. The gulf coast and the east coast, these are the two most coveted offshore areas by the oil and gas industry. That is where the threat of hurricanes is the greatest. It could wreak havoc on what they're trying to do there.

In 2005, in that hurricane season, that was the first year in reported history that we had three category five storms: Katrina, Rita, and Wilma. In 2005 Hurricanes Rita and Katrina caused massive spills of oil and other pollutants that seriously affected production, re-

finery capacity, and the price of oil in the United States. The storms caused 124 oil spills into the waters of the Gulf of Mexico. During Hurricane Katrina alone, 233,000 gallons of oil were spilled. There were 508,000 gallons of oil spilled during Hurricane Rita. And the U.S. Minerals Management Service reports that Hurricanes Katrina and Rita destroyed 115 petroleum production platforms in the Gulf of Mexico. The storms also damaged 457 pipelines, connecting production facilities in the gulf, and bringing oil and natural gas to shore. A full year after Katrina, BP admitted that a damaged oil well valve in the Gulf of Mexico was still leaking oil. The knee-jerk reaction to throw up more rigs offshore, especially in hurricane-prone waters like Florida's gulf coast and the eastern seaboard is precarious at best and not smart energy policy.

As much as the oil and gas lobby would like us to believe that drilling near our beaches would be a panacea, the experts say that only a couple of weeks of oil and gas are available.

Mr. Chairman, we can be smarter. We can be more strategic. Where is the commitment to conservation in this country?

Just a minute ago, the Senate sent over its new energy bill. Well, it is time for this House to get to work on new alternative energies and not continue to fuel our addiction to oil and gas.

Let's oppose these amendments.

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

Mr. Chairman, I rise in favor of the amendment, and I am glad to speak on this.

I come from Odessa, Texas, an oil and gas province that produces an incredible amount of our country's natural gas and crude oil, and I make no apologies for that. My colleagues from Florida come from Florida and they defend their beaches, and they make no apologies for that, as they should not.

But let me talk about a couple of things I have heard on the floor this afternoon. One of them was the effect of time to market. In other words, if we drill today, it will take 6, 7, 8, 9 years in order to get that production to our gas pumps. The moratorium that we are talking about, Mr. Chairman, is dated 1998, 9 years ago. Had we been drilling since then, then that production would have, in fact, come to market and would be available to reduce our demand for that product.

We have also heard criticism on this floor this afternoon about oil company profits. They have been roundly criticized from both sides of the aisle in some instances, many times from the other side of the aisle. And the criticisms seem to be that those nasty, vicious, terrible oil companies are going to take those profits and drill, take those profits and try to produce additional crude oil and additional natural gas, as if somehow that is a negative in the way we do things.

That is kind of the free market process. If I make money doing something, then I should be taking those profits and putting them back into the ground to produce additional crude oil and natural gas.

We have also heard comments about the offshore facilities, the production facilities, drilling facilities, and what terrible things they are and the terrible things they do to the environment, on the shorelines and everything else. And that may or may not be true. But what I have not heard is the equal passion for the production facilities that take natural gas into those States. In other words, where is the passion against the gas pipelines, the roads, the infrastructure that takes that natural gas that is produced in Texas, produced in Louisiana, and puts it into your State? Where is that passion for all of that terrible infrastructure that benefits you?

We have also heard an appeal to conservation. Well, okay. If those States who do not want this drilling off their shores would begin to commit today to eliminate their use of natural gas, just simply say, okay, if we are not going to drill off our shores, then we are not going to use it either. Let's see the passion for your commitment to conservation.

We have also heard conversations about the importance of the tourism industry in Florida, and I don't doubt that. An incredible impact on that part of the world, a beneficial impact. How about those hotels that run their air conditioning programs off of natural gas? Where does that natural gas come from? Well, it comes from somewhere else. And what we are saying with the gentleman's amendment is that that vast bureaucracy that runs this process of leasing and coming to conclusions that it can be done safely would be unleashed.

Therefore, Mr. Chairman, I would urge adoption of my colleague's amendment.

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong opposition to Mr. PETERSON's amendment, which would end the longstanding moratorium of new drilling in the Outer Continental Shelf.

For the past 25 years, bipartisan legislation and executive memoranda have kept this area off limits, preserving one of the most sensitive ecological areas off limits to oil and natural gas drilling. The Peterson amendment would open new areas to natural gas drilling.

Although at first glance natural gas drilling may seem favorable to some, but I urge my colleagues not to be tempted by this fool's gold. There is no guarantee that natural gas drilling will only get natural gas. In fact, according to the American Association of Petroleum Geologists, when drilling for natural gas, "There are a lot of times when you drill for oil and find gas instead, and the other way around. You

never for sure what you're going to find until you're in there."

And certainly I think we all understand very clearly what would happen if oil was found instead of natural gas.

Mr. Chairman, as a representative with over 75 miles of coastline along South Florida's east coast, new drilling could be a death knell for our environment, for our economy, and our way of life.

During my time in the Florida legislature, I worked with colleagues from both sides of the aisle to keep the moratorium in place. I pledged zero tolerance then, and I still pledge that same zero tolerance against any attempts to open up drilling off Florida's coast. And, of course, it is not only Florida's coast we are talking about. I said I would not compromise and I would not capitulate; so I am here today with my Florida colleagues to oppose this amendment.

But, most importantly, now that I am here in Congress along with many others, this is a false choice. It is a false choice of saying either we have oil or gas to cool hotels or to provide energy or we do something different. I don't know about many of the other Members of this body, but I think there are a lot of people that have a lot of passion about this issue not only to stop drilling off the coasts but a passion to expand into alternative energy sources.

As a matter of fact, this Congress has already taken steps to say instead of huge billion dollar subsidies for oil companies, let's focus those resources on our scientists, our universities, our business entrepreneurs, whether it is wave power or ethanol, wind power, solar power, coal liquefaction, nuclear power. There are a whole lot of ideas. I don't know if any of them are good and any of them necessarily are not the right answer. But it could be any combination of sources of alternative energy that will get us through this.

So let's not put this as a question of it is either we drill off the coast or we don't have adequate energy for this country. We have the ingenuity. We have the innovation. We are very smart people. And there is nothing that Americans can't do if they put their nose to it.

So I would suggest today that this amendment is not a good amendment and, rather, we should focus our attention, our passion, our science, our energy, and our resources toward alternative energy sources to take this country into the next generation.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong opposition to the amendment put forth about by my good friend from Pennsylvania (Mr. PETERSON), which would overturn a long-standing bipartisan moratorium on new gas drilling.

Under Mr. PETERSON's amendment, we could see drilling for natural gas as close as 25 miles from our precious coastlines. Despite claims by its sup-

porters, the Peterson amendment is not a viable short-term nor long-term solution to our energy needs. Instead, this proposal could damage sensitive habitats and undermine the economic future of our coastal towns and cities.

In my own congressional district, I am privileged to represent such underwater treasures as the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary, the most extensive living coral reef system in the Continental United States.

In addition to its aesthetic value, this marine ecosystem also supports tourism and commercial fishing, the economic livelihood of the Florida Keys. Any offshore oil drilling near this area could place thousands of rare and vulnerable marine plant species in harm's way and could potentially cripple the local economy.

Furthermore, drilling structures along the gulf coast would be located in the middle of hurricane alley. Proponents of this amendment say that current production methods safeguard against any environmental damage resulting from a tropical storm or a hurricane. Mr. Chairman, as many of us know firsthand, sadly, there is no such thing as being hurricane proof. Given the scientific likelihood for stronger and more frequent storms in the gulf and along our Atlantic coast, offshore oil drilling presents a sizable risk of onshore damage and water pollution in the event of the next big one.

I encourage my colleagues' help in making sure that we can protect Florida's coastline as well as our Nation's ecosystem by voting "no" on the Peterson amendment.

My Florida colleague, my good friend (Mr. MICA), who, as he states, favors drilling even in the Everglades, says that it is fear versus facts. Well, Mr. Chairman, the fact is that the Florida Keys depends on the 4 million tourists who come to the area every year for its economic livelihood. The debate is not about fear. It is about economic reality. Our coastal towns and cities will be devastated financially with the adoption of the Peterson amendment.

I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on the Peterson amendment.

Mr. MELANCON. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of the amendment.

I have heard a lot of facts from both sides for and against. And from a State that has been producing oil and gas off its coast in its coastal waters, on land, and every place else that is possible for well over 50 years, and I think Pennsylvania may have been the only State produced before Louisiana started, if you go back those 50 years, there is a lot that we could see environmentally that should have been done back there that would have protected America's wetlands, the estuaries and the marshes of South Louisiana.

That being said, now looking at today's technology, offshore drilling for oil or for gas is one of the cleanest that you will ever find. Yes, there are muds,

there are liquids. But there are also liquids that are made from sugar. So my friends from Florida, we can keep that Florida industry healthy. It is biodegradable. It is something that can and is being used out there.

The thing that scares me the most, as we talk about energy independence, and the information that has been brought to the floor, is that we had, in an energy bill, a 125-mile barrier from Florida in the Gulf of Mexico, if I recall, in an energy bill this past year. While if you go 45 miles off of Key West, where those important fragile areas are down in that area, we have got China and Cuba in control of the oil and gas production. And that scares me even more so. And if you look in the latest weekly news, Russia is basically becoming dominant in the world for energy production, as are the countries in the Middle East.

□ 1445

If you look at their offshore drilling, I don't hear about all the oil spills. As a matter of fact, I went through Katrina, I went through Rita. And I heard the numbers, and I respect where the Member got the numbers because it was provided by somebody. But the only real oil spills I know of were in Chalmette, Louisiana, at the Murphy Oil Refinery and at the Phillips Petroleum Refinery, which are on land in Plaquemines and St. Bernard. Yes, there were some small oil leaks. There was probably more diesel fuel out of the tanks of some of those rigs that collapsed, but far less than what came out of the gas tanks in the ground in Chalmette, in St. Bernard, in Plaquemines, in Orleans Parishes and probably over on the gulf coast. Far more fuel leaked into the waters that flooded those cities.

As we move forward in this country and talk about energy independence, and when you pull up to that gas pump and you see that \$3 figure up there, just remember those folks back home that are on fixed incomes, on Social Security, that are worried about how they pay the utility bill, much less how they fill their gas tank, whether they can buy the loaf of bread and milk or whether they need to have the gas in their car to get to the doctor.

We talk about tourism and fishing. The tourism in Louisiana has been better than it has ever been, particularly now that the industries have the technology. The fishing is phenomenal. Thirty percent of the seafood consumed in this country comes from the waters off Louisiana's coast, and we've been drilling for over 50 years. Deep water, shallow waters, coastal waters, inland waters, land-based, you name it. I implore everyone to think about this.

I respect tremendously my colleagues that have the fear of the environmental concerns. That is something that I share with you. But I've seen these oil companies. I've seen them in the past when they were awful; I've seen them today when they do an excellent job. The technology gets better

by the day. The last oil spills that were of any consequence were done by ships hauling oil in from the Middle East, Venezuela and other locations. It wasn't by oil rigs offshore.

We're talking about natural gas. You can perforate a drilling pipe at any point in time or elevation or depth that you want. You can drill through oil, you can drill through water, you can drill through rock, you can drill through whatever is below there and sample what's there before you open it up, and if it's not natural gas, then you keep drilling until you get to the sand that you're looking for, perforate, and, yes, bring only natural gas in.

Mr. Chairman, I thank you for the opportunity. I implore, if we're going to make this country energy independent, we have to find the means. And gas, this amendment, helps us.

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITTE of Florida. I move to strike the last word.

I rise in opposition to Mr. PETERSON's amendment to allow exploration within 25 miles of the coast.

It was just around this time last year when the Florida delegation finally, most of us agreed to go along with the negotiation that had been hammered out which protected the gulf coast.

The gulf coast in the Tampa Bay area, which Mr. YOUNG and I both represent, was protected some 230-some miles where there would not be any exploration for gas or oil. Why? Because of several issues. Number one, military mission line, where regularly they are doing military exercises. Very, very important area to protect. Then eventually some of us who are very, very reluctant, but who realize that our friends on the other side of the aisle and even some people on this side would never go for anything in ANWR, so we can't stick our heads in the sand, so we agreed to 230 miles out.

But let me tell you that what we are asking for is a disaster here, a disaster in many ways. Will people ever believe us again? We said we came to an agreement that had protected the coast and given some protection to the east coast. Now we have an amendment here which shortens that area to 25 miles.

I represent eight counties; four of them are coastal counties along the gulf coast. Many of them have been hit by hurricanes. To have this kind of exploration this close to the shore, not only in Florida, but along the gulf coast, is asking for trouble. It's a bait-and-switch. It absolutely is a bait-and-switch. Those of us who agreed last year to have some exploration did not agree to the 25-mile amendment. And I guess if you can't get 25 miles, they will try for 100 miles. That's not what we agreed to do our share of exploration for domestic energy sources.

My colleague from south Florida was absolutely right about the tourism and fishing industry that would be affected, but also the very, very fragile habitat that exists, and one that we want to protect. Now, some would say Repub-

licans aren't that concerned about the environment, but I, as somebody who received the Sierra Club award, I disagree. Republicans do care about the environment. That's one reason why we set up buffer zones that were certainly far greater than 25 miles.

And let me express a great fear: if we do this for gas, oil certainly will follow. And, you know, I just don't remember there being a lot of tourism in ANWR. But you're affecting States where there is a lot of tourism.

You know, the citizens' confidence in Congress is at an all-time low. If we do this bait-and-switch as suggested in Mr. PETERSON's amendment, it will be down to zero.

I urge my colleagues to vote against the Peterson amendment.

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, I'm sure Mr. DICKS wishes by this time that this moratorium would disappear as an issue because it keeps coming up.

Mr. DICKS. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. I will certainly yield.

Mr. DICKS. It was in 1984 when the gentleman created the moratorium off the coast of Washington and Oregon. I hope it never goes away.

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. That may be, and that makes my point. I certainly was not among the ones to create it; but I'll tell you, had I been here in 1984, I probably would have voted for it. I voted for these kinds of things before without thinking much about it because it was an easy vote, it was an easy vote as to come and say, well, environmental groups, they all know all about this, why get crossways with them when you have a good environmental record. I've gotten my awards, too, not because of my bright perception, but because I voted the right way without thinking much about it.

Why is this here in the Interior bill on appropriations? Why do we have members of the committee standing up ahead of time? I don't know that anybody on Appropriations knows more about it than the people on Resources or the Energy Committee. But why? Because we legislate on an appropriations bill, that's why.

And we didn't break any agreements down here. If the agreement was what was being broken, why is this moratorium again being put into the bill this year? If we had an agreement last year, you wouldn't need the moratorium.

Mr. DICKS. I have a parliamentary point. Limitations are appropriate on an appropriation bill. I just wanted to make sure the gentleman from Hawaii was reminded of that technical point.

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. And I quite agree on that technical point, that limitations are appropriate. We're trying to put some limitations on some of the fiction that's out here today. I can assure you of that.

I think I know something about tourism. I know that in order to have tour-

ists, you have to have people with jobs that have sufficient discretionary income to be able to come and spend their money. But if we're destroying the industrial structure of this country, which is what we're about right now, there won't be anybody having the jobs to be able to come and spend the money on tourism or anything else.

And if you want them to arrive in automobiles, which we can't do yet because I haven't been able to get an earmark for that bridge from San Francisco to Hawaii, that's a bridge to somewhere, I can assure you, the question then would be, well, what are you going to be paying for your gasoline? You want to have a hybrid car, you're going to have natural gas. You have to have ethanol to be able to do it? You have to have natural gas for the fertilizer that's going to grow the feedstocks in order to create the ethanol.

Natural gas is the natural energy bridge to a natural energy future, to an alternative energy future. If we don't have natural gas, let me tell you what's going to happen. It's happening right now, and there has been references to it already. Europe and Russia are now making a deal to promote natural gas exploration and extrication from Russia to the European economy, to the European Union in the hundreds of billions of gallons in order to be able to compete with us. It's not just mythology that the Chinese, using inferior technology, will be some 45 miles off of Florida right now exploring natural gas, as the Canadians are already doing on the other side of the Great Lakes.

Every single industrial country in this world is producing natural gas right now except us. We are the ones that destroying ourselves, committing suicide on this. This is what is happening; the rest of the world is going to have an industrial base and an industrial complex that's able to compete, and we're destroying ourselves.

You're looking at a convert here. I went into the Resources Committee fully prepared to not only sustain the moratorium that's here, but to vote against Mr. PETERSON when he first brought up the idea of drilling for natural gas. But when I listened to him and I read all the facts involved, I decided that I had the wrong position. And what's required of us now is to become energy independent. We have to produce the energy in this country that is going to allow us to be independent, sufficient to be able to back up that Defense Department that we're talking about. The Air Force right now is spending an enormous amount of money on fuel that we have to import. If we can take the natural gas base for the Air Force right now, we stand a chance of producing fuel that can sustain ourselves.

We have to be energy independent in this country. And that means those who us who have blindly supported, what were supposedly the right environmental proposals in the past have

to take an honest look at where we are today and what we can do to produce clean energy.

Mr. Chairman, I thank you for the time. I hope that when we get past this today, that we will deal with the bill that Mr. PETERSON and I will be bringing forward to produce natural gas in this country to produce a free and independent America.

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

I rise in opposition to this and any amendment that proposes to lift the moratorium on oil and gas leasing off our coast.

The moratorium has been a bipartisan, multi-State, bicoastal agreement for over 25 years, and as mentioned has been renewed annually since the 1980s.

The north coast of California along my district, and I want to point out that my district has the longest run of coastline, the most miles of coastline of any district in the lower 48 States, I want you to know that people don't want this moratorium lifted. And the businesses that operate up there can't afford to have this moratorium lifted. An oil or a gas spill off my district's coast could devastate one of the most unique marine ecosystems in the world, as well as the economy that depends upon it.

My north coast district is part of an upwelling zone found along the west coast. It's one of only four of these upwelling zones in the entire world. These upwelling zones bring nutrient-rich water to the surface, and they support an incredibly abundant and productive marine life, including fish. The ecosystem also supports some of the largest and the most economic fishing industries in the world. A spill in this area would be absolutely devastating.

The north coast of California also supports a large tourism industry, and that industry is vital to our local economy, our State economy, and it contributes mightily to our national economy. It's dependent upon pristine coves, pristine beaches and spectacular views, all of which would be threatened if this moratorium were to be lifted.

In addition, given the rural and rugged nature of my congressional district, an oil or a gas spill would be disastrous to an even greater extent because of the limited accessibility to get in and clean that up, as well as the limited resources that would be readily available for cleaning up a disaster of this magnitude.

Mr. Chairman, the north coast waters provide economic and biological benefits to our entire country, and they must be protected. Lifting this moratorium, as pointed out by previous speakers, does nothing to lessen our dependency on oil and gas. And more important, it does nothing to increase the research and use of alternative energy sources.

□ 1500

This amendment, and all of the other amendments that are proposing to lift this moratorium, need to be rejected.

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

Mr. Chairman, I appreciate so much my friend from Hawaii across the aisle pointing out what he did. I would like to pick up on that. We are not just talking about lower fuel costs. That is extremely important. We are talking about that.

We are also talking about jobs. In my district alone, we have a huge plant there. Their feedstock is natural gas. They produce plastics. They produce all kinds of great things. If we did an actual test and checked, did a survey, I would bet you that most of the jobs there are held by Democrats. So even if you just looked at it politically, my goodness, we are losing Democrats' jobs by not bringing down the price of natural gas.

On top of that, it does cost other jobs when you raise the price of natural gas. For a country like ours that has natural gas all up and down our coast, east, west, down around the Gulf, there is a tremendous supply west of Florida in the Caribbean. We have all this natural gas. Yet what breaks my heart is that I see we are building new liquid natural gas ports on our coast so we can bring it in and become more dependent on people who don't like us.

It makes no sense at all. It is clean burning. It helps the environment. Yes, my friend indicated that we ought to be drilling in ANWR. Yes, we should. The caribou proliferate when we give them a good warm place to mate, like the pipelines, as has already been shown.

Mr. Chairman, I appreciate my friend, Mr. PETERSON, bringing this amendment. I would like to yield the remainder of my time to him.

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman.

Several things have been said that I think must be responded to. Oil and gas spills. Could someone here show me a gas spill? A natural gas spill? There is no recorded history of one. Natural gas comes out of the ocean floor and bubbles into the air all over the ocean all the time. But there is no spill.

The fact is you can't drill for gas without oil. I grew up around it. I have never made money in the oil business. I have never invested a dime in it. But I grew up around it. You drill a hole in the ground. You put a steel casing in the ground. You register every place you go through, coal, gas, oil, rocks. It is actually rocks that have oil and gas in them. Then you notch the pipe where you want to produce.

In Pennsylvania, there were three or four oil sands, and the gas is way below the oil in most places. There was a little bit of gas in the oil, but not a lot. You notch the pipe where you want to produce it. So if you want to produce gas, you notch the pipe and you produce the gas, and that is sand.

Natural gas is the future of America until we can grow our renewables. I am for wind. I am for solar. I am for biofuels. I am for hydrogen cars. But let me show you how small that is; 86 percent of our energy is fossil fuel; 40 oil, 23 gas, 23 coal. That is 86. Eight percent is nuclear. We are now at 94. Six is percent renewables. Listen closely, 6 percent renewables. Five percent is biomass and hydro. Wind, solar, hydrogen, and geothermal, our future, is 1 percent. If we can double it every 5 years, it will cost a lot, but I am for it. But we are still then at 2 percent.

How do we fuel this economy that is growing a need for energy by 2 percent, and we have countries like China and India that are growing at 15 to 20 percent, and their energy consumption is sucking up the world's supply? When the moratorium was put on, we had \$2 gas and \$10 oil. We were awash in it. It didn't matter.

Oil and gas is scarce today. There is a world shortage. Right now, they are predicting \$79 oil this summer, which will be \$3.50 gas without a storm in the Gulf, without a country being upset. The Wall Street Journal on Friday reported that if we have a storm in the Gulf and we have a country that gets upset that produces a lot of oil, we could have \$85 to \$89 oil. Do you know what that will do to home heating this winter? Do you know what that will do to travel costs? Folks, it is crisis time. Clean, green natural gas is the best alternative for a healthy America.

Mr. DICKS. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to this amendment. I appreciate the gentleman's passion on this issue, but I do not agree that this is the time or the place to overturn the 25-year moratorium protecting our Nation's best ocean beaches and fishing areas. I agree that energy supply is vital to our Nation and our economy, but so is the natural environment.

Our committee has looked at this issue closely. The President's budget request and this committee's bill maintains the existing drilling moratoria for oil and natural gas exploration. I want to say that again. The President, who has been the strongest advocate for oil and natural gas development in the history of the country, in his budget opposes lifting this moratorium. I think we ought to listen to him this time. This leaves substantial areas in the Gulf of Mexico and off of Alaska that are available for exploration.

Our bill also continues the exploration and development of public resources onshore on our public lands. We really do not need to lift the moratorium now. The protected areas do not have substantial reserves. The total technically recoverable resources on the OCS are estimated to be about 86 billion barrels of oil and 420 trillion cubic feet of gas. The amount under moratoria, or Presidential withdrawal, after January 9, 2007, is estimated to be 17.8 billion barrels of oil and 76.5 trillion cubic feet of gas.

I also point out, and maybe the gentleman from Pennsylvania disagrees with this, that the industry people I have talked to say it is impractical to pursue natural gas-only drilling, which does not involve oil. It simply is impractical to issue leases only for gas and not for oil, as well.

I think it is important that we do not start major new developments in areas that are entirely lacking drilling and energy infrastructure. These are large areas which are already leased and are available for development. Before we open large, new and sensitive areas to development, we should focus our Nation's efforts in places that already have access to existing pipelines and distribution systems.

Mr. Chairman, the Peterson amendment seems so very simple, but that is not a good approach to such a complicated issue. This amendment would not allow the various States to have meaningful input on drilling activities and the extensive development onshore which would follow.

Please join me and continue our protection of America's priceless coastlines. Please defeat this amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I will ask for a vote on the amendment.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PETERSON).

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

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

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

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. PETERSON OF PENNSYLVANIA

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Amendment offered by Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania:

Page 49, line 25, insert "and within 100 miles of the coastline" before "in the areas of".

Page 50, line 7, insert "and within 100 miles of the coastline" before "in the Mid-Atlantic".

Mr. DICKS. Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent that debate on this amendment, and any amendments thereto, be limited to 20 minutes, to be equally divided and controlled by the proponent and myself, the opponent.

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

There was no objection.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The gentleman from Pennsylvania is recognized for 10 minutes.

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Chairman, this amendment deals with 100 miles offshore. When we had the de-

bate last year, I wanted to clarify something. Everybody kept talking about a compromise. We passed a major bill in the House that opened up the OCS for both gas and oil. The Senate passed what I call a little small bill in little pieces of the Gulf that President Clinton actually had in the 5-year plan, but never leased it.

In my discussions with the other body, we were always hoping to have a compromise, but we never had one. We never had a conference committee. We reluctantly agreed to take the Senate bill because it was something, and America needs something, so we took this small piece in the Gulf because it is some additional energy for America.

We will soon be 64 percent dependent on foreign, unstable countries. I hear on both sides of the aisle here that people are distressed about that. These are not our friends. These are countries that are not democracies. They are not real stable. We often lose energy when they just have their government topple or be out of favor for a while.

We are dependent on undependable countries of the world who are not our friends. They now set the price. OPEC is back in charge. OPEC turns the spigot and lets big oil make a lot of money. I said to somebody one day, big oil's best friends are Congress and OPEC.

□ 1515

Collectively, we have slowed up the ability to produce oil and gas. And when we slow up the ability to produce oil and gas, the price rises. And if you owned it when it was worth \$30 a barrel and were able to produce it and make money, and government restriction of supply and OPEC's restriction of supply raises the price to \$70, are you going to make money? You betcha.

If you want to drop prices down, open up supply. Wall Street traders run the price up. They set the price of gasoline, fuel oil, natural gas, oil. Wall Street. Why? Strategizing on it if they can buy it and sell it and make money today or tomorrow. We often pay 15 or 20 percent of our energy prices to Wall Street as they play with it because there are shortages. When it is plentiful, they don't monkey with it.

Folks, we need a plentiful supply of gas and oil for this country. Cuba is going to be producing with China and other countries 35 to 40 miles from the Keys, our most precious Florida parks. And we are going to stay completely 200 miles offshore.

Folks, this is insanity for this country to not utilize its resources, to be dependent on undependable countries who control our destiny. And as we grow the renewables, as we get more wind and more solar and more geothermal, it is going to be years, if not decades, before we have in sufficient quantity, and in the meantime we are going to need fossil fuels, and we need to produce them.

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

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Washington for 10 minutes.

Mr. DICKS. Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong opposition to the amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Hawaii (Mr. ABERCROMBIE).

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Mr. Chairman, I want to support my friend Mr. PETERSON on this amendment.

I indicated in the last amendment, Mr. Chairman, that I had become a convert, not to everything that has to do with it, to just stand up and say, well, if it is going to be oil drilled anywhere or gas drilled anywhere, that I could care less, that doesn't make any difference. That is not true, and it is not the case.

In fact, what I have argued to the oil companies is, and I have said when I had the opportunity, why do you put these stupid ads in the paper that say we only make a return on investment the same as real estate agents? I said, there is a great way to go about saying why you got \$30 billion in profits, that real estate agents are the opposition or the comparison.

I say, why don't you get up and say oil is \$60 and \$70 a barrel. We are rolling in money. We got so much money we don't know what to do with it. I feel like Huey, Louie and Dewey jumping into the piles of money for Scrooge McDuck. We got so much money we can't even begin to figure out how to spend it.

At that kind of money a barrel, what do you think the oil companies are going to make?

We have to have an energy supply in this country, and 100 miles out that is what we are going to have to do, because the opposition keeps on coming here against our energy independence. If we don't have energy independence, we are finished. We are destroying ourselves. Every other country in the world with a natural gas reserve out there, let alone with an oil supply, especially in the Outer Continental Shelves of their respective continents, are taking it and doing it and providing for their industrial expansion. That is what we are up against.

We are now in debt. You only have to go into the papers as recently as yesterday, the next globalization backlash. Wait until the Kremlin starts buying our stocks. We are in hock to the rest of the world, including Japan and China because they are owning this country because we have to import our energy. Energy independence is the key to freedom.

Mr. DICKS. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Florida (Mr. YOUNG).

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I appreciate very much the gentleman yielding me the time.

This amendment is aimed at the military mission line in the Gulf of Mexico. The only place that has a larger area of Outer Continental Shelf in the moratorium. Where the military mission line runs through the Gulf of Mexico.

Mr. MORAN spoke earlier of the flights that are training around Oceana in Virginia. I will speak to the training areas in the Gulf of Mexico that are used very, very effectively by the United States Air Force to train pilots in some of the newest, highest-technical aircraft that we have. That is what this amendment is about. It goes to violate the military mission line that we agreed on last year.

I don't get offended very often, but I am a little offended by this, for this reason: many of us in this Chamber voted for that bill last year, and we voted for it because it protected the military mission line in the Gulf of Mexico, as well as the environmentally sensitive areas. We voted for it because it provided a permanent solution to this issue of moratorium.

Now if the Peterson amendment passes, it hasn't been very permanent. By the way, Mr. PETERSON, and Mr. ABERCROMBIE, who is one of the architects of this agreement, agreed to this, and so we agreed to it as well because we thought that having a permanent solution was a good idea. But now this amendment goes back on the agreement.

That does offend me somewhat. When I make an agreement, I keep it, and most everybody in this House Chamber, when they make an agreement, they keep it. But these two Peterson amendments violate the agreement that brought most of us to vote for this bill last year.

Just one more point: if anybody thinks that drilling another well, and there are vast areas of the Outer Continental Shelf still available for drilling for oil and for gas, if anybody thinks another oil well in The Gulf of Mexico is going to bring down the price of gasoline, drive up to your gas station. Mr. PETERSON himself mentioned the fact that no matter what the supply would be, that the Wall Street traders control the price.

What are you paying for a gallon of gasoline today? A lot more than we ought to be paying. One more well, two more wells, 10 more wells aren't going to make a difference in the price of gasoline at the pump.

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CONAWAY).

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

This drilling will be conducted in an environmentally sound method. Any time you have got an industrial operation going on, you have got some risks, but these risks have been understood for years and years and years; and this industry is so much better today at drilling and producing crude oil and natural gas than they have ever been. And, quite frankly, they will get better tomorrow than they are today, and they will be better the day after tomorrow than they are today as well.

It is inconsistent to say on the one hand that it is a national security interest for this country to be dependent

on foreign sources of crude oil and natural gas, and I agree with that. The inconsistency comes, though, when we say let's do whatever we can to limit domestic production of crude oil and natural gas. That position is inconsistent with each other, and I would argue with my colleagues that they should examine that inconsistency.

The time to market again has been mentioned again, as it was earlier. In 1998, when this moratorium was put in place 9 years ago, today all of that production that would have started in 1998 and 1999 when the price was low would be available to this country to use in hotels for air conditioning, in all of the multiple uses that the natural gas is used for.

So I urge my colleagues to agree with the Peterson amendment and vote for it.

Mr. DICKS. Mr. Chairman, I reserve my time.

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GENE GREEN).

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I want to thank my Pennsylvania colleague for yielding to me.

This is similar to the earlier amendment, although I rise in strong support of this because it is for new leases, offshore natural gas and oil, at least 100 miles of the U.S. coast.

Supply and demand for our energy is out of control and our Nation needs more energy from all sources. Demand for natural gas is already building across the economy and proposals pushing cleaner energy will only accelerate this demand. Natural gas, again, is the most abundant clean-burning fuel to heat and cool our homes and businesses. We also need a lot of natural gas to make the materials that we make wind turbine blades out of and solar blades.

Opening the OCS would save \$300 billion in natural gas costs over 20 years for customers and manufacturers. High natural gas costs are sending manufacturing jobs overseas following the cheap gas. When I had the Shell CEO of Western Hemisphere two years ago sit in my office and say they transferred jobs from their chemical facilities in our country to the Netherlands because of the high cost of our natural gas, because the North Sea gas was so much cheaper, that is why we need the Peterson amendments.

Environmentally conscious nations like Norway, Denmark, Canada, Japan and the United Kingdom are safely producing natural gas in their coastal waters. Why can't we do it?

No other country in the world can it do as responsibly as we can. I have been on oil and gas rigs and have seen so few discharges into the ocean. A medium-sized fishing boat will leak more in a year than we will see off some of our rigs.

This amendment is a major opportunity for us to respond to today's energy crisis and the climate change with a national solution. I urge my col-

leagues to support the oil and gas production on the Outer Continental Shelf and support the Peterson amendment.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The gentleman from Pennsylvania is reminded that under the unanimous consent agreement, he need not remain standing after he yields during the debate.

Mr. DICKS. Mr. Chairman, I have no further speakers at this point, so I would like the gentleman to finish and then I will finish.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The gentleman from Washington has the right to close.

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Chairman, as we talk about the production of energy and as we talk about oil being so devastating and gas being so devastating, Norway, Sweden, Ireland, Great Britain, Canada, Australia and New Zealand are all known for being environmentally sensitive countries. They all produce offshore. All of them. We are the only nation in the world that has chosen to close up our energy supply. We are dependent on unstable, unfriendly countries who control our prices and control the future of our economy.

The working people of America are counting on us to give them affordable energy that they can heat their homes with and drive their cars and have a decent competitive job. That is what this is about. And I wish we could do it with wind. I wish we could do it with solar. I wish all of those things were bigger and could grow faster.

Folks, we need to produce energy if we want to compete in the new global economy.

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

Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment. Again, I want to point out to the gentleman that we really do not need to lift the moratorium now. The protected areas do not have substantial reserves. The total technically recoverable resources on the OCS, the areas where we are drilling off of Alaska and in the Gulf are estimated to be about 86 billion barrels of oil and 420 trillion cubic feet of gas.

The amount under moratoria, or Presidential withdrawal, after January 9, 2007, is estimated to be 17.8 billion barrels of oil, which is about one-fifth, and 76.5 trillion cubic feet of gas, which is about one-eighth.

So the reason we have the moratoria is because we think those areas are more important from an environmental perspective, that we need to protect our oceans and beaches. The gentleman from California was here and talked about the north coast of California. I represent the northern coast of Washington State, and I put this moratorium in place, I think, in 1984 for both Washington and Oregon. Mr. AuCoin and I did at the time.

I have yet to have one citizen in my State ever come up to me and say, why don't you let us drill for oil and gas off the coast of Washington? Nobody has ever asked us to do that. They want it

protected. It has got fisheries. It is one of the most beautiful beaches and coasts in the entire Nation.

I went up to see what happened with Exxon Valdez and see that oil spill and all that oil in and around the waters up there and how it destroyed the herring reproduction and all of the other species.

I want to protect the coast of Washington. I want to protect the coast of Florida, the coast of Virginia. Yes, we will drill off of Alaska. We will drill off the areas where the oil and gas exists. And if the gentleman from Hawaii is so interested in this, I am sure we can work out something for him out in Hawaii.

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. DICKS. I will yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania briefly.

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. Do you realize how long it has been since we have actually done a modern seismographic on the OCS? It has not been done in 40 years. We didn't have good seismographics then. We don't really know, but we know there is a lot out there. If we had modern seismographics, it is usually three to four times what we thought.

Mr. DICKS. Mr. Chairman, reclaiming my time, I think we should continue to work in the gulf and off of Alaska where most of the reserves exist.

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

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

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PETERSON).

The amendment was rejected.

Mr. LAMPSON. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, I rise to engage in a colloquy with my colleague from Texas (Mr. HALL).

I applaud the good work that you have done, Mr. Chairman, to bring this Interior appropriations bill to the floor. There is a provision in the Interior appropriations bill that I fear will do harm to our ability to smoothly transition our Nation's energy infrastructure to the clean domestic energy future that we all desire.

In the debate on the Energy Policy Act of 2005, Mr. HALL introduced and shepherded through to enactment section 999, the Ultra-deepwater and Unconventional Natural Gas Research and Development Program. Today, more than 23 research universities and four not-for-profit research institutions are actively engaged in the implementation of this program.

A draft annual plan of research has been submitted to the Secretary of Energy for review and should be finalized within the next few weeks. That program is designed to foster collaborative research and development work by the best scientists and technologists in the country to develop the tech-

nologies that are necessary to find and produce the more than 1,200 trillion cubic feet of technically recoverable, but mostly unconventional, natural gas resources in this country.

I yield to the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. HALL of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I want to thank my colleague for those comments, and I would also point out this program will provide new technologies that will allow us to tap nearly 50 billion barrels of technically recoverable oil remaining in this country.

The United States has 55 years of natural gas resources in the lower 48, but much of it requires new technologies in order to produce it. Some 80 percent of these resources are on lands that are not subject to any access restrictions. New technologies will increase domestic energy supplies and increasing supplies will lower energy costs to consumers.

□ 1530

These technologies will enable less expensive, more efficient and more environmentally friendly domestic natural gas production. The universities and research institutions participating in this program are as follows: Colorado School of Mines; Florida International University; Jackson State University; Louisiana State University; MIT; Mississippi State University; New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology; Penn State University; Rice University; Stanford; Texas A&M; University of Alabama; University of Alaska-Fairbanks; University of Houston; University of Kansas; University of Michigan; University of Oklahoma; University of South Carolina; University of Southern California; University of Texas; University of Tulsa; University of Utah and West Virginia University.

In addition, the following national labs are funded through this program: Idaho National Laboratory; Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory; Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory; Los Alamos National Laboratory and Sandia National Laboratory.

Mr. LAMPSON. The Energy Information Administration has observed that this program will materially increase domestic natural gas and oil production. That increased production will more than pay for this research and development program by generating more royalty revenue from increased production of natural gas and oil from Federal lands that are already available, already available to be developed.

It is important to note, Mr. Chairman, that as this Congress grapples with the issue of providing robust funding to move toward increased energy independence, our Nation's energy companies are also investing in these similar research activities. Achieving energy independence isn't an easy task. It is going to take a significant investment from both public and private entities to move our Nation forward.

Mr. HALL of Texas. The House favorably voted on this provision in 2001,

2003, and 2005 and again on the conference report in 2005. Additionally, the House overwhelmingly voted last year to uphold the program by voting against an amendment to strike it by a vote of 161-255. These votes send a clear message that Congress supports this research and development program and all the benefits it will bring to the American public.

Like my colleague, Mr. LAMPSON, I have deep admiration and respect for Chairman NORM DICKS, and accept his assurance to work with us in the future for the greatest good for the greatest number.

Mr. LAMPSON. Mr. Chairman, we in this House are working hard on energy legislation to provide the tools that will help the Nation transition to clean domestic energy resources and more efficient use of those resources. We are making progress, but we must not lose sight of the scale of this challenge. We are concerned that by deferring funding for this program in 2008 in this Interior appropriations bill, the work of the program will be jeopardized, the anticipated increases in domestic natural gas and oil production will not be realized, and we will become even more dependent on foreign sources of energy while we are transitioning our Nation's energy infrastructure for the future.

Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment that will resolve this problem in the bill. However, in the spirit of comity, I will not move that amendment if I can have the commitment of the chairman to work to resolve this issue in conference so that this important program can move forward as it is authorized in the Energy Policy Act of 2005.

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

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

Mr. DICKS. I appreciate the concerns you have raised. I commit to you to work with you to resolve this issue in conference so that this program can continue to be implemented as is authorized by the Congress.

And I would also point out to my good friend from Texas, both of my good friends from Texas, that there is still \$47 million in 2007 money that has not yet been obligated.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The time of the gentleman from Texas (Mr. LAMPSON) has expired.

(On request of Mr. DICKS, and by unanimous consent, Mr. LAMPSON was allowed to proceed for 1 additional minute.)

Mr. DICKS. Mr. Chairman, I know that the gentleman is concerned about that, and is working to see that that money is obligated as well. We will work with you on this. It is a very important issue. I appreciate your hard work and interest in this subject.

Mr. LAMPSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. CONAWAY

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment offered by Mr. CONAWAY:
Strike sections 104 and 105.

Mr. DICKS. Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent that debate on this amendment, and any amendments thereto, be limited to 20 minutes, to be equally divided and controlled by the proponent and myself, the opponent.

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

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Reserving the right to object, if I may ask a question as to the form of the unanimous consent request, is it my understanding that this 20 minutes would apply to every amendment to be offered hereafter?

Mr. DICKS. No, no, no, just for this one amendment.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. I withdraw my reservation.

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

There was no objection.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas for 10 minutes.

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

We have heard an awful lot of debate already about both of these sections. My amendment is straightforward and simple. It will strike section 104 and section 105 from this bill.

What the effect of that would be is to unleash the Interior Department's bureaucracy to begin running the leasing program that is provided throughout this legislation that is not related to what is being conducted today. This bureaucracy would make sure that the environment is protected and that these drilling operations are conducted in ways that will protect the military training lanes; and that these operations will be conducted in accordance with all of the vast array of regulations and rules that we have in place to protect the environment and protect the coastlines and produce this energy in a proper way.

Reference was earlier made about the oil spill in Alaska, and I would remind my colleagues that was the Exxon Valdez, a ship that ran aground that caused that oil spill and not directly related to the drilling and production phase of finding that crude oil.

As I said earlier, these operations can be conducted through environmentally sound methods. There is a significant amount of oil and gas to be found. I would prefer a 20 percent increase in anything, so to denigrate a 20 percent increase or 20 percent opportunity, I think, is misplaced in our arguments.

Cuba and the Chinese governments, along with other folks, are going to be drilling within 45 miles of Florida. That is not necessarily an excuse for us to also drill, but it is in recognition that the risk associated to the folks in Florida with not drilling are out of our control, and if we can control the drilling within 45 miles in ways that are appropriate, then we ought to do that.

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

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

Mr. DICKS. Under your amendment, would you be able to drill in the Great Lakes or in the Chesapeake Bay or in Puget Sound or in the Long Island Sound?

Mr. CONAWAY. Section 104 and section 105, I don't know that it does the Great Lakes. But Puget Sound, I think we would be able to drill there. It would remove the moratorium that is in place now that prevents drilling in those areas, but I don't know that the Great Lakes is included.

Mr. DICKS. Okay. I knew that I opposed this amendment, but now I will oppose it with even greater fervor.

Mr. CONAWAY. I can include the Great Lakes if that will get you over the hump to agree to it.

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

Mr. DICKS. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. CAPPS) who has been a strong supporter of the moratorium throughout her career and has been a real leader on this issue.

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for his leadership on this issue.

Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong opposition to these amendments which eliminate, and I think we heard it clearly, eliminate the long-standing bipartisan moratorium that currently protects the Nation's most sensitive coastal and marine areas from new drilling.

I support the current ban not just because I think our coasts are beautiful, and they are, and not just because I believe our coasts provide valuable environmental habitat, and they do, I support the ban because I know our coastlines are the economic engines of our communities and that is being threatened by new drilling.

The people in these communities, I represent them. I know the value of their coastlines, and that is why they are so against new drilling in these areas. These amendments would mean drilling within 3 miles of the beaches of Florida, California, North Carolina, and other coastal States. It also means drilling where there isn't a whole lot of oil and gas, and where tens of millions of our citizens have made it clear they don't want more drilling.

Mr. Chairman, the congressional moratoria has been in place for 26 years and reaffirmed by Presidents George H.W. Bush, Clinton, and George W. Bush, and every Congress since 1992. State officials have also endorsed the moratoria, including Republican Governors Charlie Crist and Arnold Schwarzenegger.

These actions have all been met with widespread acclaim by a public that knows how valuable, environmentally and economically, our coastlines are. I represent a district with over 20 oil and gas platforms off its coastline. I know that drilling has serious consequences for the environment. I see it every day.

I know that drilling generates huge amounts of waste, and significant levels of air and water pollution. These pollutants are a real threat to our public health.

These amendments are just a continuation of the backward thinking energy policies that have gotten us here in the first place. Last year, 279 Members of Congress voted to protect the Outer Continental Shelf moratorium when we defeated a similar amendment to push for drilling off our coast.

Votes against these amendments are the same thing: A vote to protect our coasts and a statement for new thinking on energy. And so I urge my colleagues with all the strength that I have to oppose these amendments and keep our coastline pristine, the economic engines that they are, and a stewardship we will pass on to our children and grandchildren.

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

Mr. DICKS. I don't have any additional speakers, and I have the right to close.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The gentleman from Washington reserves the right to close.

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Again, this moratorium has been in place for a long, long time, and the gentlewoman from California went through a litany of opportunities, and she has taken a different look at it.

We have a growing continued dependence on foreign crude oil. So the old adage about the definition of insanity of doing the same thing over and over and expecting to get a different result might apply in this instance.

This amendment would simply allow the Interior Department and its vast array of scientists and bureaucrats and technicians and others who look at this information day in and day out, who know the ins and out of it, to decide how the development of this resource should occur. They will protect the environment. They will protect the military lanes and make sure that all of our codes and rules and regulations are applied to these efforts throughout the time frame that this is conducted. I trust them to do it and do it correctly.

I urge adoption of this amendment to set a new track to provide additional natural gas and crude oil resources, domestic production for our country.

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

Mr. DICKS. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself the balance of my time.

I rise in very strong opposition to this amendment. I hope the House will defeat it resoundingly. This does not make any sense for our environmentally sensitive areas, particularly on the coast of California and Washington and Oregon on the West Coast, and the sensitive areas on the East Coast as well.

I ask for a "no" vote on this amendment.

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

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CONAWAY).

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

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

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

Mr. WYNN. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, as chairman of the Environmental and Hazardous Materials Subcommittee, I rise today in strong opposition to an amendment that was offered earlier today by the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING) to cut funding to the Superfund program. The Superfund program addresses public health and environmental threats from uncontrolled releases of hazardous substances.

According to the Center for Public Integrity's May 2007 report entitled "Superfund Today," the Superfund program is desperately short of money to clean up abandoned hazardous waste sites, which has created a backlog of sites that continue to menace the environment and quite often the health of nearby residents.

According to the EPA, one in four Americans live within 4 miles of a Superfund site.

□ 1545

Mr. KING's amendment introduced earlier today would decrease funding for the Superfund program by \$160 million. This is reckless when previous EPA Inspector General reports have indicated a shortfall of at least \$175 million for remedial action projects. EPA's rate of construction completions at National Priorities List sites has dramatically decreased in recent years, from an average level of 86 per year during the years 1997 to 2000, down to 40 sites per year during years 2002 to 2006, and most recently EPA projected only 24 cleanups in 2007.

These sites present a serious risk to human health and the environment. For example, at the Libby, Montana Superfund site, where a plume of asbestos from a nearby vermiculite mine has enveloped the town, more than 200 people have died from asbestos-related diseases, according to EPA estimates. Cleanup at this site, begun in 2000, has not yet been completed.

Let me congratulate Chairman OBEY and Chairman DICKS on their decision to reverse the years of budget shortfalls for the core EPA programs that protect public health. I thank them and their staff for working closely with the Energy and Commerce Committee to increase the funding for these programs that are badly in need of funding after years of inadequate budget requests from the Bush administration.

This amendment by Mr. KING is shortsighted. Every Member that has a

Superfund site in his or her district or State that votes for this amendment could be voting to delay cleanup at that site. At many of these sites, citizens are exposed to uncontrolled hazardous substances. Rather than cutting the funding, we need to support the well-considered funding level in H.R. 2643 for the Superfund program to expedite cleanup of these sites, protect drinking water sources, and allow sites to be redeveloped to spur economic development and create jobs.

I strongly urge all Members to vote against the King amendment later today.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

TITLE II—ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

For science and technology, including research and development activities, which shall include research and development activities under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980, as amended; necessary expenses for personnel and related costs and travel expenses, including uniforms, or allowances therefor, as authorized by 5 U.S.C. 5901–5902; services as authorized by 5 U.S.C. 3109, but at rates for individuals not to exceed the per diem rate equivalent to the maximum rate payable for senior level positions under 5 U.S.C. 5376; procurement of laboratory equipment and supplies; other operating expenses in support of research and development; construction, alteration, repair, rehabilitation, and renovation of facilities, not to exceed \$85,000 per project, \$788,269,000, to remain available until September 30, 2009.

Mr. HERGER. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word for a colloquy with the gentleman from Washington.

Mr. Chairman, over the past several years, we have seen the rise of a very disturbing trend on Federal lands: the creation of a billion-dollar international drug trafficking ring. Organized criminal gangs, headquartered in Mexico, have illegally entered our country and have established large scale marijuana growing operations in our national forests and national parks.

Gang members guarding these illegal "pot gardens" have been armed with automatic weapons and given orders to shoot to kill anyone who trespasses in the area. Hunters, recreators, and Federal employees in my district and others have been shot at when recreating or working on Federal lands. Eight of the Nation's 10 worst national forests in terms of illegal marijuana production are located in California. Three of those eight problem areas are located in my congressional district of northern California: the Shasta-Trinity, the Klamath, and the Mendocino National Forest.

Our Nation's national parks are also victim to illegal occupation by Mexican drug trafficking organizations. Regrettably, my home State of California suffers the worst of the infestation on Park Service lands as well. This includes a very serious problem at the Whiskeytown National Recreation

Area in my district where illegal marijuana grows have been discovered within a few hundred yards of popular boating and fishing areas.

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

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

Mr. DICKS. We want to work with the gentleman on this important issue. We are very concerned about this problem and think it deserves our complete attention.

Mr. HERGER. I thank the chairman and greatly appreciate his efforts and the efforts of Ranking Member TIAHRT to improve public safety on Federal recreation lands.

Is it the committee's intention in granting this increase to ensure that these funds should be used to help dismantle and eradicate Mexican drug trafficking organizations in our national forests and parks?

Mr. DICKS. Yes, that is the intention of this legislation.

I completely agree with the gentleman. The increase is necessary in order to deal with this very serious problem. We will continue to work with the gentleman as we go to conference with the Senate. We will do the best we can to help on this important issue.

Mr. HERGER. Again I thank the chairman for that clarification.

Further, while I believe it would be inappropriate for those of us in Congress to micromanage the efforts of law enforcement as they work to dismantle these illegal drug networks by allocating funds only to specific areas, is the chairman able to clarify the committee's intention with regard to the distribution of funds throughout the Nation? Is it the committee's aim to ensure that the funds allocated are targeted to areas of the country that face the highest concentration of drug trafficking activity in the national forests?

Mr. DICKS. Yes, it is. I appreciate the gentleman bringing this to our attention. We should focus the resources on those areas where the problem is the most severe. If we have any problem with this, I'll be glad to work with the gentleman with the agencies involved to make certain that that happens.

Mr. HERGER. Again, I thank the gentleman from Washington and also the ranking member, Mr. TIAHRT.

AMENDMENT NO. 25 OFFERED BY MR. MCHUGH

Mr. MCHUGH. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Amendment No. 25 offered by Mr. MCHUGH: Page 55, line 22, after the second dollar amount insert "(reduced by \$1,000,000) (increased by \$1,000,000)".

Mr. MCHUGH. Mr. Chairman, I would like to begin by complimenting the chairman and the ranking member. I have sat on this floor for the last several hours and listened to the very impassioned debate. I think if nothing

else it should underscore the fact that the committee and the subcommittee have faced some very difficult decisions. Unless you have had the opportunity, the honor of serving on the Appropriations Committee or perhaps being involved as a general Member of the House, it's difficult to understand how hard the choices are that they are forced to make year in and year out. I commend them for that.

I have come today not to criticize any of the choices they have made but, rather, to offer what I believe, Mr. Chairman, is a very straightforward and relatively simple amendment. It is simply designed to maintain, not increase, not add to but maintain what is a 10-year record of level funding, a 10-year record of level funding to restore \$1 million for the CASTNET program, which stands for the Clean Air Status and Trends Network, which would restore that money to allow this program to do some very important work.

What is that work? It would allow the 80 monitoring stations that are maintained under CASTNET to continue operating at the level that they have, as I have said, with level funding over the past 10 years. These are monitoring stations for a very important issue associated with acid rain that operate in some 40 States, from California to Massachusetts, from Maine to Florida and many, many points in between.

I think we can all agree, Mr. Chairman, that for all of the debate that occurs about global warming, for all the debate that occurs about what should be done, one of the critical issues we should engage upon is that of monitoring to make sure that our baseline data, our research is sufficient to make the wise decisions.

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

Mr. MCHUGH. I would be happy to yield to the distinguished Chair.

Mr. DICKS. I want to commend the gentleman for bringing up this issue. Based on the additional information that has come to light concerning the impact of this 25 percent reduction to the Clean Air Status and Trends Network, CASTNET, and based on the gentleman's hard work and effort on this, we are prepared to accept his amendment.

Mr. MCHUGH. I thank the gentleman for restoring the cut that was proposed by the administration. I commend him and the gentleman from Kansas for their work.

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

Mr. MCHUGH. I would be honored to yield to the distinguished ranking member.

Mr. TIAHRT. I want to thank the gentleman from New York. This is a very important monitoring program. The gentleman from New York has made a very reasonable request. I want to thank him. I know he's been very concerned about environmental issues all across the Nation as well as in New

York. I thank him for his leadership. We have no objection to this amendment and thank the gentleman for offering it.

Mr. MCHUGH. I thank the gentleman.

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

The amendment was agreed to.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word for the purpose of a colloquy.

I raise the issue today of Storm Lake, Iowa. It happens to be one of the southerly most glacial lakes in the country, and it's the shallowest one that we have. It has been under a process of removal of that silt for water quality and for environmental reasons. We've done a great job of protecting the siltation in the entire watershed area. There's always ongoing work there, and it's never perfect. But this is a project that has been engaged in with local money, and that means private money, city money, county money, State money and Federal. It's a five-way partnership that has been working here, and we have 700,000 yards of silt to go.

I direct my inquiry to Chairman DICKS. I requested funds to address this challenge through the EPA's EPM account. It is my understanding, Mr. Chairman, that these projects have not been earmarked at this time for that particular account.

Would that be a correct assumption?

Mr. DICKS. If the gentleman will yield, yes, that is correct. There are presently no Member projects within the EPA EPM account within this bill.

Mr. KING of Iowa. I thank the gentleman. Is it the chairman's expectation that these types of projects will be added in conference with the Senate?

Mr. DICKS. While I can't predict the future of negotiations with the other body, I would be willing to take a closer look at the gentleman's specific concern at that time.

Mr. KING of Iowa. I thank the gentleman for his attention to this matter and Ranking Member TIAHRT as well and look forward to those discussions as we move forward to conference.

Mr. DICKS. If the gentleman will yield, one approach might be for the gentleman to go to the EPA with the money that they get that is unearmarked and make a presentation there about the importance of this program. I'm not certain he's going to do that, but that's a suggestion we have from our staff.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Reclaiming my time, I very much appreciate the chairman's recommendation and will happily follow through on that recommendation. I thank your staff as well.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. PRICE OF GEORGIA

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment offered by Mr. PRICE of Georgia:

Page 55, line 22, insert "(reduced by \$3,884,000) (increased by \$3,884,000)" after the second dollar amount.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the opportunity to offer this amendment.

This amendment would reduce the EPA operations and administrations budget by \$3,884 million and increase the EPA's science and technology homeland security water security initiative by that same amount. This area of the EPA program was decreased by \$3,884 million below the President's request and \$9 million below 2007 appropriations levels.

The operations and administrative appropriations has been increased by \$40.8 million from the 2007 level, although that's the administration's request and I commend the committee for meeting that request.

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

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. I yield to the gentleman from Washington.

Mr. DICKS. We are prepared to accept the gentleman's amendment.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Reclaiming my time, I appreciate the chairman recognizing the importance of this initiative. I thank him very much.

I am happy to yield to my friend.

Mr. TIAHRT. I want to thank the gentleman from Georgia. I think it's a very important issue that we test our Nation's water and make sure that we do have a secure water system. This is very timely. We're a little behind schedule now, so I think it's a very appropriate amendment. We have no problems with it, either.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. I thank the gentleman. I appreciate the individual's understanding and recognizing the importance of this initiative.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. PRICE).

The amendment was agreed to.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

COMMISSION ON CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION AND MITIGATION

INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS

For expenses necessary for support of the activities of the Commission on Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation established by this Act, \$50,000,000, to remain available until the termination of the Commission on September 30, 2009: *Provided*, That \$5,000,000 shall be available to the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency for the direct support of the Commission in reviewing science challenges related to adaptation and mitigation strategies necessitated by climate change, and for identification of specific action steps to address these challenges: *Provided further*, That funding allocated for direct support of Commission activities shall include the salaries and expenses of Commission staff, travel and related costs of Commission members and for the contractual costs of the National Academy of Sciences: *Provided further*, That, not later than July 1, 2008, the remaining

\$45,000,000 shall be transferred by the Administrator to agencies or offices of the Federal Government with climate science responsibilities for implementation of Commission recommendations.

AMENDMENT EN BLOC OFFERED BY MR. GINGREY

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment offered by Mr. GINGREY:

Strike page 56, lines 1 through 23.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Chairman, I have two amendments that occur sequentially in the bill, and I would ask unanimous consent that my amendments be considered en bloc.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. Is there objection to considering the amendments as one?

There was no objection.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will report the other amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment offered by Mr. GINGREY:

Strike page 56, line 24, through page 57, line 11.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Chairman, my amendment strikes the Commission on Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation from this appropriation bill. I offer this amendment not because I think an interagency climate change science program necessarily is a bad idea, but because it is clearly authorizing on an appropriation bill, and I object to this procedure.

House rule XXI (2) prohibits changing existing law in an appropriations bill. Contrary to this rule, the language included in the EPA section of H.R. 2643 changes existing law by establishing this new Commission on Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation which is tasked with “reviewing science challenges related to adaptation and mitigation strategies necessitated by climate change.”

□ 1600

An interagency climate change science program that reviews these questions already exists under the Global Change Research Act of 1990. The Office of the Parliamentarian confirms that this provision does violate rule XXI.

Also, Chairman GORDON and Ranking Member HALL of the Science and Technology Committee sent a letter to the Rules Committee outlining these concerns requesting that the Rules Committee not waive points of order against this provision. Yet last night the Rules Committee reported out a rule that waives all points of order against provisions in the bill for failure to comply with clause 2 of rule XXI.

Again, I reiterate, I am not opposed to authorizing a strong interagency climate change science program. In fact, on Wednesday, Science and Technology Committee will take up a bill, H.R. 906, that does just that. I plan to vote for it.

H.R. 906 reorients the U.S. Global Change Research Program to produce more policy relevant information about, among other things, adaptation

and mitigation. It also emphasizes the need to develop information to help communities make themselves more resilient to climate and other environmental changes. This is nearly identical to the task given to the Commission on Climate Change in this bill, H.R. 2643.

Mr. DICKS. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. GINGREY. I will be glad to.

Mr. DICKS. I appreciate the gentleman's very constructive approach to this matter. I just wanted to make sure the gentleman knew that the distinguished chairman of the Science and Technology Committee, Mr. GORDON, and I had a colloquy at the start of the day in which I committed myself to work with him to align our approach with the work of the Science and Technology Committee when that legislation is enacted.

I would hope that the gentleman might consider that in making his decision whether to go forward with this amendment, because I do believe we have a commitment to get this important work done.

As the gentleman has mentioned, and I will give the gentleman additional time, if necessary, as the gentleman has mentioned, adaptation and mitigation of the effects of climate change are terribly important to the United States, to our wildlife, to our habitat. In fact, this is an issue that is worldwide in reach and scope.

I would hope that the gentleman might reconsider his amendment to strike and allow us to go forward with a commitment that I have made to the chairman, and I make to you, that we will work this out in a way that is consistent with the authorizing legislation. That's why the chairman was willing to go along with me at this point.

Mr. GINGREY. Reclaiming my time.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The gentleman's time has expired.

(By unanimous consent, Mr. GINGREY was allowed to proceed for 2 additional minutes.)

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Chairman, I thank the subcommittee Chair. Mr. DICKS and Mr. GORDON are honorable Members, and I am aware of the colloquy that they have had in regard to this matter.

But to me the point is, and I want to go forward with this amendment, because it's not just this authorizing committee that I am concerned with, the Science Committee that I sit in on or the Armed Services Committee, it's all the authorizing committees.

This rule, I think, is very, very important. For the Rules Committee to just waive this, I know that the other side, us, in the 109th, probably did the same thing on occasion.

But at some point we need to draw the line on this, and how do we know that this bill, H.R. 906, that we are going to consider tomorrow, will ever get through the other body, and then we have this bill that's basically an ap-

propriations bill and legislating on that.

I think we ought to, as we go back into our district and talk to middle school students, and explain how this Congress works and what's the purpose of authorizing committees and appropriations committees, so they can understand that. This is just a situation where I feel very strongly about standing for the process, not necessarily what's been worked out between Mr. DICKS and Mr. GORDON.

I respect both of them, I trust them. I know they will try to work this out. But the more we do this, the more confusing it gets.

With all due respect to the chairman, I will not withdraw my amendment, but have a vote on it.

Mr. DICKS. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to this amendment.

I believe the report language beginning on page 100 very adequately describes and justifies the new Commission on Climate Change, adaptation and mitigation. As I noted in my opening remarks, we have tried in this bill to move the climate change debate beyond talking about whether global warming exists and, instead, focus on what we must do to deal with this as a reality. The recent reports of the international panel on climate change make clear that warming will persist for many years irrespective of any regulatory actions or technology breakthroughs which may occur in the near future.

Testimony before our subcommittee in April describes significant impacts already occurring. These impacts included 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. The 2-year Commission established in this bill is intended to help identify and jump start the science which can help our country and the world adapt to these changes.

The Commission brings together a panel of 15 of this country's science leaders, and is headed by the president of the National Academy of Sciences, Dr. Ralph Cicerone. Dr. Cicerone, who I have met with personally on this proposal, is one of the world's leaders in climate change studies.

While the use of advisory panels is common in guiding federally-funded science, this panel is different in two ways. First, it cuts broadly across all areas of Federal science in looking at the climate problem. I make no apology for that. This is a national and worldwide problem, and I think we need to think beyond the traditional agency or subcommittee's stovepipe approaches.

Second, the Commission has \$45 million to begin implementation of its recommendations. Giving the commission implementation funds will make it both more credible and more effective.

This is not a large amount of money, but we believe it could get a few of the

most critical science initiatives going without having to wait for the 2009 funding cycle.

Chairman OBEY has asked our subcommittee to be aggressive and imaginative in approaching the climate change challenge this year. We think that the funding, provided in this bill for the climate change adaptation and mitigation science, responds to that need, and I urge the funds be preserved.

The committee is aware, however, that a number of other committees are working on legislation in this area. Chairman OBERSTAR, from the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, has written us in support of our Commission, which he believes can be supportive of efforts in his committee.

We are also working closely with the Natural Resources Committee, and we understand how Science, as I mentioned earlier, will mark something up in July. I want to assure the Members that when we get to conference on this bill, presumably in September, I am going to try for July. We will give full consideration to any new legislation which may be adopted as we finalize fiscal year 2008 spending for climate research in our committee.

I think it would be a real tragedy for this House, on the first major amendment this year on climate change, to have a negative vote, to show that we still don't get it, that we still don't realize that the planet is at risk here.

So I urge the committee to stay with us. This was approved in the Appropriations Committee, and I think it's a very good Commission, and I think this thing will work and will help us adapt to the problems that we are going to face because of this. We have these problems on all of our Federal lands. We had a hearing on that.

I think this is an important amendment. I urge everyone to defeat the gentleman's amendment.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, I want to stand up in support of my colleague from Georgia's amendment.

I spent 12 years in the Georgia House in the minority. What I tried to do for that 12 years is change the process, because the process was broken. When the process is broken, the product is flawed.

When I came to Congress, I came as a freshman in the majority, and found that the process was still broken. So I found myself going from being in the minority trying to change the process, to being in the majority trying to change the process that the majority was using.

Now I find myself back in the minority still trying to change the process, because the process in Washington is broken.

I think Mr. GINGREY's amendment highlights that, in that we adopted rules in this House on first day, but we keep waiving those rules when those rules don't fit what we want to do. Now this is not to say anything about a

Commission on Climate Change. But when you let public opinion, and you let political winds determine public policy, then the taxpayers of this country pay for it.

That's exactly what the majority party is doing. In fact, Mr. Chairman, we used to have a majority party and a minority party. I think, now, some people in this body think they are a monarchy, that they control everything, that the process should just be overlooked.

The gentleman's amendment talks about this process and who has authorization and who has oversight. If you will remember when we first opened up and we had the first 100 hours or 100 days or 100 amendments or 6 for '06 or whatever it was, we didn't go through any regular process, no regular order. So we have seen this body go from what the minority, now the majority, used to complain about us.

You know, my momma used to say to me, Lynn, if your buddy jumped off the cliff, would you jump after him? Well, I am going to ask, I am going to ask the side over there, if we jumped off a cliff or no matter what we had done, are you saying, well, you all did it. That sounds like a bunch of kids playing in a sandbox.

We need to stop the things that are wrong with the process today, no matter who used to do them. No matter what's been done in the past, let's look at today. Let's see if we can't make a difference.

That's what I ask, that we go through the normal process. I think the gentleman from Georgia's amendment gets us back to that place. It puts the Rules Committee, hopefully, back in a light to where they understand that we are not going to stand for the continual waiving of the rules that this House adopted.

I yield to the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. GINGREY. I thank the gentleman for his remarks, and I thank him for yielding some time to me to conclude.

Mr. Chairman, I think the gentleman said it just as well as it can possibly be said. Again, I want the gentleman from Washington (Mr. DICKS) to know that it's not in opposition at all to the creation and the format of the committee. I think it's a grand design, a good idea. We all need to work toward climate change problems and solutions. I am just saying that this issue, and Mr. WESTMORELAND pointed out very well, that it's a process issue that we are opposed to, and I thank the gentleman for giving me the opportunity.

In conclusion, I want to urge my colleagues to allow the suitable authorizing committee, the Science and Technology Committee, to complete its consideration of the best way to improve our inter-agency climate science programs by supporting this amendment.

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

Mr. Chairman, I oppose this amendment, and I hope that this amendment, obviously, will not pass.

In our subcommittee earlier this year, in testimony on the hearings that were held in relation to the park service and the Fish and Wildlife Service and the Forest Service and EPA, people spoke of the challenges to their stewardship, of our lands, basically our public lands, that were caused by climate change.

Then toward the end of our hearing's process, we held a hearing specifically on the issue of climate change and had witnesses who were experts in that field to speak to the issues there, and they testified describing, for instance, how permanent ice coverage in the Arctic has shrunk dramatically at an ever-increasing rate.

It's at an ever-increasing rate because, first of all, because ice coverage reflects sun's heat back to the atmosphere, back to space, whereas water and land absorbed that heat, so that heats, that raises the temperature.

Because methane is released from permafrost, as you take the ice cover off, and the land heats up, ends up expanding the greenhouse gas blanket that is the very cause of global warming. So they are telling us by the year 2050, we will have no ice over a substantial piece of the north polar region that is then contributing to ever more greater global warming.

□ 1615

They tell us that the Everglades National Park is at risk from rising sea levels and more intense hurricanes. They tell us that the changing climate has allowed invasive species to move into new ecosystems where they have no predators and they can expand explosively, which they're doing, for example, the northern pine beetle in huge portions of the northern forests in the northern U.S. and in Canada over much of the central part of the continent, and increasing severity of droughts that will make our lands more vulnerable to forest fires and such. In any case, regardless of one's opinion on the need to regulate greenhouse gas emissions, it is irresponsible to ignore the impacts that we are witnessing.

For the record, this commission that the amendment would eliminate does not create any new regulations with regard to carbon dioxide emissions or any other greenhouse gas emission. What the commission does would be to review and assess the scientific challenges to the available adaptation and mitigation strategies necessitated by the climate change and simply provide recommendations to the various Federal agencies on how to proceed.

It seems to me that with the importance of this issue of global warming and the climate change that comes with that global warming, that it would be irresponsible for us not to look at those things that are particularly within the jurisdiction of our subcommittee and to seek the ways that

we might adapt and mitigate those climate changes.

And so I hope that we will not be tempted here to take a shortcut that will cost us deeply in the future, and I hope this amendment will not be adopted.

Mr. HALL of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

I speak as the ranking member of the Science and Technology Committee, and I support Dr. GINGREY of Georgia. And the problem is the process.

Actually, this committee oversees on some of the most exciting parts of the Federal Government. We hear from astronauts at NASA about new discoveries in space. We work with scientists at the National Institute of Standards and Technology to ensure that the best technology informs decisions, such as new materials, even for bulletproof vests, standards for the nanotechnology industry.

At the Department of Energy, we support research and the technologies to make America energy independent. And I guess through the National Science Foundation, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Environmental Protection Agency and other agencies, we oversee the \$2 billion interagency climate change science program. In fact, on Wednesday, the Science and Technology Committee will consider a bill, H.R. 906, to reauthorize this very important research program.

This is exactly why I was a little disturbed when I read H.R. 2643 and saw the provision establishing a commission on climate change, which is supposed to review the science challenges associated with adapting to climate change. That mission is the same as already existing interagency climate change science program. Also, establishing an interagency commission clearly violates clause 2 of rule XXI which prohibits changing existing law in an appropriations bill. The current interagency climate change science program was established by a Science Committee bill in 1990, the Global Change Research Act.

Actually, climate change science falls clearly within the jurisdiction of the Science and Technology Committee, and this provision of H.R. 2643 clearly violates clause 2 of rule XXI. For these reasons, I urge all my colleagues to support the rules of the House and the jurisdiction of the committee and vote "yes" for the Gingrey amendment.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The question is on the amendment en bloc offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY).

The amendment was rejected.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

The Commission established and financed with this appropriation shall consist of the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, the Director of the National Science Foundation, the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Admin-

istration, the Director of the United States Geological Survey, the Undersecretary for Science of the Department of Energy, the Administrator of the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration, the Chief of the United States Forest Service, the President of the National Academy of Sciences, who shall serve as the Commission's Chairman, the President of the National Academy of Engineering, and six additional members with appropriate expertise, to be selected by the Chairman.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMS AND MANAGEMENT

For environmental programs and management, including necessary expenses, not otherwise provided for, for personnel and related costs and travel expenses, including uniforms, or allowances therefor, as authorized by 5 U.S.C. 5901-5902; services as authorized by 5 U.S.C. 3109, but at rates for individuals not to exceed the per diem rate equivalent to the maximum rate payable for senior level positions under 5 U.S.C. 5376; hire of passenger motor vehicles; hire, maintenance, and operation of aircraft; purchase of reprints; library memberships in societies or associations which issue publications to members only or at a price to members lower than to subscribers who are not members; construction, alteration, repair, rehabilitation, and renovation of facilities, not to exceed \$85,000 per project; and not to exceed \$9,000 for official reception and representation expenses, \$2,375,582,000, to remain available until September 30, 2009, including administrative costs of the brownfields program under the Small Business Liability Relief and Brownfields Revitalization Act of 2002.

AMENDMENT NO. 21 OFFERED BY MR. JINDAL

Mr. JINDAL. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Amendment No. 21 offered by Mr. JINDAL:
Page 58, line 3, insert "(reduced by \$2,500,000) (increased by \$2,500,000)" after the dollar amount.

Mr. JINDAL. Mr. Chairman, every summer an environmental phenomenon occurs off the coast of Louisiana, at times covering over 7,000 square miles off the Gulf of Mexico. This dead zone, or hypoxic zone, in the Gulf of Mexico is an expanse of oxygen-depleted waters that cannot sustain most marine life. This hypoxic zone is caused by excessive amounts of nitrogen pollution delivered to the gulf by the Mississippi River.

The dead zone has become a serious threat to commercial fishing, shrimp and recreational industries. The gulf produces approximately 40 percent of the United States commercial fish yield. The livelihoods of many thousands of people and their communities are at risk, as is the large marine ecosystem on which they depend.

My amendment provides resources to combat the development of hypoxia by directing \$2.5 million in additional funding for the Environmental Protection Agency's Gulf of Mexico program. These funds will go to the five Gulf of Mexico coastal States, Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and Florida, local governments, colleges, interstate agencies, individuals, and nonprofit agencies. They are used to de-

velop the techniques and science needed to restore and protect the Gulf of Mexico ecosystem and included projects to develop solutions to the dead zone in the gulf, improve water quality, and restore coastal areas.

The Gulf of Mexico program, with a recommended budget of \$4.5 million, has again been provided with much less funding than the other great water body programs, for example, the Chesapeake Bay at \$30 million, the Great Lakes at \$25 million, the Puget Sound at \$15 million and the Long Island Sound at \$10 million.

With the growth of the dead zone and the dramatic loss of coastal wetlands, my amendment will help to make up for this disparity at a time when funding to develop solutions is needed more than ever.

I urge my colleagues to support my amendment. We must develop the techniques to restore and protect the areas of our gulf coast.

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

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

Mr. DICKS. I want to tell the gentleman I appreciate his hard work on this issue, and we're prepared to accept his amendment. And having had dead zones off the coast of Washington State, in Puget Sound and in Hood Canal, I can tell you this is a very serious problem, and I'm very pleased the gentleman is working so hard to deal with it and bring it to our attention.

Mr. JINDAL. I thank the chairman for accepting the amendment and thank him for his support.

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

Mr. Chairman, I rise today to offer an amendment that shifts funding within the EPA environmental program and management account.

Although the rules of the House prevent me from specifying in the amendment where the funding will go, it is my intention to increase by \$2.5 million the funding for grants as part of the Environmental Protection Agency's Gulf of Mexico Program. Grants awarded under this program go to the five Gulf of Mexico coastal states (Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida), local governments, colleges, interstate agencies, individuals, and nonprofit agencies. They are used to develop the techniques and science needed to restore and protect the Gulf of Mexico ecosystem. They have been used for projects working to develop solutions to the dead zone in the Gulf, improve water quality, restore coastal areas, and educate others about findings to allow better informed decision-making.

The Gulf of Mexico Program, with a recommended budget of less than \$4.5 million, has again been provided with much less funding than the other similar great water body programs. For example, the Committee has provided \$30 million to the Chesapeake Bay program, \$25 million to the Great Lakes program, and \$15 million to the Puget Sound program. My amendment will help to make up for this disparity, at a time when grants to develop solutions in the Gulf are needed more than ever.

For example, it is imperative that solutions are found to the Dead Zone problem in the Gulf that are consistent with the economic well-being of the region and our inland states. The dead zone is an area off the Louisiana and Texas coasts in which water contains low amounts of oxygen. It is caused by excessive algal growth. The low oxygen causes fish and shrimp to leave the area, and it kills the marine life that cannot get away. Last year, the dead zone measured over 6,600 square miles, which is about the size of Connecticut and Rhode Island combined.

Another important area where solutions are needed is with restoring our coastal wetlands. Since the 1930s, coastal Louisiana has lost over 1.2 million acres, an area nearly the size of the state of Delaware. This area is critical to fish and wildlife, including endangered species, and to the people of Louisiana.

I urge my colleagues to support my amendment. The Gulf of Mexico produces approximately 40 percent of the U.S. commercial fish yield, and it provides critical habitats for 75 percent of migratory waterfowl traversing the United States.

We must develop the techniques to restore and protect the areas off our Gulf Coast. Increasing the allocations for grants will help to do that.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. JINDAL).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 9 OFFERED BY MR. CONAWAY

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Amendment No. 9 offered by Mr. CONAWAY: Page 58, line 3, after the dollar amount, insert the following: “(reduced by \$2)”.

Page 58, line 3, after the dollar amount insert the following: “(increased by \$1)”.

Page 60, line 24, after the dollar amount, insert the following: “(increased by \$1)”.

Page 61, line 13, after the dollar amount, insert the following: “(increased by \$1)”.

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Chairman, I will be willing to withdraw the amendment, but would first ask unanimous consent to enter into a colloquy with Mr. DICKS on the subject.

Mr. Chairman, I am sure you agree that all people deserve access to affordable drinking water and families in rural communities should not be required to spend thousands of additional dollars each year to comply with unfunded mandates from the EPA.

Mr. DICKS. I certainly agree with the gentleman that rural communities are unfairly burdened by the high costs associated with Federal clean water regulations and that families in such communities are shouldering alarmingly high rates of increase.

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Chairman, currently, small community water systems across America are being forced to increase rates to meet clean water regulations, and some of my constituents pay almost 800 percent more for their water than their urban counterparts. While the rules may be well-in-

tentioned and promote public health, we must do a better job of addressing the restraint of small systems and their communities to raise the capital and afford water treatment technology. If we don’t, rural, middle-income families will be forced to leave community water systems in favor of water sources they can afford, namely, unregulated shallow groundwater wells and dirt tanks, and that will not advance the cause of clean, safe water for everyone.

I have proposed to take a symbolic \$2 from the Office of Ground and Drinking Water, the office which oversees these water regulations, and direct the symbolic funds to two offices which may assist rural water systems comply with these unfunded mandates.

First, the EPA is currently working on revising the Small Drinking Water System Variance Affordability Methodology, which, once completed, will redefine the EPA’s definition of “affordable” to more accurately reflect the world in which rural America lives. My amendment would return \$1 to the Office of Ground and Drinking Water to facilitate and urge the completion of this urgent report. Once completed, this report should help communities utilize the existing routes to afford more cost-effective technology.

Second, I would have chosen to redirect \$1 to the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund, which was established in the Safe Drinking Water Act Amendments of 1996 to highlight the shortfall in funds faced by small community water systems. Although loans are not an ideal way to support unfunded mandates on small water systems, I have been unable to find any other relevant program to build these funds.

I would like to encourage the creation of a significant grant program for Small Community Water Systems using existing funds. I would like this fund to be modeled on the USDA Rural Utility Services and the Clean Water Hardship Grants program. There is an urgent need for some funding, as the Rural Utilities Service currently has a backlog of \$3.3 billion worth of program applications, and the EPA estimates that over the next 20 years small water systems will need \$34 billion to continue to meet EPA mandates.

To begin the discussion and move us in the direction of clean, safe and affordable rural drinking water, I have recently introduced H.R. 2141, the Small Community Options for Regulatory Equity Act. This bill would further assist rural communities in complying with the cost of clean water regulations by allowing not-for-profit water systems serving less than 10,000 people to request exemptions from the national drinking water standards that are too costly for them to implement. This would return decision-making power to our local communities who are best suited to understand their needs and resources and ensure that rural communities could provide clean enough water without forcing their citizens to completely unregulated water sources.

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

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

Mr. DICKS. I commend the gentleman for his efforts on the part of his constituents and for all the rural water users who are facing similar problems. I commit to work with the gentleman to see what can be done to address the problems as this legislation moves forward to conference with the Senate.

I might point out that we did put \$16 million in the bill for the rural water. There’s going to be a competition. This had been an earmark in the past, but it got thrown out in 2007.

□ 1630

I have been calling over there to Mr. Grumbles at the EPA to try to get this thing moving as fast as possible so that the money gets out to the rural communities. And I commend the gentleman. This is a major problem. I have a lot of rural areas in my district, and every single one of them is having a terrible time getting the money to do the clean water issues.

Now, remember this too: When Christine Todd Whitman did her study, she came up with a backlog of \$388 billion. So we are going to need a new authorization program. And I commend the gentleman for having one that focuses on the rural areas. And we have got to at least do that as a priority.

So I commend the gentleman and we will continue to work with him.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The time of the gentleman from Texas has expired.

(On request of Mr. DICKS, and by unanimous consent, Mr. CONAWAY was allowed to proceed for 1 additional minute.)

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Chairman, I yield the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. SMITH).

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Mr. Chairman, I thank my colleague from Texas for his work on this issue.

The need for rural water assistance needs continues to increase with the expansion of Federal water regulations. And because of limited local resources, small communities in my district face severe hardships as they comply with the Safe Drinking Water Act and the Clean Water Act.

We need to find ways to work to protect the public health without placing overbearing costs on small communities, and I look forward to the EPA’s updates to the Small Drinking Water System Variance Affordability Methodology.

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to withdraw my amendment.

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

There was no objection.

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

OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

For necessary expenses of the Office of Inspector General in carrying out the provisions of the Inspector General Act of 1978, as

amended, and for construction, alteration, repair, rehabilitation, and renovation of facilities, not to exceed \$85,000 per project, \$43,500,000, to remain available until September 30, 2009.

BUILDINGS AND FACILITIES

For construction, repair, improvement, extension, alteration, and purchase of fixed equipment or facilities of, or for use by, the Environmental Protection Agency, \$34,801,000, to remain available until expended.

HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCE SUPERFUND (INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)

For necessary expenses to carry out the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 (CERCLA), as amended, including sections 111(c)(3), (c)(5), (c)(6), and (e)(4) (42 U.S.C. 9611), and for construction, alteration, repair, rehabilitation, and renovation of facilities, not to exceed \$85,000 per project; \$1,272,008,000, to remain available until expended, consisting of such sums as are available in the Trust Fund on September 30, 2007, as authorized by section 517(a) of the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act of 1986 (SARA) and up to \$1,272,008,000, as a payment from general revenues to the Hazardous Substance Superfund for purposes as authorized by section 517(b) of SARA, as amended: *Provided*, That funds appropriated under this heading may be allocated to other Federal agencies in accordance with section 111(a) of CERCLA: *Provided further*, That of the funds appropriated under this heading, \$10,000,000 shall be paid to the "Office of Inspector General" appropriation to remain available until September 30, 2009, and \$26,126,000 shall be paid to the "Science and Technology" appropriation, to remain available until September 30, 2009.

LEAKING UNDERGROUND STORAGE TANK TRUST FUND PROGRAM

For necessary expenses to carry out leaking underground storage tank cleanup activities authorized by subtitle I of the Solid Waste Disposal Act, as amended, and for construction, alteration, repair, rehabilitation, and renovation of Environmental Protection Agency facilities, not to exceed \$85,000 per project, \$117,961,000 to remain available until expended, of which \$82,461,000 shall be for carrying out leaking underground storage tank cleanup activities authorized by section 9003(h) of the Solid Waste Disposal Act, as amended; \$35,500,000 shall be for carrying out the other provisions of the Solid Waste Disposal Act specified in section 9508(c) of the Internal Revenue Code, as amended: *Provided*, That the Administrator is authorized to use appropriations made available under this heading to implement section 9013 of the Solid Waste Disposal Act to provide financial assistance to federally-recognized Indian tribes for the development and implementation of programs to manage underground storage tanks.

OIL SPILL RESPONSE

For expenses necessary to carry out the Environmental Protection Agency's responsibilities under the Oil Pollution Act of 1990, \$17,280,000, to be derived from the Oil Spill Liability trust fund, to remain available until expended.

STATE AND TRIBAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS

For environmental programs and infrastructure assistance, including capitalization grants for State revolving funds and performance partnership grants, \$3,391,514,000, to remain available until expended, of which \$1,125,000,000 shall be for making capitalization grants for the Clean Water State Revolving Funds under title VI of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act,

as amended (the "Act"); of which up to \$75,000,000 shall be available for loans, including interest free loans as authorized by 33 U.S.C. 1383(d)(1)(A), to municipal, intermunicipal, interstate, or State agencies or nonprofit entities for projects that provide treatment for or that minimize sewage or stormwater discharges using one or more approaches which include, but are not limited to, decentralized or distributed stormwater controls, decentralized wastewater treatment, low-impact development practices, conservation easements, stream buffers, or wetlands restoration; \$842,167,000 shall be for capitalization grants for the Drinking Water State Revolving Funds under section 1452 of the Safe Drinking Water Act, as amended; \$10,000,000 shall be for architectural, engineering, planning, design, construction and related activities in connection with the construction of high priority water and wastewater facilities in the area of the United States-Mexico Border, after consultation with the appropriate border commission; \$10,500,000 shall be for grants to the State of Alaska to address drinking water and waste infrastructure needs of rural and Alaska Native Villages: *Provided*, That, of these funds: (1) the State of Alaska shall provide a match of 25 percent; (2) no more than 5 percent of the funds may be used for administrative and overhead expenses; and (3) not later than October 1, 2005, the State of Alaska shall make awards consistent with the State-wide priority list established in 2004 for all water, sewer, waste disposal, and similar projects carried out by the State of Alaska that are funded under section 221 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1301) or the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1921 et seq.) which shall allocate not less than 25 percent of the funds provided for projects in regional hub communities; \$140,000,000 shall be for making special project grants for the construction of drinking water, wastewater and storm water infrastructure and for water quality protection, and, for purposes of these grants, each grantee shall contribute not less than 45 percent of the cost of the project unless the grantee is approved for a waiver by the Agency; \$100,000,000 shall be to carry out section 104(k) of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 (CERCLA), as amended, including grants, interagency agreements, and associated program support costs; \$50,000,000 shall be for grants under title VII, subtitle G of the Energy Policy Act of 2005, as amended; and \$1,113,847,000 shall be for grants, including associated program support costs, to States, federally-recognized tribes, interstate agencies, tribal consortia, and air pollution control agencies for multi-media or single media pollution prevention, control and abatement and related activities, including activities pursuant to the provisions set forth under this heading in Public Law 104-134, and for making grants under section 103 of the Clean Air Act for particulate matter monitoring and data collection activities subject to terms and conditions specified by the Administrator, of which \$49,495,000 shall be for carrying out section 128 of CERCLA, as amended, \$10,000,000 shall be for Environmental Information Exchange Network grants, including associated program support costs, \$18,500,000 of the funds available for grants under section 106 of the Act shall be for water quality monitoring activities, \$25,000,000 shall be for making competitive targeted watershed grants, and, in addition to funds appropriated under the heading "Leaking Underground Storage Tank Trust Fund Program" to carry out the provisions of the Solid Waste Disposal Act specified in section 9508(c) of the Internal Revenue Code other than section 9003(h) of the Solid Waste

Disposal Act, as amended, \$2,500,000 shall be for financial assistance to States under section 2007(f)(2) of the Solid Waste Disposal Act, as amended: *Provided further*, That notwithstanding section 603(d)(7) of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, the limitation on the amounts in a State water pollution control revolving fund that may be used by a State to administer the fund shall not apply to amounts included as principal in loans made by such fund in fiscal year 2008 and prior years where such amounts represent costs of administering the fund to the extent that such amounts are or were deemed reasonable by the Administrator, accounted for separately from other assets in the fund, and used for eligible purposes of the fund, including administration: *Provided further*, That for fiscal year 2008, and notwithstanding section 518(f) of the Act, the Administrator is authorized to use the amounts appropriated for any fiscal year under section 319 of that Act to make grants to federally-recognized Indian tribes pursuant to sections 319(h) and 518(e) of that Act: *Provided further*, That for fiscal year 2008, notwithstanding the limitation on amounts in section 518(c) of the Act, up to a total of 1½ percent of the funds appropriated for State Revolving Funds under title VI of that Act may be reserved by the Administrator for grants under section 518(c) of that Act: *Provided further*, That no funds provided by this appropriations Act to address the water, wastewater and other critical infrastructure needs of the colonias in the United States along the United States-Mexico border shall be made available to a county or municipal government unless that government has established an enforceable local ordinance, or other zoning rule, which prevents in that jurisdiction the development or construction of any additional colonia areas, or the development within an existing colonia the construction of any new home, business, or other structure which lacks water, wastewater, or other necessary infrastructure.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS, ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

(INCLUDING RESCISSIONS OF FUNDS)

For fiscal year 2008, notwithstanding 31 U.S.C. 6303(1) and 6305(1), the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, in carrying out the Agency's function to implement directly Federal environmental programs required or authorized by law in the absence of an acceptable tribal program, may award cooperative agreements to federally-recognized Indian Tribes or Intertribal consortia, if authorized by their member Tribes, to assist the Administrator in implementing Federal environmental programs for Indian Tribes required or authorized by law, except that no such cooperative agreements may be awarded from funds designated for State financial assistance agreements.

The Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency is authorized to collect and obligate pesticide registration service fees in accordance with section 33 of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (as added by subsection (F)(2) of the Pesticide Registration Improvement Act of 2003), as amended.

None of the funds provided in this Act may be used, directly or through grants, to pay or to provide reimbursement for payment of the salary of a consultant (whether retained by the Federal Government or a grantee) at more than the daily equivalent of the rate paid for level IV of the Executive Schedule, unless specifically authorized by law.

From unobligated balances to carry out projects and activities authorized under section 206(a) of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, \$5,000,000 are hereby rescinded.

and I still think that this is the effective way of making sure there is still an increase, once again to a program that hasn't been reauthorized since 1992, and at the same time putting a significant amount of resources to our land managers who desperately need those resources to do their job in protecting our southern borders and protecting the land that we have set aside for its sensitive nature and its specific qualities. That has to be there.

With that, Mr. Chairman, that is the specific element of this particular amendment, to try to reprioritize to meet the needs of our southern border, which at this time, when we are talking about immigration, is such a significant issue.

□ 1645

Mr. DICKS. Mr. Chairman, I withdraw my point of order, and I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The principal purpose of this amendment is to block the long overdue increase in funding for the National Endowment for the Arts provided in the bill.

The gentleman is correct that the bill reported by the committee provides \$160 million for the NEA, an increase of \$35 million over the 2007 enacted level. I am very proud of that increase, which I think is fully justified and broadly supported by Members of this body.

It is important for Members to realize, as they consider the committee's action, that the \$160 million recommended only partially restores cuts made to this agency a decade ago. In fact, the amount in this bill is just \$16 million below the level provided in 1993. After adjusting for inflation, the amount recommended is \$100 million below the level in 1993 as displayed on the chart in front of the Members.

As we debate this amendment, Members should also note the National Endowment for the Arts has been transformed since the arts' funding debate of the 1990s. Two gifted chairmen have reinvigorated the NEA into an agency with broad support. Chairman Bill Ivy, appointed by Bill Clinton, negotiated, then implemented bipartisan reforms in NEA's grant structure to ensure that funds go to activities for which public funding is appropriate. Dana Gioia, the current chairman, then energized the agency with many new programs and a commitment to reach beyond the culture centers of our major cities.

Last year, every single congressional district received NEA support through innovative programs such as American Masterpieces, Operation Homecoming and the Big Read. Today, NEA is truly a national program with outreach efforts to every corner of America and every segment of our society.

Each of us has different reasons to support the arts. Some will describe their support in terms of the inherent joy of the arts as a personally enriching experience. Others support the arts

as an engine of job development and economic growth. It is equally important to emphasize that here in the House we've had votes on this issue year after year after year. In fact, in the last 2 years, the votes on the Slaughter-Dicks amendment have been accepted on voice vote.

As far as I'm concerned, one of the things that I'm proudest of is the fact that we had a hearing this year and brought in artists from all across our country to testify about the arts and what it means not only in terms of educating our youth, but also what it means to the American people.

I'm always surprised that there are some on the other side of the aisle who always want to beat up on the National Endowment for the Arts. In fact, when Mr. REGULA was chairman of the committee, an outstanding chairman, he put into place some very significant reforms which I supported. And what we emphasized was quality, that we don't have enough money to fund every single project, that we must emphasize quality. And that's what Mr. Ivy has done; that's what Mr. Gioia has done. And I want you to know the endowment is thrilled about this increase. They think they can spend this money wisely and effectively.

I just urge the gentleman to reconsider his amendment. I wish he would withdraw it and recognize and join all of us who support the arts here in the United States. I'd like to see us have a bipartisan approval of this bill, and particularly this particular increase for the Endowment for the Arts. And we also increase funding for the National Endowment for the Humanities. The humanities are very important to our country as well.

So I urge that we oppose this amendment and keep moving along.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. Does any other Member wish to be heard regarding the amendment by the gentleman from Utah?

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

The amendment was rejected.

Mr. DICKS. Mr. Chairman, the gentlewoman from New York was on the floor asking for recognition.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. I move to strike the requisite words.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The gentlewoman will suspend.

Mr. DICKS. I ask unanimous consent that the gentlelady be recognized.

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

Without objection, the voice vote is vacated.

There was no objection.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The gentlewoman is recognized.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Chairman, I do have a request before you actually officially announce the voice vote. Does this UC prohibit me from making a request for a recorded vote?

The Acting CHAIRMAN. No. Another voice vote will be taken.

Mr. DICKS. Thank you. I appreciate the gentleman's courtesy.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. And so do I.

Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong opposition to the amendment that will strip \$31.5 million for the National Endowment for the Arts.

Nearly 12 years ago, the Republicans slashed the 1988 budget nearly in half. In 1992, funding for the NEA reached an all-time high of \$176 million. However, 4 years later, just 4 years later, they cut the funding to \$99 million. Despite obstacles posed by a lack of adequate funding, the NEA persevered, and under the leadership of Chairman Gioia, instituted national programs to engage all Americans in the arts.

Recognizing its accomplishments, Congress began to support it once more and has approved funding increases by voice vote for the last 2 years. That support could not be more deserved, from Shakespeare in American communities to the NEA Jazz Masters, from American Masterpieces to the Big Read, the NEA has made art programs accessible to Americans in every congressional district.

Its programs enrich our culture by inspiring provocative community discussions and energizing the Nation's creative spirit. And every year, we hear more good news from the NEA.

Innovative programs are bringing arts to our schools, our community leaders and even our military bases, with Great American Voices, and are appreciated. This popular program has brought about 24 professional opera companies to 39 military bases across the country.

In 2004, the NEA initiated another program directed to military families called Operation Homecoming. It helped our troops and their families to write about their wartime experiences. The anthology of contributions was published by Random House in September 2006, and I encourage all of my colleagues to read it. The stories of patriotism and courage are truly inspiring.

What's more, the arts are improving our economy. This is terribly important. Americans for the Arts has just released a study on the economic impact of nonprofit art organizations. In 2002, the second Arts and Economic Impact Study told us that nonprofit arts organizations created \$134 billion annually in economic activity. Just 5 years later, that number has gone up 24 percent to \$166 billion. For the small investment we make, we bring back into the Federal Treasury \$166 billion a year. That means that while they pump \$63 billion into community economies, audiences are spending an additional \$103 billion on local hotels, restaurants, parking, souvenirs, refreshments and other associated costs. And these numbers likely underestimate the total economic impact of the arts. New York City and Los Angeles were not even included so as to avoid skewing the national estimates.

So what do these figures mean for us? That \$166 billion in economic activity

means \$104.2 billion in resident economic income. It means \$7.9 billion in local government tax revenues. It means \$9.1 billion in State government tax revenues. It means \$12.6 billion in Federal Government tax revenues, and 5.7 million full-time equivalent jobs.

To put that in perspective, over 1 percent of the American workforce is employed in an arts-related industry. That is a greater percentage than the number of Americans who are police officers, accountants, lawyers, firefighters, telemarketers, computer programmers, mail carriers or professional athletes. What community in America could afford to lose those jobs?

A generous estimate of the total Federal investment in the arts is \$1.4 billion, yet we earn about \$12.6 billion. That is a 12-1 return on the Federal investment. No place else, Mr. Chairman, do we see a return like that.

Simply put, in every way, investment in the arts is sound public policy. Cutting funding would ignore everything positive we know about it, and it is the wrong policy.

I want to thank Subcommittee Chairman DICKS and Ranking Member TIAHRT for funding the National Endowment of the Arts at a level that reflects its important role in fostering creativity and making art accessible to Americans.

Mr. Chairman, your leadership and enduring commitment to this issue has been instrumental in keeping arts part of our national priorities. Thank you, and I thank the staff.

Mr. SHAYS. I wonder if the gentlelady would yield?

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Of course I will yield.

Mr. SHAYS. Not to take another 5 minutes, the statistics that you present are what I would want to share. As cochair of the NEA, I want to say how proud I am to be able to vote for a budget that finally is beginning to pay attention to the arts.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. DICKS. I ask unanimous consent that the gentlelady have 1 additional minute.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The gentlewoman can have 1 additional minute or can conclude her time, and the gentleman from Connecticut can be recognized on his own time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Thank you very much for that. I won't take that much time.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Already?

Mr. DICKS. Mr. Chairman, I just asked unanimous consent for the gentlelady to have 1 additional minute.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. And I stated that the gentlewoman could have 1 additional minute or could complete her time, and the gentleman from Connecticut should have his own time. I asked the gentlewoman from New York what is her preference.

Mr. DICKS. What's the difference? I'm the chairman of the committee. I can ask unanimous consent any time I want.

I ask unanimous consent for 1 additional minute for the gentlelady from New York.

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

There was no objection.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The gentlewoman from New York is recognized.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. I thank everybody, but I certainly want to thank Mike Stevens and Pete Modaff for their work on the decade-long fight to restore funding for the NEA. I encourage my colleagues to support the progress we've made in restoring funding to the NEA.

Mr. DICKS. Will the gentlewoman yield?

Ms. SLAUGHTER. I will yield.

Mr. DICKS. I was somewhat mystified by the gentleman's amendment. He was talking about the border. As we understand it, the money for this amendment would go to Forest Service research, which is, as we understand it, \$15.5 million over the old 2007 level, and \$38 million over the President's level in our budget. We don't need any more money for the forest research. We've already very adequately and generously taken care of it.

I appreciate the gentlelady for yielding and for her great leadership over many years. I have always enjoyed being your partner on this important amendment, and now we're close to getting back to where we need to get.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Thank you, Mr. DICKS. Thank you, Mr. SHAYS.

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

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

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

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

Mr. DICKS. Mr. Chairman, I move that the Committee do now rise.

The motion was agreed to.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mrs. BOYDA of Kansas) having assumed the chair, (Mr. DAVIS of Alabama) Acting Chairman of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration 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, had come to no resolution thereon.

PROVIDING FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2643, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2008

Mr. DICKS. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that, during further consideration of H.R. 2643 in the Committee of the Whole pursuant to House Resolution 514, notwithstanding clause 11 of rule XVIII, no further amendment to the bill may be offered except:

Pro forma amendments offered at any point in the reading by the chairman or ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations or their designees for the purpose of debate;

An amendment by Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas regarding historic preservation;

An amendment by Mr. PEARCE striking language related to administrative cost sharing for certain activities performed by the Minerals Management Service;

An amendment by Mr. LAMBORN regarding funding for the National Endowment for the Arts;

An amendment by Mr. RAHALL to strike certain provisions relating to national wildfire refuge management of wild horses;

An amendment by Mr. KING of Iowa regarding funding for the U.S. Forest Service;

An amendment by Mr. NUNES regarding funding for the U.S. Forest Service;

An amendment by Mr. LOBIONDO regarding funding for the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry;

An amendment by Mr. ELLSWORTH regarding Smithsonian Institution salaries;

An amendment by Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida reducing funding for the National Endowment for the Arts;

An amendment by Mrs. MUSGRAVE reducing funds in the bill by 0.5 percent, which shall be debatable for 40 minutes;

An amendment by Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia striking language expressing the sense of Congress on global climate change;

An amendment by Mr. BARTON of Texas or Mr. SULLIVAN regarding global climate change;

An amendment by Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas regarding Maximum Achievable Air Control Standards;

An amendment by Mr. ANDREWS or Mr. CHABOT regarding the Tongass National Forest;

An amendment by Mr. INSLEE or Mr. LOBIONDO regarding importation of polar bear parts;

An amendment by Mr. SALAZAR or Mr. UDALL of Colorado regarding oil and gas leasing on the Roan Plateau;

An amendment by Mr. UDALL of Colorado regarding oil shale leasing;

An amendment by Mr. UDALL of Colorado regarding RS 2477 road determinations;

An amendment by Mr. CONAWAY regarding use of reductions made