

living memorial for performance arts programming and education. The Kennedy Center is the Nation's busiest arts facility, presenting more than 3,000 performances in 2006 and hosting millions of theater goers, visitors, and tourists. The Kennedy Center also provides educational programs for teachers and students from pre-kindergarten through college across the United States.

H.R. 3986, as amended, authorizes the Kennedy Center's capital and maintenance program for the next 5 years. The bill authorizes a total of \$112.5 million for fiscal years 2008 through 2012 for maintenance, repair, and security projects for the Kennedy Center. The bill also authorizes a total of \$91.7 million for capital projects for the Kennedy Center during this period. These authorization levels are derived from the Kennedy Center's 2006/2007 Comprehensive Building Plan.

Over the past 10 years, the priorities for Kennedy Center capital improvements were life safety and accessibility projects. With the pending completion of these projects, the current Comprehensive Building Plan emphasizes facility infrastructure. In some past projects, such as theater renovations, the mechanical and electrical infrastructure scope has been limited to replacement of renovated space. The primary building mechanical and electrical systems consist of original equipment and those elements not previously replaced are reaching the end of normative service life, are showing signs of failure or impending breakdown, or are deteriorating. The bill authorizes systematic rehabilitation of these primary mechanical and electrical systems.

In addition, the bill authorizes the Kennedy Center to study, plan, design, and construct a photovoltaic system on the 4-acre (140,000 square foot) main roof of the Kennedy Center. According to a preliminary estimate by the Kennedy Center, a photovoltaic system would cost approximately \$6 million to construct and would yield savings of approximately \$10.2 million over the next 25 years.

I strongly urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 3986, as amended, the "John F. Kennedy Center Reauthorization Act of 2008".

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON) that the House suspend the rules and concur in the Senate amendment to the bill, H.R. 3986.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

GREAT LAKES LEGACY REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2008

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 6460) to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to provide for the remediation of sediment contamination in areas of concern, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 6460

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Great Lakes Legacy Reauthorization Act of 2008".

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

Section 118(a)(3) of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1268(a)(3)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (I) by striking "and" at the end;

(2) in subparagraph (J) by striking the period and inserting a semicolon; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

"(K) 'site characterization' means a process for monitoring and evaluating the nature and extent of sediment contamination in accordance with the Environmental Protection Agency's guidance for the assessment of contaminated sediment in an area of concern located wholly or partially within the United States; and

"(L) 'potentially responsible party' means an individual or entity that may be liable under any Federal or State authority that is being used or may be used to facilitate the cleanup and protection of the Great Lakes."

SEC. 3. REMEDIATION OF SEDIMENT CONTAMINATION IN AREAS OF CONCERN.

(a) ELIGIBLE PROJECTS.—Section 118(c)(12)(B)(ii) of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1268(c)(12)(B)(ii)) is amended by striking "sediment" and inserting "sediment, including activities to restore aquatic habitat that are carried out in conjunction with a project for the remediation of contaminated sediment"

(b) LIMITATIONS.—Section 118(c)(12)(D) of such Act (33 U.S.C. 1268(c)(12)(D)) is amended—

(1) in the subparagraph heading by striking "LIMITATION" and inserting "LIMITATIONS";

(2) in clause (i) by striking "or" at the end;

(3) in clause (ii) by striking the period and inserting a semicolon; and

(4) by adding at the end the following:

"(ii) unless each non-Federal sponsor for the project has entered into a written project agreement with the Administrator under which the party agrees to carry out its responsibilities and requirements for the project; or

"(iv) unless the Administrator provides assurance that the Agency has conducted a reasonable inquiry to identify potentially responsible parties connected with the site."

(c) IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS.—Section 118(c)(12)(E)(ii) of such Act (33 U.S.C. 1268(c)(12)(E)(ii)) is amended to read as follows:

"(i) IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS.—

"(i) IN GENERAL.—The non-Federal share of the cost of a project carried out under this paragraph may include the value of an in-kind contribution provided by a non-Federal sponsor.

"(ii) CREDIT.—A project agreement described in subparagraph (D)(iii) may provide, with respect to a project, that the Administrator shall credit toward the non-Federal share of the cost of the project the value of an in-kind contribution made by the non-Federal sponsor, if the Administrator determines that the material or service provided as the in-kind contribution is integral to the project.

"(iii) WORK PERFORMED BEFORE PROJECT AGREEMENT.—In any case in which a non-Fed-

eral sponsor is to receive credit under subclause (II) for the cost of work carried out by the non-Federal sponsor and such work has not been carried out by the non-Federal sponsor as of the date of enactment of this subclause, the Administrator and the non-Federal sponsor shall enter into an agreement under which the non-Federal sponsor shall carry out such work, and only work carried out following the execution of the agreement shall be eligible for credit.

"(IV) LIMITATION.—Credit authorized under this clause for a project carried out under this paragraph—

"(aa) shall not exceed the non-Federal share of the cost of the project; and

"(bb) shall not exceed the actual and reasonable costs of the materials and services provided by the non-Federal sponsor, as determined by the Administrator.

"(V) INCLUSION OF CERTAIN CONTRIBUTIONS.—In this subparagraph, the term 'in-kind contribution' may include the costs of planning (including data collection), design, construction, and materials that are provided by the non-Federal sponsor for implementation of a project under this paragraph."

(d) NON-FEDERAL SHARE.—Section 118(c)(12)(E) of such Act (33 U.S.C. 1268(c)(12)(E)) is amended—

(1) by redesignating clauses (iii) and (iv) as clauses (iv) and (v), respectively;

(2) by inserting after clause (ii) the following:

"(iii) TREATMENT OF CREDIT BETWEEN PROJECTS.—Any credit provided under this subparagraph towards the non-Federal share of the cost of a project carried out under this paragraph may be applied towards the non-Federal share of the cost of any other project carried out under this paragraph by the same non-Federal sponsor for a site within the same area of concern."; and

(3) in clause (iv) (as redesignated by paragraph (1) of this subsection) by striking "service" each place it appears and inserting "contribution".

(e) SITE CHARACTERIZATION.—Section 118(c)(12)(F) of such Act (33 U.S.C. 1268(c)(12)(F)) is amended to read as follows:

"(F) SITE CHARACTERIZATION.—

"(i) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator, in consultation with any affected State or unit of local government, shall carry out at Federal expense the site characterization of a project under this paragraph for the remediation of contaminated sediment.

"(ii) LIMITATION.—For purposes of clause (i), the Administrator may carry out one site assessment per discrete site within a project at Federal expense."

(f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Section 118(c)(12)(H) of such Act (33 U.S.C. 1268(c)(12)(H)) is amended—

(1) by striking clause (i) and inserting the following:

"(i) IN GENERAL.—In addition to other amounts authorized under this section, there is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this paragraph—

"(I) \$50,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2004 through 2008; and

"(II) \$150,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2009 through 2013."; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

"(iii) ALLOCATION OF FUNDS.—Not more than 20 percent of the funds appropriated pursuant to clause (i)(II) for a fiscal year may be used to carry out subparagraph (F)."

(g) PUBLIC INFORMATION PROGRAM.—Section 118(c)(13)(B) of such Act (33 U.S.C. 1268(c)(13)(B)) is amended by striking "2008" and inserting "2013".

SEC. 4. RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM.

Section 106(b)(1) of the Great Lakes Legacy Act of 2002 (33 U.S.C. 1271a(b)(1)) is amended to read as follows:

"(I) IN GENERAL.—In addition to amounts authorized under other laws, there is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section—

“(A) \$3,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2004 through 2008; and
 “(B) \$5,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2009 through 2013.”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON) and the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and add any extraneous materials on H.R. 6460.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

H.R. 6460 reauthorizes appropriations, at increased levels, for sediment remediation purposes in the Great Lakes' areas of concern.

The presence of these contaminated sediments, a toxic legacy of the industrialized past for the Great Lakes basin, have plagued its waters for decades. These sediments have contributed to over 90 percent of the near-shore waters of the lakes being unsafe for fishing, swimming and wildlife habitat.

In 2002, the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, under the leadership of our current chairman, Congressman OBERSTAR, and Congressman VERN EHLERS, took action to begin the healing process for the Great Lakes community.

In that year, the Great Lakes Legacy Act was signed into law. The 2002 Legacy Act was enacted to encourage greater cooperation and expedited clean-up of the areas of concern. To accomplish this goal, the Legacy Act targeted Federal resources toward the remediation of contaminated sediment within the 31 areas of concern located within the United States or shared with Canada.

In many ways, the Legacy Act has been successful in laying the groundwork for addressing the areas of concern, but progress toward addressing and delisting these areas of concern has been very slow. Of the approximately 70 individual sites within the U.S. areas of concern, only four have been completely addressed. This is simply too slow, and the citizens of the Great Lakes basin demand that we take action to accelerate this process.

It is my hope that this legislation will set that in motion. Over the past year, my subcommittee has investigated why progress has slowed and has received several recommendations for targeted changes to the Legacy Act from stakeholders closely related with clean-up projects. H.R. 6460 encapsulates many of these recommendations, and it is intended to address the

lessons learned as implementation of the Legacy Act program has matured.

First, H.R. 6460 significantly increases the authorization of appropriations for sediment remediation projects in the areas of concern, from \$50 million to \$150 million annually through 2013. The committee strongly believes that the increase in overall authorization and appropriations for this program will accelerate the pace of clean-up of the areas of concern. With full appropriation of the authorized amounts, it is our hope to complete the clean-up of all U.S. areas of concern within the next decade.

Second, in order to facilitate better understanding of the types, nature and volume of toxic sediment at contaminated sites, H.R. 6460 authorizes the administrator to carry out a site assessment of eligible projects at Federal expense.

This authority should overcome two difficulties identified in the implementation of the Legacy Act, the lack of sufficient information on the extent of the contamination and the identification of potential non-Federal cost-share partners for subsequent phases of remediation projects.

The language in H.R. 6460 attempts to replicate the successful model of the Corps of Engineers reconnaissance studies for Great Lakes sediment remediation projects. Again, this important change should accelerate the process of identifying the scope of contamination projects and quickly move projects from the conceptual stage to planning, design and construction phases.

Third, H.R. 6460 authorizes Legacy Act funding to be utilized for the restoration of aquatic habitat, provided that this restoration activity is carried out in conjunction with a sediment clean-up project.

Oftentimes, contaminated sediment has caused harm to neighboring aquatic habitat, and it is the presence of both contaminated sediment and the degraded aquatic habitat that results in sites being deemed as impaired. By allowing the simultaneous remediation of sediment, along with corresponding aquatic habitat, the Legacy Act should accelerate the process of delisting sites.

Finally, H.R. 6460 includes language requiring the administrator to provide assurance that the Environmental Protection Agency has conducted a reasonable inquiry to identify parties that are potentially liable for sediment contamination before a site can proceed under the Legacy Act. The committee believes that this provision is consistent with the intent of the original Legacy Act, as well as the “polluter pays” principle. In addition, this provision should help maximize the leveraging potential of contributions from non-Federal sources through the identification and encouraged participation of responsible parties in remediation activities.

While some have expressed concern that this provision will require addi-

tional time, it should neither present an opportunity to excessively delay clean-up projects, nor to divert additional sites to other Federal and State clean-up authorities. In addition, EPA is encouraged to coordinate this effort with State authorities and, where appropriate, utilize existing State efforts to identify responsible parties as a basis for its responsibilities under this Act.

Again, let me congratulate Congressman EHLERS and Congressman OBERSTAR for moving this important legislation forward. It is my hope that this legislation will mark another turning point in our joint efforts to remediate the Great Lakes areas of concern, and that by the time this legislation is again ripe for reauthorization, we will be within reach of completing the task of remediating the toxic legacy of the Great Lakes' past.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Madam Speaker, I want to first commend our colleague from Michigan, Dr. VERN EHLERS, for his years of work with stakeholders from the Great Lakes to advance the Great Lakes Legacy Act.

The Great Lakes are a vital source for both the United States and Canada. The Great Lakes system provides a waterway to move goods; water supply for drinking, industrial and agricultural purposes; a source of hydroelectric power; and swimming and other recreational activities.

But the industrialization and development of the Great Lakes Basin over the past 200 years has had an adverse impact on the Great Lakes. Although safe for drinking and swimming, in many places fish caught from the Great Lakes are not safe to eat.

Lake sediments, contaminated from the history of industrialization and development in the region, are one of the primary causes of this problem. By treaty, the United States and Canada are developing clean-up plans for the Great Lakes and for specific areas of concern. The Great Lakes Legacy Act, passed in 2002, has helped citizens restore the water quality of the Great Lakes by taking action to manage contaminated sediments and to prevent further contamination.

The Great Lakes Legacy Act authorized the Environmental Protection Agency to carry out qualified sediment remediation projects and conduct research and development of innovative approaches, technologies and techniques for the remediation of contaminated sediment in the Great Lakes.

Legacy Act funding must be matched with at least a 35 percent non-Federal share, encouraging local investment. By encouraging cooperative efforts through public-private partnerships, the Great Lakes Legacy Act provided a better way to address the problem of contaminated sediments. At some sites, removing sediments will be the best way to address short and long-term risks. At other sites, the last

thing we want to do is go in and stir up contaminated sediments by dredging, causing more harm to the environment.

Obviously, how to address contaminated sediments at each Great Lakes area of concern will be very much a site-specific decision.

The Great Lakes Legacy Act does not try to presume any particular clean-up option. It simply encourages stakeholders to take action and to make sure that the action they take will make a real improvement to human health and the environment.

This legislation is strongly supported by both environmental groups and business groups in the Great Lakes region. The Great Lakes Legacy Act reflects a consensus approach to addressing sediment contamination in the Great Lakes.

While the authorization for the Great Lakes Legacy Act expires this year, I remain concerned over tripling the authorized level of spending. The Act has been funded at a level between \$22 million and \$35 million per year, far short of the current \$50 million annual authorization. In addition, the bill authorizes that habitat restoration be included as one of the authorized purposes. Unfortunately, this may mean less clean-up of contaminated sediments in the Great Lakes.

By expanding this program to cover other purposes, there will be less money for the primary purpose of getting pollution out of the water. Again, by all measures, the Great Lakes Legacy Act has been a successful program. There is some concern that we might delay ultimate clean-up by spending some of the Federal funds on activities other than sediment remediation.

Again, I want to congratulate Dr. EHLERS so much for his hard work in this area. He has been a true champion in this and for his persistence in bringing it to the floor today.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I recognize Mr. STUPAK from Michigan for 2 minutes.

Mr. STUPAK. I thank the chairwoman for yielding me time.

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 6460, the Great Lakes Legacy Reauthorization Act of 2008.

Since coming to Congress, I have made it my mission to protect and promote one of the Nation's most precious resources, the Great Lakes. I am a cosponsor of the Great Lakes Legacy Act and can speak personally on the positive impact it has had on my district.

Tannery Bay, located in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, suffered from pollution from byproducts left behind by the Northwestern Leather Company, which operated in the area from 1900 to 1958. On September, 2007, the Environmental Protection Agency, through the Great Lakes Legacy Act program, completed remediation of the Tannery Bay industrial site. In total, the clean-up removed 880,000 pounds of chromium and

more than 70 pounds of mercury from the bay and the wetland on Tannery Point.

Success stories such as these demonstrate the need for continued support for the Great Lakes Legacy Act. The Environmental Protection Agency has estimated that more than 850,000 cubic yards of contaminated sediment has been removed since 2004. However, an estimated 75 million cubic yards of contaminated sediment remain in the Great Lakes.

This legislation would reauthorize the Great Lakes Legacy Act for an additional 5 years and triple the authorized funding levels for remediation in the Great Lakes up to \$150 million per year.

I strongly support H.R. 6460 and look forward to the continued success of this program.

□ 1645

Mr. BOOZMAN. Madam Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. EHLERS).

Mr. EHLERS. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding. I also want to thank my colleague from Michigan for his kind words. He and I have worked on a number of Great Lakes issues together, and it has been a pleasure to work across the aisle on something that really benefits the people of this country.

I am very pleased today that we are taking up this bill. It is another great day for the Great Lakes. Today we renew and expand upon one of the most effective Federal environmental clean-up programs ever, the Great Lakes Legacy Act.

All of us have heard about Superfund and all of the tremendous cost overruns of that program. When we wrote this original Legacy Act some years ago, we made sure to keep the issues out of the courts, and make it a very efficient program, and that is exactly what has happened.

The Great Lakes, we all know, comprise the largest source of fresh water in the world—20 percent of the earth's total and 95 percent of the surface fresh water in the United States. The Great Lakes also provide drinking water, transportation, and recreation to millions of people. Approximately 30 million people drink the water of the Great Lakes in the United States and Canada.

However, the Great Lakes are endangered by contaminants from years of industrial pollution that have settled into the sediments of the tributaries, the rivers and streams, that flow into the lakes. These pollutants degrade the health of both humans and wildlife, and they disrupt the beneficial uses of the lakes. The longer we take to clean up these areas, the greater the likelihood that the sediment will be transported into the open waters of the Great Lakes, where cleanup is virtually impossible.

To address this problem, I introduced the original Great Lakes Legacy Act in

the 107th Congress. With bipartisan support, the Congress passed and the President signed this bill in 2002.

The Great Lakes Legacy Act authorizes the EPA to clean up contaminated sediments in designated areas of concern in the Great Lakes. These areas of concern are designated by the EPA and are defined as any ecologically degraded geographic area that requires remediation. Currently, there are 43 areas of concern throughout the Great Lakes and 31 of those are either wholly or partially located within U.S. waters.

The Great Lakes Legacy Act has made tremendous progress in cleaning up contaminated areas. Of the 31 areas of concern in U.S. waters, four remediation projects have been completed, one project is underway, and six more are currently being monitored and evaluated. Since 2004, the EPA estimates that almost 1 million cubic yards of contaminated sediments have been removed from our Great Lakes tributaries. These sediments are saturated with toxic substances such as mercury, arsenic, chromium, cadmium, polychlorinated, better known as PCBs, and lead.

However, more cleanup work remains. The U.S. Policy Committee for the Great Lakes has identified 75 remaining contaminated sites. The Great Lakes Legacy Act expires in just a few days. In order to ensure this vital cleanup continues, Congressman JIM OBERSTAR and I introduced this bill. The bill has 45 bipartisan cosponsors and passed the Transportation Infrastructure Committee by voice vote.

In order to speed up efforts, this bill triples the authorized funding level from \$50 million to \$150 million per year. If fully appropriated, this has the potential to delist all of the U.S. areas of concern within the next decade. These funds will continue to be leveraged with a 35 percent non-Federal cost share with locals, businesses, environmental groups, and so forth.

The bill also makes a limited number of changes to the original Legacy Act that were jointly recommended by involved parties, and will vastly improve the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Madam Speaker, I yield an additional 30 seconds to the gentleman.

Mr. EHLERS. The toxic pollutants from our industrial past have plagued the Great Lakes region for far too long. By voting for the Great Lakes Legacy Reauthorization Act, we can ensure that critical cleanup efforts in the Great Lakes continue.

In closing, I want to thank Chairman OBERSTAR, Chairwoman JOHNSON, Ranking Member MICA and Ranking Member BOOZMAN for all of their great work on this bill and their dedication to preserving our greatest fresh water resource.

I also want to thank staff members Ryan Seiger, Ben Webster, John Anderson and Jon Pawlow, and also Ben

Gielow on my staff. It has taken a lot of hard work, but it is a great bill and I am proud to present it. I ask all of my colleagues to join me in supporting the bill.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH).

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlelady.

As a cosponsor, I rise in support of H.R. 6460, the Great Lakes Legacy Reauthorization Act. This bill will reauthorize and expand a highly successful program designed to help address the issue of contamination in the Great Lakes. The lakes hold 20 percent of the world's fresh water and are an irreplaceable economic engine and drinking water source for our region.

As a Member of Congress representing Ohio and particularly the Cleveland area, we pride ourselves on our access to that fresh water and we know it is not only important for today, but it is also part of our future as well. So the program created by the Great Lakes Legacy Act is focused on cleaning up areas of concern, sites that are known to be contaminated with toxic chemicals. These chemicals can cause damage to the entire ecosystem as well as damage to human health. For example, in the past research has linked consumption of Great Lakes fish by pregnant women to irreversible health problems in the child. So it becomes obvious that this program which will help to clean up contamination that remains in the Great Lakes will have an appreciable impact on improving human health and will also give people confidence in the fish that they consume from the Great Lakes.

We can do better to protect our precious Great Lakes. This bill is an important step, and I urge my colleagues to support the Great Lakes Legacy Reauthorization Act.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. KIRK).

Mr. KIRK. Madam Speaker, the Outboard Marine Corporation dumped tons of PCBs directly into Waukegan Harbor, polluting it. OMC's owner, George Soros, then looted the company and left.

I joined with Congressman EHLERS and Congressman EMANUEL to address that issue. To date we have been successful in cleaning five of 31 areas of concerns. One more is underway, and seven additional harbors are under evaluation. Under this very program, more than a million pounds of polluted sediment have been removed.

This bill before the House increases environmental remediation funds, and it speeds up the cleanup. It will help us to protect the Great Lakes, the source of drinking water for over 30 million Americans. I am particularly looking forward to Waukegan's cleanup. Shortly, we will announce the full Superfund cleanup of that harbor. Under Federal law, the Federal Government will take

the lead to do its duty to remove this threat to human health. Some locals don't want the cleanup of our harbor, but they will not be able to prevent this needed environmental remediation. And when complete, it will increase Lake County property values by over \$800 million.

We still have a few more days left to fund this program under the Great Lakes Legacy Act. I hope we do because then the cleanup will be even faster.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I would like to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EMANUEL).

Mr. EMANUEL. Madam Speaker, when I was growing up near Lake Michigan in Chicago, we used to have dead fish on top of the water for the first 30 feet. You had to run through the sand, past all of the dead fish, jump in the water, hold your breath, and go about 30 feet past the dead fish. Then Congress at that time passed the Clean Water Act. After 30-plus years, there is no doubt when you look at all of the Great Lakes, like Lake Michigan in Chicago, the Clean Water Act has been a tremendous success in the Great Lakes region. Kids today swim all across the different lakes because of what this Congress and a President had done in the past.

This act is important. It has been stated here on the floor, over 30 million Americans get their daily drinking water from Lake Michigan, Lake Erie, Lake Ontario, Lake Superior, and Lake Huron. It is the largest body of fresh water in North America and represents a quarter of the world's fresh water. The water here for the future of America will be like the energy debates we are having today, and the Great Lakes and all of the States that border them are the equivalent of our Yellowstone Park, our Grand Canyon. This is our national treasure and we have treated it over the years sometimes like a pond that can just be dumped in.

This act is a small step, but the right step. It is a bipartisan step to protect for a little over 30 million Americans their daily drinking water, to give the States and cities that border this area water and a sense of investment in their future.

Brookings Institute last year did a study. They showed that for every dollar we invest, we get \$2 back of economic activity here in the Great Lakes.

This is the right thing to do. But we need to do the next step, the biggest step, build on the Clean Water Act of 30-plus years ago with a great American waterway.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman's time has expired.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. I yield the gentleman an additional minute.

Mr. EMANUEL. If we invest in our lakes and deal with the basic pollutants, that is invasive species, urban runoff and those types of pollution, we

can deal with 93 percent of the problems affecting our lakes, our fresh water.

This is the type of investment that will make sure that not only the regions and the States that border these lakes, but the entire United States, will preserve and invest in one of the most important natural resources in the coming days and years ahead, which is clean water. I am proud of this accomplishment and hope it builds momentum going forward for a Clean Water Act, act II, that invests like the last one of 30 years and takes us to the next generation of what we need to do to deal with the invasive species and deal with the urban runoff and deal with the industrial deposits left from industrial times. If we do those three things, we will have made a dramatic difference in Lake Erie, Lake Michigan, Lake Superior, Lake Huron and Lake Ontario. I am proud to be associated with this great bipartisan legislation.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Madam Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. ROGERS).

Mr. ROGERS of Michigan. Madam Speaker, I too want to congratulate Dr. Vern Ehlers of Michigan who has spent a great portion of his career in the United States Congress championing our Great Lakes. They are truly our Nation's jewel that we in the north don't think we get enough credit for helping protect. I know the Speaker understands exactly what I am talking about, being a part of that Great Lakes basin.

□ 1700

And now I think if you watch the speeches on the floor today, that the rest of America will see why we become so feisty about water diversion and invasive species and contaminants going into our Great Lakes, and why, in a bipartisan way, we stand on this floor today to celebrate what has been done, what this bill will do, and the future health of the Great Lakes for future Americans.

I too grew up in the Great Lakes region and remember the warnings of no fishing and no wall eye fishing in Lake St. Claire when I was growing up, and how devastated we were to think that you couldn't even go out and put your line in the water and take that fish home without some horrible thing happening to you.

Well, we've come a long way since then, and I think we've all gotten a lot smarter on how we protect these lakes. And it goes just beyond what is good for the Great Lakes Basin. Currently it provides water to 42 million people in America. Nearly 30 percent of the Nation's gross domestic product is produced in the Great Lakes region.

The Great Lakes States have 3.7 million registered recreational boats, a third of the Nation's total. The commercial sport and fishing industry is collectively valued at more than \$4 billion annually. Unfortunately, years of

industrial pollution have spread toxic sediments throughout the Great Lakes, and this bill directly confronts and cleans up those polluted and degraded areas.

This act has had an enormous impact on the citizens of Michigan and their communities. In Michigan alone, hundreds of thousands of pounds of dangerous contaminants have already been removed and safely disposed of. Of the 31 areas of concern in U.S. waters, four projects have already been completed, one project is underway, and six are currently being monitored and evaluated. This program is extremely workable and has been named one of the most effective Federal clean-up programs we have.

Since 2004, the EPA estimates that almost 1 million cubic yards of contaminated sediments have been removed from our Great Lakes tributaries. These sediments are filled with toxic substances such as mercury, arsenic, chromium, cadmium, polychlorinated (PCBs), and lead.

This really stands as our legacy to the next generation of Americans who will enjoy the Great Lakes, and it is an investment in the health of those Great Lakes for a prosperous, clean future of the Great Lakes basin. We have to pass this Great Lakes Legacy Act and continue the investment in the Great Lakes so that future generations will experience the lakes as we know them today.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I continue to reserve.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. MCCOTTER).

Mr. MCCOTTER. Madam Speaker, woven throughout the fabric of our lives in the Wolverine State, we in Michigan, the Midwest, and all of America must never take our Great Lakes for granted. Today, in a bipartisan moment that reflects what is both the best in us and is expected of us, we come together to ensure that we do not take them for granted.

I come to this as someone whose parents took him on vacation with my brother up to Lake Superior to see its pristine natural beauty, to watch the glow of a Michigan sunset over Lake Michigan, to fish in Lake Erie and, in a moment of rare weakness on the part of my wife, I proposed to her on the shores of Lake Huron. I won't bring up whether she regrets it or not.

I say this because, as we raise our own children and they share the same experiences with the natural beauty of the Great Lakes, we are honoring a commitment to future generations to ensure that, for the time to come, our Great Lakes remain not only the boon of our quality of life and to the vibrancy of our economy, but they remain the most visible way we in Michigan and in the Midwest in America can teach our children that we honored our duty to defend those Great Lakes and pass them on for future generations.

I thank you for the opportunity to be a part of this bipartisan legislation.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. UPTON).

Mr. UPTON. Madam Speaker, I do hail from the great State of Michigan, and I'm glad to say that my district borders one of the five Great Lakes, and I know the gentlelady from Wisconsin is equally as proud of our five Great Lakes as well.

Madam Speaker, one of my favorite guys here in the House is certainly former chairman of the Energy and Commerce Committee, JOE BARTON. And he has a statement that he says, "Don't mess with Texas."

Well, in the Midwest we have a statement as well: "Don't mess with the Great Lakes." It doesn't matter if you're a Republican or a Democrat, a Member from Wisconsin, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York, it doesn't matter. You do not mess with the Great Lakes.

We have seen, over the years, some great improvement in terms of the quality of the water in Lake Michigan and all of the Great Lakes. It is not by accident. It is because of the actions of this Congress, Republicans and Democrats working together, to make sure that we have adequate resources not only to have identified the problem, but then to come back with the clean-up.

Sadly, the Great Lakes Legacy Act, and I want to give great credit to my colleague, Dr. EHLERS from Grand Rapids, for pushing this along, it expires this year. So the work that we have done over the last number of years would have been for naught had it not been for the committee moving together, important legislation that otherwise would see this expire, literally within just a couple of weeks.

My colleagues have talked about the tens of millions of Americans that live and rely on the Great Lakes for so many different needs. This bill authorizes the appropriation of \$150 million each and every year to make sure that, in fact, we can continue to clean up the identified contaminated areas.

Now let me just relate an area that we had big time on this House floor last year. We were going to see the expansion of a refinery in Indiana, and we made sure, as a delegation—

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Can I inquire how much time we have left?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Arkansas controls 3½ remaining minutes.

Mr. BOOZMAN. I yield the gentleman 1 additional minute.

Mr. UPTON. Madam Speaker, we saw last year a major refinery that was going to be expanded in the Great Lakes, and it was going to add to the discharge into Lake Michigan. And every single member of the Great Lakes Caucus, Republican and Democrat, all around that circle, stepped in,

and we passed a resolution on this House stopping that from happening. We are proud to say that that did not happen. And that means we're going to actually save money because we're not going to have to clean it up.

But this is a bill that needs to happen. It has strong bipartisan support. I'm proud to say that we've had great progress over the last couple of years, but we're not done yet. This bill needs to happen. I commend the leadership on both sides of the aisle to make sure that it happens. And now we have to make sure that we work on the appropriators to make sure that the money continues to be there, to make sure, that, in fact, this remains a national treasure, because it is.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Madam Speaker, I want to thank our chairwoman, EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON from Texas, for her leadership in this matter, for pushing this forward. Also, our chairman, Mr. OBERSTAR, who also has been very, very active on behalf of the Great Lakes, Ranking Member MICA, and again, as Mr. EHLERS mentioned earlier, which we probably don't mention enough, for our staffs that do a very, very good job of working hard and getting these very difficult things together so that we can bring them to the floor.

I also want to congratulate Dr. EHLERS for his hard work. This has been something that he's worked so hard on for so many years, for such a long time. It really is great that we're able to bring it to the floor and vote on it.

I look forward to coming back 5 years from now when we reauthorize again and hearing about, on both sides of the aisle, in a very bipartisan way, the people that live along the lake telling the story, telling the difference that this reauthorization has made and the tremendous improvement that we're going to make over the next 5 years.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise in full support of the Great Lakes Legacy Act and express my appreciation to Mr. OBERSTAR, Dr. EHLERS, and to Mr. BOOZMAN, who provided leadership on this bill.

Mr. DINGELL. Madam Speaker, I rise today as a strong supporter and cosponsor of H.R. 6460, the Great Lakes Legacy Reauthorization Act. I want to thank my friend and colleague from Michigan, VERN EHLERS, for sponsoring this bill as well as Chairman OBERSTAR for his leadership on the bill.

The Great Lakes Legacy Act has been an incredibly successful program. In fact, the first success story from the Legacy Act is in Trenton, Michigan. Black Lagoon, as it had been named in the 1980s because of the oil and grease that had accumulated between the 1940s and the 1970s, was renamed Ellias Cove just 1 year ago after the area was remediated. Without the Great Lakes Legacy Act, the \$9.3 million cleanup would not have been possible.

Madam Speaker, the Great Lakes are a national treasure. However, to date, they have

not been treated as such. The Lakes have seen deterioration of water quality, the introduction of aquatic invasive species, and the contamination of toxic sediment, among other things. While the Great Lakes region has worked diligently over the past several decades to help clean up the Lakes, it is clear more must be done on the Federal level to implement the streamlined strategy already in place.

All of us representing Great Lakes' States were hopeful when in 2004 President Bush signed an executive order creating the Great Lakes Interagency Task Force. The task force spawned a coalition of Great Lakes' stakeholders, including local, State, and Federal Government groups, to implement a strategy over 5 years to protect and restore the Lakes. The Great Lakes Regional Collaboration, as the group is known, which consists of over 1500 stakeholders, called for \$20 billion in funding to implement its recommendations. Unfortunately, the administration's Interagency Task Force, in its annual report, recommended that the strategy be funded from existing programs. Madam Speaker, such a recommendation demonstrates how out of touch the Bush administration is when it comes to the resources and major efforts needed to restore the Great Lakes.

So far, the Bush administration has paid quite a bit of lip service to restoring and protecting the Great Lakes, but that is where its commitment to the Lakes has ended. I am reminded of that commercial from the 1980s—"Where's the beef?" We all know what it is going to restore and protect the Lakes—money. Unfortunately, the President has not put his money where his mouth is and made the Great Lakes a real priority. The Great Lakes continue to be plagued by toxic pollutants that contaminate the sediment which can cause health problems for both wildlife and humans. That is why the House must act to reauthorize the Great Lakes Legacy Act by passing H.R. 6460. This legislation triples authorized funding from \$50 million to \$150 million per year for the next 5 years for cleanup of the nearly 40 degraded sites within the Great Lakes basin identified as Areas of Concern. In addition, this bill reauthorizes a non-Federal 35 percent match of Federal dollars invested into restoration efforts as well as \$5 billion over 5 years for development of more effective clean up technologies, saving money in the long-run.

The past 8 years brought the Great Lakes little but empty promises from the Bush administration. Not only must we pass H.R. 6460 today, but we must also implement more of the recommendations of the Regional Strategy. I look forward to working with a new President—hopefully one from the Great Lakes region—who understands the importance of the Lakes and will do more than pay them just lip service.

Again, I ask my colleagues to join me in passing H.R. 6460.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 6460, the Great Lakes Legacy Reauthorization Act of 2008.

This legislation is designed to address the toxic legacy of the Great Lakes' industrial past that is currently putting residents of the Great Lakes region in harms way. Residents of the region have long been waiting for the remediation of these contaminated sites and it is the responsibility of this Congress to ensure that they do not wait any longer.

The history of the Great Lakes' region has largely been defined by the industrial successes of its past. For more than 2 centuries, the Lakes have provided residents of the region with sources of power and abundant natural resources, as well as transportation for the residents and manufactured goods of the basin. The Lakes have served as a catalyst that brought about growth and economic prosperity to not only the region, but also to the country as a whole.

The growth and expansion of the region's commerce and economy, however, did not come about without negative consequences. Along with it came unrestrained pollution of the Great Lakes watershed. Sadly, for the most part, this contamination remains today and continues to affect the region's residents.

In 2002, Congress enacted the Great Lakes Legacy Act to remediate contaminated sediments in the Great Lakes' areas of concern. This Act brought attention and awareness to the areas of concern, and also provided much needed funding for remediation sites.

This Congress has been tasked with reauthorizing the Act, but has also been afforded the opportunity to address the shortfalls of the initial legislation. For instance, during a hearing before the Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment, many Members from the Great Lakes region expressed concern with the pace of cleanup of areas of concern.

In our view, the delay is the result of an incomplete knowledge of the contamination present at sites within the areas of concern, as well as a lack of funding to address the 70 different contaminated sediment sites with the U.S. areas of concern.

Madam Speaker, for far too long, residents of the Great Lakes region have been waiting for cleanup of these toxics sites.

H.R. 6460, the Great Lakes Legacy Reauthorization Act of 2008, will accelerate remediation of the areas of concern. It is my hope that this legislation will advance the pace of cleanup of contaminated sites in the Great Lakes and also ensure that parties responsible for the contamination are held liable.

Madam Speaker, I applaud the efforts of my Committee colleague, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. EHLERS), for his unremitting work during the 107th Congress on the passage of the initial Great Lakes Legacy Act, as well as for his work on this important legislation that the House considers today.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 6460, the "Great Lakes Legacy Reauthorization Act of 2008".

I insert in the RECORD an exchange of letters between the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and the Committee on Science and Technology.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE,

Washington, DC, September 4, 2008.

HON. BART GORDON,

Chairman, Committee on Science and Technology, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN GORDON: I write to you regarding H.R. 6460, the Great Lakes Legacy Reauthorization Act of 2008.

I appreciate your willingness to waive rights to further consideration of H.R. 6460, notwithstanding the jurisdictional interest of the Committee on Science and Technology. Of course, this waiver does not prejudice any further jurisdictional claims by your Committee over this or similar legisla-

tion. Furthermore, I agree to support your request for appointment of conferees from the Committee on Science and Technology if a conference is held on this matter.

This exchange of letters will be placed in the Committee Report on H.R. 6460 and inserted in the Congressional Record as part of the consideration of this legislation in the House. Thank you for the cooperative spirit in which you have worked regarding this matter and others between our respective committees.

I look forward to working with you as we prepare to pass this important legislation.

Sincerely,

JAMES L. OBERSTAR,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY,

Washington, D.C., September 4, 2008.

HON. JAMES L. OBERSTAR,

Chairman, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN OBERSTAR: Thank you for your letter regarding H.R. 6460, the Great Lakes Legacy Reauthorization Act of 2008. This legislation was initially referred to both the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and the Committee on Science and Technology.

H.R. 6460 was marked up by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure on July 31, 2008. I recognize and appreciate your desire to bring this legislation before the House in an expeditious manner, and, accordingly, I will waive further consideration of this bill in Committee. However, agreeing to waive consideration of this bill should not be construed as the Committee on Science and Technology waiving its jurisdiction over H.R. 6460.

Further, I request your support for the appointment of Science and Technology Committee conferees during any House-Senate conference convened on this legislation. I also ask that a copy of this letter and your response be placed in the legislative report on H.R. 6460 and the Congressional Record during consideration of this bill.

I look forward to working with you as we prepare to pass this important legislation.

Sincerely,

BART GORDON,
Chairman.

Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join my colleagues from both sides of the aisle today in expressing my support for H.R. 6460, the Great Lakes Legacy Reauthorization Act of 2008.

Although progress has been reported in reducing the discharge of toxic and persistent chemicals into the Great Lakes, high concentrations of contaminants still remain at the bottom of a number of rivers and harbors in the region and continue to pose a risk to aquatic life, wildlife, and humans.

Although many of these chemicals have been banned for a number of years, after decades of industrial and municipal discharges and urban agricultural runoff, they continue to plague our region's water and without continued and strong federal support, I am concerned they may remain long after many of us and our grandchildren are no longer.

The areas targeted by the Legacy Act funding are plagued by chemicals that are known to cause adverse health effects in animals and humans, which do not break down easily, and which tend to persist in the environment and to accumulate in aquatic life, animals and human tissues.

It is not a problem with an easy solution. But we know that the Great Lakes Legacy Act

is part of the solution. Not only has it helped states in the region deal with this insidious threat but it also recognizes and affirms that the continuing protection of the Great Lakes is and must remain a national priority.

Although it has never been funded at its authorized level of \$50 billion a year, the Legacy Act has contributed to a number of projects to remove polluted sediments from these waters and protect the water quality of the Great Lakes as well as the millions of Americans who reside near, recreate in, or depend on the Lakes for their drinking water.

One of the areas of concerns targeted by the Legacy Act is the Milwaukee Estuary in my district which includes the lower portions of several rivers (the Milwaukee River, Menomonee River, and Kinnickinnic Rivers) and the inner and outer areas of the Milwaukee harbor and nearshore waters of Lake Michigan.

The rivers that flow through the area were for decades filled with toxic contaminants such as PCBs (polychlorinated biphenylhydrocarbons), PAHs (polychlorinated biphenyls and polyaromatic hydrocarbons), and industrial heavy metals.

Recently, the EPA and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources announced that they will soon begin a \$22 million cleanup project to remove contaminated sediment from the Kinnickinnic River using Great Lakes Act funding (\$14 million).

The project would remove about 170,000 cubic yards of sediment contaminated with PCBs and PAHs and is expected to be completed in Late 2009.

The project's successful completion will mean the removal of about 1,200 pounds of harmful PCBs and 13,000 pounds of PAHs and lead to the reduction of contaminated sediment being transported downstream to Lake Michigan. It will also improve the habitat for fish and wildlife that live in or near the river, while increasing recreational and commercial boating use of the river by the public, uses that have been strictly discouraged if not prohibited for a number of years.

Even as this project moves forward in my district, I know that many more are needed and remain on the drawing board for possible action and funding.

According to one estimate, seven projects being reviewed for possible funding under the Legacy Act would have a projected cost of about \$85 million. The Legacy Act received \$35 million in FY 2008 and this grant program is currently authorized at \$50 million.

It is clear that the funding needs far outweigh the funding available. Given the high costs of these important projects, it is important that the federal government step up to the plate. This legislation before us does just that as it would triple the authorized levels of funding for Great Lakes Legacy Act programs.

Great Lakes communities have long taken pride in protecting our region's greatest natural resources. That pride has been matched by financial commitment. A study earlier this year by the Great Lakes and Saint Lawrence Cities initiatives estimated that local governments in the U.S. and Canada invest over \$15 billion annually to protect the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River basin ecosystem.

It is important that the federal government continue to show its commitment to this region as well. The strong reauthorizing legislation before us today would help keep that commit-

ment and help mitigate the risk to the Great Lakes posed by toxic pollutants.

This program has and continues to enjoy strong support from elected officials in the Great Lakes states, the business community, environmental groups, and local communities affected by the legacy of contamination.

As a cosponsor of this bill and a strong supporter of efforts to protect the Great Lakes, I urge my colleagues to vote yes on this important bill.

Mrs. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. I have no additional speakers, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 6460, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Madam Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

VERITAS TELESCOPE RELOCATION

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the Senate joint resolution (S.J. Res. 35) to amend Public Law 108-331 to provide for the construction and related activities in support of the Very Energetic Radiation Imaging Telescope Array System (VERITAS) project in Arizona.

The Clerk read the title of the Senate joint resolution.

The text of the Senate joint resolution is as follows:

S.J. RES. 35

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. LOCATION OF VERITAS PROJECT.

Public Law 108-331 (118 Stat. 1281) is amended—

(1) in the long title, by striking "on Kitt Peak near Tucson, Arizona" and inserting "in Arizona"; and

(2) in section 1, by striking "on Kitt Peak near Tucson, Arizona" and inserting "at the Fred Lawrence Whipple Observatory Base Camp on Mount Hopkins, Arizona, or other similar location".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON) and the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GRAVES) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I ask unani-

mous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and add any extraneous materials to S.J. Res. 35.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of S.J. Res. 35, which amends Public Law 108-331. This public law provided for the construction and location and related activities in support of the VERITAS project in Arizona.

Madam Speaker, this Senate resolution amends this law by identifying another location for the VERITAS project. S.J. Res. 35 authorizes the Smithsonian to relocate the telescope to Fred Lawrence Whipple Observatory Base Camp on Mount Hopkins, Arizona, from the original site at Kitt Peak, Arizona. This is a simple but necessary change, and I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of Senate Joint Resolution 35 that would amend Public Law 108-331 to provide for the Smithsonian Institution's construction of certain facilities in support of the Very Energetic Radiation Imaging Telescope Array System, or VERITAS.

The VERITAS project is a collaboration with the National Science Foundation and the Department of Energy as the lead agencies. Universities in the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada and Ireland are participants in this work.

The goal of the VERITAS project is to increase our ability to view gamma-ray radiation in space.

□ 1715

Studying gamma ray radiation from objects like exploding stars and black holes will help increase our scientific understanding of the universe. In 1968, the first telescope was created to observe this gamma ray radiation. VERITAS significantly enhances this technology.

In 2004, Congress authorized the Smithsonian to construct a control building to support the VERITAS project. The control building would include space for computers, technical equipment, and other facilities for researchers to carry out their work with the new telescopes.

The original legislation authorized the control building to be built in Kitt Peak, Arizona, where the VERITAS project was expected to be located. Site and construction preparation began in Kitt Peak in 2004 on land leased to the U.S. Government by a local Indian tribe. Unfortunately, in 2005, the