

project was halted when a lawsuit was brought and the National Science Foundation issued a stop work order.

As a result, the NSF and the DOE began to undertake new environmental assessments of the Kitt Peak site and, in 2005, started initial work on the VERITAS telescopes 35 miles away at the Fred Lawrence Base Camp in Mount Hopkins, Arizona. The plan was to move the telescopes to Kitt Peak following completion of the necessary assessments.

However, the assessment process continued into 2007 and there were concerns about missing windows of opportunities for joint work planned with NASA's gamma ray telescope satellite.

In light of this, the VERITAS team sought and received approval from the United States Forest Service to test the telescopes at the Whipple Base Camp. The testing revealed that the Whipple location produced results comparable with those they expected at Kitt Peak. As a result, the collaborative partners agreed that the VERITAS project should remain at the Whipple Base Camp.

The legislation enacted in 2004 authorized the construction of a control building by the Smithsonian for the project; however, it specified Kitt Peak, Arizona, as the project location.

The Senate resolution today would amend that law to authorize the construction of the control building at the Whipple Base Camp in Mount Hopkins, Arizona, where the VERITAS project is now located.

This resolution does not authorize any additional funds for the project. The resolution simply authorizes the change in the location of the project at no additional cost.

I urge my colleagues to support the bill.

If the gentlelady does not have any further speakers, Madam Speaker, I would go ahead then and yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of S.J. Res. 35, which amends 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. Public Law 108–331 was passed in October 2004 during the 108th Congress.

This joint resolution authorizes the Smithsonian Institution to permanently locate the telescope at the Fred Lawrence Whipple Observatory Base Camp on Mount Hopkins, Arizona, which is approximately 35 miles from the original site, Kitt Peak's Horseshoe Canyon. The Smithsonian Institution has set up the telescope at this site on an interim basis and the VERITAS Science Consortium and Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory request that the VERITAS telescope remain at the Whipple Observatory for the rest of its scientific life. As a result, the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution requests an amendment to Public Law 108331 to authorize the Board to locate the VERITAS telescope at Fred Lawrence Whipple Observatory Base Camp on Mount Hopkins, Arizona, or other similar location.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting S.J. Res. 35.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I just urge support and 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 agree to the Senate joint resolution, S.J. Res. 35.

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.

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION FACILITIES AUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2008

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 6627) to authorize the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution to carry out certain construction projects, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 6627

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 “Smithsonian Institution Facilities Authorization Act of 2008”.

SEC. 2. LABORATORY AND SUPPORT SPACE, EDGEWATER, MARYLAND.

(a) AUTHORITY TO DESIGN AND CONSTRUCT.—The Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution is authorized to design and construct laboratory and support space to accommodate the Mathias Laboratory at the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center in Edgewater, Maryland.

(b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section a total of \$41,000,000 for fiscal years 2009 through 2011. Such sums shall remain available until expended.

SEC. 3. LABORATORY SPACE, GAMBOA, PANAMA.

(a) AUTHORITY TO CONSTRUCT.—The Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution is authorized to construct laboratory space to accommodate the terrestrial research program of the Smithsonian tropical research institute in Gamboa, Panama.

(b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section a total of \$14,000,000 for fiscal years 2009 and 2010. Such sums shall remain available until expended.

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 unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and add any extraneous material on H.R. 6627.

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 strong support of H.R. 6627, the Smithsonian Facilities Authorization Act of 2008. This bill has bipartisan support, including support from Congresswoman MATSUI, Congressman BECERRA, and Congressman JOHNSON, who are Smithsonian regents. Majority Leader HOYER and Ranking Member MICA are also in support of authorizing construction funding of these two renowned and vital Smithsonian facilities.

The Mathias Research Center located in Edgewater, Maryland, is a global leader in the study of ecosystems in coastal zones. It was established in the 1930s on a dairy farm in Edgewater, Maryland. Nearly one-half of SERC's 146 employees and fellows conduct the majority of their work in trailers. A major part of SERC's mission is research and professional training of the next generation of environmental scientists.

The Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution requested authority to design and construct laboratory space to accommodate the Mathias Laboratory at SERC.

The Board requested authority to upgrade and replace the facility to eliminate unsafe trailers and address substandard, inefficient labs. The facility and its support spaces need to be replaced.

The Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute, located in Mathias Research Center, Panama, is the principal United States organization devoted to research in tropical biology which will advance scientific study and improve human welfare. Ecological catastrophes such as drought, starvation, and flooding caused by deforestation and overpopulation of tropical regions are studied for causes and remedies.

This facility is a world-renowned research and education center dedicated to research and analysis of tropical ecosystems. The Board of Regents requested authority to replace current science building structure that is heavily infested with termites.

I support these projects and the Board of Regents' request for construction authorization.

I urge passage.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Madam Speaker, H.R. 6627 authorizes construction of permanent structures to serve as Smithsonian research facilities in Edgewater, Maryland, and Gamboa, Panama. The new buildings will replace aging leased and temporary structure, and provide needed research space for the Smithsonian's research mission.

As part of a comprehensive facilities management plan, the Smithsonian has identified these two research centers as facilities in need of permanent, modern research buildings. The construction of the laboratories authorized by this bill will enable the Smithsonian to reduce its leased space inventory and consolidate its research operations. This will also allow the Smithsonian to close 80-year-old buildings that are costly to operate and not suitable for renovation.

Construction of new facilities in Gamboa will allow the Smithsonian to move out of general office space reconfigured for research and consolidate operations into a government-owned structure more appropriate and less costly for a modern research facility.

The Edgewater, Maryland, research facility will finally have permanent structures after working for many years out of temporary trailers. These trailers are expensive to maintain, and have a short, useful life.

Because the new buildings will be government-owned and cost less to operate and maintain, this legislation is expected to save money in the long term. The new facilities will be designed to meet the specific needs of the research centers.

Government ownership of the structures will save taxpayer dollars by investing in assets that will continue to serve the Smithsonian Institution over time. The dilapidated buildings and trailers currently used consume building maintenance resources and are a liability to the government rather than an asset. Replacement of the old buildings will allow us to shift dollars from maintaining aging structures to creating modern, useful facilities.

I am encouraged by the Smithsonian's responsible property management decisions in these two cases, and I ask my colleagues to please join me in supporting H.R. 6627.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 6627, the "Smithsonian Facilities Authorization Act of 2008".

H.R. 6627 authorizes the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution to design and construct laboratory space to accommodate the Mathias Laboratory at the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center ("SERC") in Edgewater, Maryland. The bill also authorizes the Board of Regents to construct laboratory space to accommodate the terrestrial research program of the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute ("STRI") in Gamboa, Panama.

The SERC is a global leader in the study of ecosystems in coastal zones. Founded on the site of an abandoned 1930s dairy farm in Edgewater, Maryland, the SERC facilities include farm buildings, the Mathias Laboratory, 10 temporary trailers, an administrative build-

ing, and a variety of lab support spaces. Nearly one-half of SERC's 146 employees and fellows conduct the majority of their work in trailers. A major part of SERC's mission is to conduct research and professional training of the next generation of environmental scientists.

The Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution requested authority to design and construct laboratory space to accommodate the Mathias Laboratory at SERC. The Board requested authority to upgrade and replace the facility to eliminate unsafe trailers and address substandard, inefficient labs. The facility and its support spaces need to be replaced. The bill authorizes a total of \$41 million for fiscal years 2009 through 2011 to design and construct the Mathias Laboratory.

The Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute is located in Gamboa, Panama. STRI is the principal United States organization devoted to research in tropical biology. Both scientific advancement and human welfare depend on a continuing commitment to research in tropical biology for such things as finding untapped tropical resources to add to the important supply of food, pharmaceuticals, and fiber that we already get from the tropics, and to give us a better understanding of how to avoid further ecological catastrophes such as drought, starvation, and flooding caused by deforestation and overpopulation of tropical regions.

The STRI facility is a world-renowned research and education center dedicated to research and analysis of tropical ecosystems. The Board of Regents requested authority to replace current science building structure that is heavily infested with termites. The bill authorizes a total of \$14 million for fiscal years 2009 and 2010 to construct the laboratory.

Madam Speaker, over the past two years, the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution has worked to address numerous management shortfalls. I look forward to working with the Board of Regents and the new Secretary of the Smithsonian, Secretary G. Wayne Clough, as we continue to work together to improve the Smithsonian's management practices and carry out James Smithson's mandate of 1826: "for the increase and diffusion of knowledge among men."

I thank Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure Ranking Member MICA, Subcommittee Chairwoman NORTON, Committee on House Administration Chairman BRADY and Ranking Member EHLERS, the Smithsonian Congressional Regents, Mr. BECERRA, Ms. MATSUI, and Mr. JOHNSON of Texas, and Majority Leader HOYER for their support in authorizing construction funding of these two vital Smithsonian facilities.

I strongly urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 6627, the "Smithsonian Institution Facilities Authorization Act of 2008".

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

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of the act to replace these two facilities, 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. 6627.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the

rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on motions to suspend the rules previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

H. Res. 1335, de novo;

S. 2339, de novo;

H.R. 1594, de novo.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. Remaining electronic votes will be conducted as 5-minute votes.

CELEBRATING THE 120-YEAR PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND STATE VETERANS HOMES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the question on suspending the rules and agreeing to the resolution, H. Res. 1335.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 1335.

The question was taken.

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

Mrs. CAPITO. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 411, nays 0, not voting 22, as follows:

[Roll No. 602]

YEAS—411

Abercrombie	Bonner	Carter
Ackerman	Bono Mack	Castle
Aderholt	Boozman	Castor
Akin	Boren	Cazayoux
Alexander	Boswell	Chabot
Allen	Boucher	Chandler
Altmire	Boustany	Childers
Andrews	Boyd (FL)	Clarke
Arcuri	Boyda (KS)	Clay
Bachmann	Brady (PA)	Cleaver
Bachus	Braley (IA)	Clyburn
Baird	Brown (GA)	Coble
Baldwin	Brown (SC)	Cohen
Barrett (SC)	Brown, Corrine	Cole (OK)
Barrow	Brown-Waite,	Conaway
Bartlett (MD)	Ginny	Cooper
Barton (TX)	Buchanan	Costa
Bean	Burgess	Costello
Becerra	Burton (IN)	Courtney
Berkley	Butterfield	Cramer
Berman	Buyer	Crenshaw
Berry	Calvert	Crowley
Biggert	Camp (MI)	Cuellar
Bilbray	Campbell (CA)	Culberson
Bilirakis	Cantor	Cummings
Bishop (GA)	Capito	Davis (AL)
Bishop (NY)	Capps	Davis (CA)
Bishop (UT)	Capuano	Davis (IL)
Blackburn	Cardoza	Davis (KY)
Blumenauer	Carnahan	Davis, David
Blunt	Carney	Davis, Lincoln
Boehner	Carson	Davis, Tom