

most important things about National Engineers Week is the inspiration that we are looking to provide.

I remember when I was a kid growing up in Chicago, I was always fascinated by the way things work, especially mechanical things. I remember with my high school calculus and physics teachers, Father Thul and Father Fergus, they were the ones who really helped mold this childhood fascination into an interest in engineering. And I have seen a lot of the work that is done in National Engineers Week to try to provide this inspiration for students who are out there today.

I think this is very critical, as we face so many problems going into the future with energy, that we try and take care of global warming and so many other issues that we face. We need to have more engineers in this country to help us solve these problems. National Engineers Week is a great place to help provide inspiration so we have more engineers. And this resolution provides some more inspiration out there, hopefully, for some students who are watching this, listening to this, reading this later on, that we do need more engineers. I want to encourage that.

I ask my colleagues to vote in support of H. Res. 917.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I would like to express my support for H. Res. 917, supporting the goals and ideals of National Engineers Week.

Engineers are important to Texas.

The petrochemical, space, high-tech and transportation industries are integral to Texans' livelihoods.

In fact, Texas ranks first in the nation in industries such as petrochemical, computer, and organic chemical manufacturing. Engineers have contributed to that success.

As a Member of the House Committee on Science and Technology, I am glad to see my colleague, Mr. Lipinski, offer this resolution. It is important to acknowledge engineers for the valuable work that they do. The Texas Society of Professional Engineers works to foster a diverse and skilled workforce.

I want to commend the Society for its work to empower students by educating them about careers in engineering, providing materials for use in classrooms, participating in after-school programs, disseminating scholarship information, and holding math and science competitions.

I would also like to thank the Chairman of the House Committee on Science and Technology, Chairman GORDON, for his leadership on issues of national competitiveness.

I support this resolution and urge my colleagues to support it also.

Mr. MCNERNEY. Madam Speaker, I am proud to support H. Res. 917, and I thank my colleague Mr. LIPINSKI for introducing this resolution. As a mathematician who spent much of my career working as a renewable energy engineer, I am particularly honored to advocate for the passage of this legislation. H. Res. 917 supports the goals and ideals of National Engineers Week, a valuable opportunity to recognize the importance of the work engineers perform.

Engineers are responsible for many of the vital technological breakthroughs that improve

the quality of life for Americans and people around the globe. American engineers and businesses lead the world in innovation, but unfortunately we are no longer producing as many engineers as our international competitors. Without a sustained national effort to train a new generation of engineers, our country is at risk of losing our competitive edge.

I am proud of the work of the 110th Congress to reinvest in the science, technology, engineering, and math education programs that will train the next generation of American engineers. In addition, the America COMPETES Act, which was passed last summer, is a signature bipartisan achievement that marks a major milestone for science, technology, engineering, and math education in our country. More work remains to be done, however, and I hope all of my colleagues will join me in a bipartisan effort to support engineering in America.

I would like to thank my colleagues again for their support of H. Res. 917, and I look forward to watching as American engineering continues to thrive.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LIPINSKI) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 917. 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. AKIN. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

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.

NATIONAL OCEAN EXPLORATION PROGRAM ACT

Mr. LIPINSKI. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1834) to authorize the national ocean exploration program and the national undersea research program within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1834

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

TITLE I—NATIONAL OCEAN EXPLORATION PROGRAM

SECTION 101. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the "National Ocean Exploration Program Act".

SEC. 102. AUTHORIZATION.

The Secretary of Commerce, through the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, shall, in consultation with the National Science Foundation and other appropriate Federal agencies, conduct a coordinated national ocean exploration program within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration that promotes collaboration with existing programs of the Administration, including those authorized in title II.

SEC. 103. AUTHORITIES.

In carrying out the program authorized under section 102, the Administrator of the National

Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (in this title referred to as the "Administrator") shall—

(1) conduct interdisciplinary voyages or other scientific activities of discovery in conjunction with other Federal agencies or academic or educational institutions, to explore and survey little known areas of the marine environment, inventory, observe, and assess living and nonliving marine resources, and report such findings;

(2) give priority attention to deep ocean regions, with a focus on deep water marine systems that hold potential for important scientific discoveries, such as hydrothermal vent communities and seamounts;

(3) conduct scientific voyages to locate, define, and document historic shipwrecks, submerged sites, and other ocean exploration activities that combine archaeology and oceanographic sciences;

(4) develop and implement, in consultation with the National Science Foundation, a transparent process for merit-based peer-review and approval of proposals for activities to be conducted under this program;

(5) enhance the technical capability of the United States marine science community by promoting the development of improved oceanographic research, communication, navigation, and data collection systems, as well as underwater platforms and sensors and autonomous vehicles;

(6) accept donations of property, data, and equipment to be applied for the purpose of exploring the oceans or increasing knowledge of the oceans; and

(7) establish an ocean exploration forum to encourage partnerships and promote communication among experts and other stakeholders in order to enhance the scientific and technical expertise and relevance of the national program.

SEC. 104. OCEAN EXPLORATION ADVISORY BOARD.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Administrator shall appoint an Ocean Exploration Advisory Board, or utilize an existing panel, composed of experts in relevant fields to—

(1) advise the Administrator on priority areas for survey and discovery;

(2) assist the program in the development of a five-year strategic plan for the fields of exploration, discovery, and science;

(3) annually review the quality and effectiveness of the proposal review process established under section 103(4); and

(4) provide other assistance and advice as requested by the Administrator.

(b) FEDERAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ACT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) shall not apply to the Ocean Exploration Advisory Board.

(2) COMPLIANCE.—Notwithstanding paragraph (1), the Ocean Exploration Advisory Board shall be appointed and operate in a manner consistent with all provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act with respect to—

(A) the balance of membership and expertise;

(B) provisions of public notice regarding activities of the Ocean Exploration Advisory Board;

(C) open meetings; and

(D) public access to documents created by the Ocean Exploration Advisory Board.

(c) UTILIZATION OF EXISTING PANEL.—If the Administrator utilizes an existing panel to fulfill the requirements of this section, the membership of that panel must include relevant experts in the fields specified in subsection (a)(2).

SEC. 105. APPLICATION WITH OUTER CONTINENTAL SHELF LANDS ACT.

Nothing in this title or title II supersedes, or limits the authority of the Secretary of the Interior under, the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act (43 U.S.C. 1331 et seq.).

SEC. 106. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

There are authorized to be appropriated to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to carry out this title—

- (1) \$30,500,000 for fiscal year 2008;
- (2) \$33,550,000 for fiscal year 2009;
- (3) \$36,905,000 for fiscal year 2010;
- (4) \$40,596,000 for fiscal year 2011;
- (5) \$44,655,000 for fiscal year 2012;
- (6) \$49,121,000 for fiscal year 2013;
- (7) \$54,033,000 for fiscal year 2014;
- (8) \$59,436,000 for fiscal year 2015;
- (9) \$65,379,000 for fiscal year 2016; and
- (10) \$71,917,000 for fiscal year 2017.

TITLE II—UNDERSEA RESEARCH PROGRAM

SEC. 201. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the “National Undersea Research Program Act of 2007”.

SEC. 202. AUTHORIZATION.

The Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration shall conduct an undersea research program and shall designate a Director of that program.

SEC. 203. PURPOSE.

The purpose of the program authorized under section 202 is to increase scientific knowledge essential for the informed management, use, and preservation of oceanic, coastal, and large lake resources through undersea research, exploration, education, and technology development. The program shall be part of National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s undersea research, education, and technology development efforts, and shall make available the infrastructure and expertise to service the undersea science and technology needs of the academic community and marine industry.

SEC. 204. PROGRAM.

The program authorized under section 202 shall be conducted through a national headquarters, a network of extramural regional undersea research centers that represent all relevant National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration regions, and a national technology institute. Overall direction of the program will be provided by the program director in coordination with a Council of Center Directors comprised of the directors of the extramural regional centers and the National Institute for Undersea Science and Technology.

SEC. 205. REGIONAL CENTERS AND INSTITUTE.

(a) **PROGRAMS.**—The following research, exploration, education, and technology programs shall be conducted through the network of extramural regional centers and the National Institute for Undersea Science and Technology:

(1) Core research and exploration based on national and regional undersea research priorities.

(2) Advanced undersea technology development to support the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s research mission and programs.

(3) Development, testing, and transition of advanced undersea technology associated with ocean observatories, submersibles, advanced diving technologies, remotely operated vehicles, autonomous underwater vehicles, and new sampling and sensing technologies such as LEO-15, Pisces, and the Aquarius habitat.

(4) Undersea science-based education and outreach programs to enrich ocean science education and public awareness of the oceans and Great Lakes.

(5) Discovery, study, and development of natural products from ocean and aquatic systems.

(b) **OPERATIONS.**—Operation of the extramural regional centers and the National Institute for Undersea Science and Technology shall leverage partnerships and cooperative research with academia and private industry.

SEC. 206. COMPETITIVENESS.

Except for a small discretionary fund for rapid response activities, for which no more than 10 percent of the program budget shall be set aside, and for National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration-related service projects, the external projects supported by the regional centers shall be managed using an open and

competitive process to evaluate scientific merit, relevance to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, regional and national research priorities, and technical feasibility.

SEC. 207. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

There are authorized to be appropriated to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to carry out this title—

- (1) \$17,500,000 for fiscal year 2008;
- (2) \$19,500,000 for fiscal year 2009;
- (3) \$21,500,000 for fiscal year 2010;
- (4) \$23,500,000 for fiscal year 2011;
- (5) \$25,500,000 for fiscal year 2012;
- (6) \$27,500,000 for fiscal year 2013;
- (7) \$29,500,000 for fiscal year 2014;
- (8) \$31,500,000 for fiscal year 2015;
- (9) \$33,500,000 for fiscal year 2016; and
- (10) \$35,500,000 for fiscal year 2017.

TITLE III—INTERAGENCY FINANCING, PLANNING, AND COORDINATION

SEC. 301. INTERAGENCY FINANCING.

The Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the National Science Foundation, the Department of the Navy, and other Federal agencies involved in the programs authorized under title I and II, may participate in interagency financing and share, transfer, receive, and spend funds appropriated to any Federal participant in the program for the purposes of carrying out any administrative or programmatic project or activity under the program. Funds may be transferred among such departments and agencies through an appropriate instrument that specifies the goods, services, or space being acquired from another Federal participant and the costs thereof.

SEC. 302. OCEAN EXPLORATION AND UNDERSEA RESEARCH TECHNOLOGY AND INFRASTRUCTURE TASK FORCE.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, in coordination with the National Science Foundation, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the United States Geological Survey, the Department of the Navy, the Mineral Management Service, and relevant governmental, nongovernmental, academic, industry, and other experts, shall convene an ocean exploration and undersea research technology and infrastructure task force, or utilize an existing panel, to develop and implement a strategy—

(1) to facilitate transfer of new exploration and undersea research technology to the programs authorized under titles I and II of this Act;

(2) to improve availability of communications infrastructure, including satellite capabilities, to the program;

(3) to develop an integrated, workable, and comprehensive data management information processing system that will make information on unique and significant features obtained by the program available for research and management purposes;

(4) to conduct public outreach activities that improve the public understanding of ocean science, resources, and processes, in conjunction with relevant programs of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the National Science Foundation, and other agencies; and

(5) to encourage cost-sharing partnerships with governmental and nongovernmental entities that will assist in transferring exploration technology and technical expertise to the program.

(b) **UTILIZATION OF EXISTING PANEL.**—If the Administrator utilizes an existing panel to fulfill the requirements of this section, the membership of that panel must include representative of all the agencies and other interests specified in subsection (a).

TITLE I—NATIONAL OCEAN EXPLORATION PROGRAM

SEC. 101. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the “National Ocean Exploration Program Act”.

SEC. 102. AUTHORIZATION.

The Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration shall, in consultation with the National Science Foundation and other appropriate Federal agencies, conduct a coordinated national ocean exploration program within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration that promotes collaboration with other Federal ocean and undersea research and exploration programs. To the extent appropriate, the Administrator shall seek to facilitate coordination of data and information management systems, outreach and education programs to improve public understanding of ocean and coastal resources, and development and transfer of technologies to facilitate ocean and undersea research and exploration.

SEC. 103. AUTHORITIES.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—In carrying out the program authorized under section 102, the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (in this title referred to as the “Administrator”) shall—

(1) conduct interdisciplinary voyages or other scientific activities of discovery in conjunction with other Federal agencies or academic or educational institutions, to explore and survey little known areas of the marine environment, inventory, observe, and assess living and nonliving marine resources, and report such findings;

(2) give priority attention to deep ocean regions, with a focus on deep water marine systems that hold potential for important scientific discoveries, such as hydrothermal vent communities and seamounts;

(3) conduct scientific voyages to locate, define, and document historic shipwrecks, submerged sites, and other ocean exploration activities that combine archaeology and oceanographic sciences;

(4) develop and implement, in consultation with the National Science Foundation, a transparent, competitive process for merit-based peer-review and approval of proposals for activities to be conducted under this program, taking into consideration advice of the Board established under section 104;

(5) enhance the technical capability of the United States marine science community by promoting the development of improved oceanographic research, communication, navigation, and data collection systems, as well as underwater platforms and sensors and autonomous vehicles; and

(6) establish an ocean exploration forum to encourage partnerships and promote communication among experts and other stakeholders in order to enhance the scientific and technical expertise and relevance of the national program.

(b) **DONATIONS.**—In carrying out the program authorized under section 102, the Administrator may accept donations of property, data, and equipment to be applied for the purpose of exploring the oceans or increasing knowledge of the oceans.

SEC. 104. OCEAN EXPLORATION ADVISORY BOARD.

(a) **ESTABLISHMENT.**—The Administrator shall appoint an Ocean Exploration Advisory Board composed of experts in relevant fields to—

(1) advise the Administrator on priority areas for survey and discovery;

(2) assist the program in the development of a five-year strategic plan for the fields of ocean, marine, and Great Lakes exploration, discovery, and science;

(3) annually review the quality and effectiveness of the proposal review process established under section 103(4); and

(4) provide other assistance and advice as requested by the Administrator.

(b) FEDERAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ACT.—Section 14 of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) shall not apply to the Board appointed under subsection (a).

SEC. 105. APPLICATION WITH OUTER CONTINENTAL SHELF LANDS ACT.

Nothing in this Act supersedes, or limits the authority of the Secretary of the Interior under the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act (43 U.S.C. 1331 et seq.).

SEC. 106. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

There are authorized to be appropriated to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to carry out this title—

- (1) \$30,500,000 for fiscal year 2008;
- (2) \$33,550,000 for fiscal year 2009;
- (3) \$36,905,000 for fiscal year 2010;
- (4) \$40,596,000 for fiscal year 2011;
- (5) \$44,655,000 for fiscal year 2012;
- (6) \$49,121,000 for fiscal year 2013; and
- (7) \$54,033,000 for fiscal year 2014.

TITLE II—UNDERSEA RESEARCH PROGRAM

SEC. 201. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the “National Undersea Research Program Act of 2007”.

SEC. 202. AUTHORIZATION.

The Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration shall conduct an undersea research, exploration, education, and technology development program and shall designate a Director of that program.

SEC. 203. PURPOSE.

The purpose of the program authorized under section 202 is to increase scientific knowledge essential for the informed management, use, and preservation of oceanic, coastal, and Great Lakes resources. The Director, in carrying out the program authorized in section 202, shall cooperate with institutions of higher education and other educational marine and ocean science organizations, and shall make available undersea research facilities, equipment, technologies, information, and expertise to support undersea research efforts by these organizations. The Director may also enter into partnerships, using existing authorities, with the private sector to achieve the goals of the program and to promote technological advancement of the marine industry.

SEC. 204. PROGRAM.

The program authorized under section 202 shall be conducted through a national headquarters, a network of extramural regional undersea research centers that represent all relevant National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration regions, and a national technology institute. Overall direction of the program will be provided by the program director in coordination with a Council of Center Directors comprised of the directors of the extramural regional centers and the National Institute for Undersea Science and Technology. Program direction shall be published not later than 3 years after the date of enactment of this Act.

SEC. 205. REGIONAL CENTERS AND INSTITUTE.

(a) PROGRAMS.—The following research, exploration, education, and technology programs shall be conducted through the network of extramural regional centers and the National Institute for Undersea Science and Technology:

- (1) Core research and exploration based on national and regional undersea research priorities.
- (2) Advanced undersea technology development to support the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's research mission and programs.
- (3) Development, testing, and transition of advanced undersea technology associated with ocean observatories, submersibles, advanced diving technologies, remotely oper-

ated vehicles, autonomous underwater vehicles, and new sampling and sensing technologies.

(4) Undersea science-based education and outreach programs to enrich ocean science education and public awareness of the oceans and Great Lakes.

(5) Discovery, study, and development of natural products from ocean and aquatic systems.

(b) OPERATIONS.—Operation of the extramural regional centers and the National Institute for Undersea Science and Technology shall leverage partnerships and cooperative research with academia and private industry.

SEC. 206. COMPETITION.

(a) DISCRETIONARY FUND.—The program shall allocate no more than 10 percent of its annual budget to a discretionary fund that may be used only for program administration and priority undersea research projects identified by the Director but not covered by funding available from centers.

(b) COMPETITIVE SELECTION.—The Administrator shall conduct a competition to select the regional centers that will participate in the program five years after the date of enactment of this Act and every five years thereafter. Funding for projects conducted through the regional centers shall be awarded through a competitive, merit-reviewed process on the basis of their relevance to the goals of the program and their technical feasibility.

SEC. 207. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

There are authorized to be appropriated to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to carry out this title—

- (1) \$17,500,000 for fiscal year 2008;
- (2) \$19,500,000 for fiscal year 2009;
- (3) \$21,500,000 for fiscal year 2010;
- (4) \$23,500,000 for fiscal year 2011;
- (5) \$25,500,000 for fiscal year 2012;
- (6) \$27,500,000 for fiscal year 2013; and
- (7) \$29,500,000 for fiscal year 2014.

TITLE III—INTERAGENCY FINANCING PLANNING AND COORDINATION

SEC. 301. INTERAGENCY FINANCING.

The Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the National Science Foundation, the Department of the Navy, and other Federal agencies involved in the programs authorized under title I and II, are authorized to participate in interagency financing and share, transfer, receive, and spend funds appropriated to any Federal participant in the program for the purposes of carrying out any administrative or programmatic project or activity under this Act. Funds may be transferred among such departments and agencies through an appropriate instrument that specifies the goods, services, or space being acquired from another Federal participant and the costs thereof.

SEC. 302. OCEAN EXPLORATION AND UNDERSEA RESEARCH TECHNOLOGY AND INFRASTRUCTURE TASK FORCE.

The Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, in coordination with the National Science Foundation, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the United States Geological Survey, the Department of the Navy, the Mineral Management Service, and relevant governmental, non-governmental, academic, industry, and other experts, shall convene an ocean exploration and undersea research technology and infrastructure task force to develop and implement a strategy—

- (1) to facilitate transfer of new exploration and undersea research technology to the programs authorized under titles I and II of this Act;
- (2) to improve availability of communications infrastructure, including satellite capabilities, to such programs;

(3) to develop an integrated, workable, and comprehensive data management information processing system that will make information on unique and significant features obtained by such programs available for research and management purposes;

(4) to conduct public outreach activities that improve the public understanding of ocean science, resources, and processes, in conjunction with relevant programs of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the National Science Foundation, and other agencies; and

(5) to encourage cost-sharing partnerships with governmental and nongovernmental entities that will assist in transferring exploration and undersea research technology and technical expertise to the programs.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LIPINSKI) and the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. AKIN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LIPINSKI. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 1834, the bill now under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1834, the National Ocean Exploration and National Undersea Research Program Act.

I would like to first thank our colleague, Representative SAXTON from the Natural Resources Committee, for his leadership on important ocean and Great Lakes issues. This is a good bill that will expand our knowledge of the ocean and provide information about the vast resources of the seas.

The coastal areas of our Nation support a wide variety of significant activities, but in many respects the oceans remain a mystery, with many areas unexplored. Marine scientists tell us that we haven't come close to tapping the resources available to us from the oceans. I hope that my colleagues today from both sides of the aisle will agree that we should steer research dollars to those fact-finding projects so that humanity might one day reap the benefits of our oceanic resources.

This bill provides the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, NOAA, with the authorities and direction to support a vigorous ocean exploration program. The bill authorizes two programs to be carried out by NOAA. The Ocean Exploration Program will explore and survey the ocean and assess ocean and coastal resources. The National Undersea Research Program will operate through a network of regional undersea research centers. Both of those programs have strong education and outreach programs.

Madam Speaker, H.R. 1834 is a good bill. It is a product of a bipartisan effort to promote expanded appreciation

and knowledge of the oceans. I urge my colleagues to support the legislation.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1445

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

I rise in support of H.R. 1834, the National Ocean Exploration Program Act.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, or NOAA, is the Nation's lead agency charged with conserving and managing our coastal and oceanic resources. As such, relevant and high-quality research and development is vital to NOAA's ability to better understand the marine ecosystems it manages. NOAA's ocean exploration efforts have been organized in a systematic and strategic manner in order to investigate the farthest depths of the Earth's oceans. NOAA's undersea research programs allow for direct access to undersea environments through submersibles and indirect observation through the use of robots and sea-floor observatories. These programs provide invaluable information that enables us to learn more about our environment that covers more than two-thirds of our planet.

H.R. 1834 authorizes two existing ocean programs: the Ocean Exploration Program and the National Undersea Research Program. Under this authorization, NOAA is required to work with the National Science Foundation to map out a coordinated national exploration program that promotes collaboration with other Federal ocean exploration programs to prevent duplicative efforts. This bill also requires NOAA to conduct an undersea research, exploration, education, and technology development program that coordinates with similar efforts of the academic and marine and ocean science communities.

Most of these research and exploration efforts are conducted by outside groups who receive grants and funding from NOAA. H.R. 1834 requires that such funding shall now be distributed through a competitive bid process. Competition for funding will encourage existing research centers to select their most valuable research projects and partner with each other on other research programs. This competition is essential to ensure that the best research programs and ideas are adequately funded, something that, unfortunately, has not always been the case in the past.

Madam Speaker, at a time when our Nation is struggling to divide resources among a greater number of programs, we cannot afford to allow spending on research programs that do not provide pertinent information related to NOAA's important mission. The authorizing of these two programs and the competitive grant process that is established in this bill will ensure that NOAA is able to fund only the most useful projects and leverage taxpayer dollars in a way that provides the most

useful information to understanding and managing our ocean environment.

I urge all my colleagues to support H.R. 1834.

Madam Speaker, I would like to yield now such time as he may consume to my colleague JIM SAXTON from the State of New Jersey. He has a long and very well-established reputation here, and, by the way, this is part of his legislation.

Mr. SAXTON. I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I thank the gentleman from Illinois for his kind remarks and great description, I might add, of the bill.

Madam Speaker, I obviously rise in strong support of H.R. 1834 and am very pleased that it's here under this bipartisan arrangement. It authorizes both the Ocean Exploration and National Undersea Research Programs in the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

According to the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy, about 95 percent of the ocean floor remains unexplored. This vast area teems with undiscovered species and natural and cultural resources. On virtually every expedition, oceanographers and explorers make fascinating new discoveries. Hydrothermal vents in the Pacific, numerous new species, and important archaeological sites are but a few of the important discoveries made in the past 30 years.

Consequently, the report of the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy recommended the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the National Science Foundation should lead and expand our national ocean exploration and undersea research programs.

I am proud to be the sponsor of H.R. 1834. I'm proud that it's a bipartisan piece of legislation, and I'm proud that it promotes implementation of the commission's recommendations.

This bill authorizes two important programs: the Ocean Exploration Program as well as the National Undersea Research Program, also known as NURP. The Ocean Exploration Program was created to investigate the oceans for the purpose of discovery and the advancement of knowledge. It is the NOAA program established to, first, explore and map the oceans unknown and poorly known living and nonliving resources and, second, to gain new insights about its physical, chemical, biological, and archeological characteristics.

Title I of the bill, the National Ocean Exploration Program Act, will create better coordination between NOAA and the National Science Foundation. The purposes of the act are to expand the ocean exploration to discover new marine substances that potentially have therapeutic benefits; to study the unique marine ecosystems, organisms, and the geology of the world's oceans; and to maximize ocean research effectiveness by integrating multiple scientific disciplines in the ocean science community.

A new element created by the legislation is an Ocean Exploration Advisory Board. The National Undersea Research Program is part of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research. As the Federal agency responsible for managing living marine and coastal organisms, NOAA requires a presence beneath the sea and the Great Lakes to better understand the systems under its management. NURP provides NOAA with the unique capability to access the undersea environment. NURP also provides scientists with the tools and expertise they need to investigate the undersea environment, including submersibles, remotely operated vehicles, autonomous underwater vehicles, mixed gas diving gear, underwater laboratories and observatories.

Title II of the bill, the National Undersea Research Program Act of 2007, formally authorizes the National Undersea Research Program for the first time, and we're very proud of this. The legislation creates a competitive process for the extramural undersea research centers to encourage the very best undersea research program for the United States.

Both of these programs authorized in this legislation are core to the mission of NOAA. I urge my colleagues to support this important bipartisan legislation.

Mr. LIPINSKI. Madam Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. LIPINSKI. Madam Speaker, I want to thank Mr. SAXTON for his work on this bill. I'm very happy we were able to work this through the Science and Technology Committee in a bipartisan manner, and I urge all my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. FARR. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1834 introduced by my colleague JIM SAXTON. This bill would authorize the national ocean exploration program and the national undersea research program within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

Our world is defined by its ocean. Planet Earth could be better named Planet Ocean. We are truly an ocean nation. In fact, more than half of the United States lies underwater and all people in the United States and in the world are affected by the ocean. The ocean helps control our climate, influences our weather, and affects our health.

The ocean gives us rain, oxygen, food, medicines, and minerals and energy sources. The ocean supports our nation's economy; it is a highway for transportation of goods and people. Even our national security is affected by the ocean.

Our ocean is important as a heritage to many cultures throughout the world and to our cultures throughout the United States. This one world ocean we all share is also a constant source of wonder and discovery.

In spite of its importance, little of the ocean has been explored. The ocean is our last and largest frontier. More is known about the moon

than is known about the deepest parts of the ocean.

This bill will add to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's ability to conduct research and exploration of the ocean. The bill will foster collaboration between the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the National Science Foundation, and the Department of the Navy.

The ocean exploration program and the undersea exploration program will drive technological advances and will increase our knowledge about the ocean to help us understand how to best manage, use, and preserve this resource.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this bill, and show that the age of discovery is not over.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 1834, to authorize the national ocean exploration program and the national undersea research program within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

First and foremost, I want to commend my good friend Mr. JIM SAXTON of New Jersey and other cosponsors for introducing this important legislation. I also want to acknowledge the leadership for both the Committee on Natural Resources and the Committee on Science and Technology.

Madam Speaker, H.R. 1834, the National Ocean Exploration Program Act, is an important piece of legislation because it will expand ocean exploration and will be a key avenue in understanding better our marine ecosystems and coastal resources and, importantly, maximize effective research relating to the physical, chemical, and biological characteristics of our oceans and lakes. We have succeeded in embarking missions to space but have failed in studying the unknown in our very oceans.

This legislation will provide scientists the necessary equipment to investigate and explore the undersea environment and will allow NOAA to conduct archaeological and scientific voyages of historic shipwrecks and cultural sites important to our academic and local communities.

Again, I thank my colleagues for supporting this bipartisan legislation.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LIPINSKI) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1834, as amended.

The question was taken.

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

Mr. AKIN. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

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.

MAKING TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS TO THE FEDERAL INSECTICIDE, FUNGICIDE, AND RODENTICIDE ACT

Mr. CARDOZA. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the

Senate bill (S. 2571) to make technical corrections to the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act.

The Clerk read the title of the Senate bill.

The text of the Senate bill is as follows:

S. 2571

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

SECTION 1. TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS TO THE FEDERAL INSECTICIDE, FUNGICIDE, AND RODENTICIDE ACT.

(a) PESTICIDE REGISTRATION SERVICE FEES.—Section 33 of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (7 U.S.C. 136w-8) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)(7)—

(A) in subparagraph (D)—

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

“(i) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator may exempt from, or waive a portion of, the registration service fee for an application for minor uses for a pesticide.”; and

(ii) in clause (ii), by inserting “or exemption” after “waiver”; and

(B) in subparagraph (E)—

(i) in the paragraph heading, by striking “WAIVER” and inserting “EXEMPTION”; and

(ii) by striking “waive the registration service fee for an application” and inserting “exempt an application from the registration service fee”; and

(iii) in clause (ii), by striking “waiver” and inserting “exemption”; and

(2) in subsection (m)(2), by striking “2008” each place it appears and inserting “2012”.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by subsection (a) take effect on October 1, 2007.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. CARDOZA) and the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. LUCAS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

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

Senate bill 2571 provides a technical correction to the reauthorization of the Pesticide Registration Improvement Act approved by the House and the Senate and that was signed by the President on October 9, 2007.

As my colleagues know, EPA is currently responsible for regulating the sale, use, and distribution of pesticides. In order to facilitate and expedite the approval process, pesticide manufacturers and other registrants have supplemented EPA's annual budget for a number of years. It's a win-win process for both the manufacturer and the end user and a clear example of good government at its best.

Unfortunately, EPA has interpreted the PRIA reauthorization approved by Congress to collect fees for chemicals that are not part of the Interregional Project Number 4, a popular research program that assesses tolerance levels for pest management chemicals applied on specialty crops. These IR-4 chemicals have historically been exempt from fees prior to the enactment of the PRIA reauthorization, and it was not the intention of the House nor the Sen-

ate to suddenly assess fees on all these chemicals.

This bill will simply restore the status quo for these particular products and reassert congressional intent.

Because the program fees are being assessed on IR-4 chemicals as we speak, it is vitally important to address this situation immediately. While the farm bill would be the natural vehicle to make this technical correction, EPA is currently unable to process any registration applications without these fees being paid. Therefore, while this fix is not controversial, it is extremely time sensitive, and the uncertainty of the farm bill process dictates that Congress must take action now.

Restoring congressional intent by passing this technical correction to PRIA will prevent delays and backups of applications and stop EPA from collecting and then reimbursing the fees for these chemicals.

It is important that we continue to encourage the type of public-private partnerships envisioned in PRIA. I urge my colleagues to support this technical fix and the underlying goals of the Pesticide Registration Improvement Act.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I rise today in support of S. 2571. Madam Speaker, last fall we passed Senate bill 1983, which reauthorized the highly successful Pesticide Registration Improvement Act. That act had been worked on by a number of Members in the House and Senate, including the chairmen and ranking members of the House and Senate Agriculture Committees as well as the chairman and ranking member of the Subcommittee on Horticulture and Organic Agriculture. In developing this legislation, we sought the advice and counsel of the administration, the affected industry, and the environmental community. I was very happy to have the unanimous endorsement of all interested parties as we moved forward with that bill.

As is not uncommon in working on complex legislation, language is included that is subject to interpretation, and in this particular case we included language intending to maintain an existing fee exemption for certain chemicals that have limited uses on specialty crops. Unfortunately, the EPA has interpreted the final language to mean that they would not be able to continue to offer this exemption. This bill that we are considering today would simply restore the status quo for these chemicals, as was the congressional intent.

I urge all of my colleagues to support this legislation.

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

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Mr. CARDOZA. Madam Speaker, I just want to thank my colleague, the