

rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

WATER USE EFFICIENCY AND CONSERVATION RESEARCH ACT

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 631) to increase research, development, education, and technology transfer activities related to water use efficiency and conservation technologies and practices at the Environmental Protection Agency.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 631

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 “Water Use Efficiency and Conservation Research Act”.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) Between 1950 and 2000, the United States population increased nearly 90 percent. In that same period, public demand for water increased 209 percent. Americans now use an average of 100 gallons of water per person each day. This increased demand has put additional stress on water supplies and distribution systems, threatening both human health and the environment.

(2) Thirty-six States are anticipating local, regional, or statewide water shortages by 2013. In addition, climate change related effects are expected to exacerbate already scarce water resources in many areas of the country.

(3) The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change’s 2007 assessment states that water stored in glaciers and snow cover is projected to decline, reducing water availability to one-sixth of the world’s population that relies upon meltwater from major mountain ranges. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change also predicts droughts will become more severe and longer lasting in a number of regions.

(4) Water conservation should be a national goal and the Environmental Protection Agency should work with nongovernmental partners to achieve that goal. The Environmental Protection Agency should support the research, development, and dissemination of technologies and processes that will achieve greater water use efficiency.

(5) WaterSense is a voluntary public-private partnership program established by the Environmental Protection Agency to promote water efficiency by helping consumers identify water-efficient products and practices. The Environmental Protection Agency estimates that if all United States households installed water-efficient appliances, the country would save more than 3,000,000,000,000 gallons of water and more than \$17,000,000,000 per year.

(6) The WaterSense program has developed a network of partners, and therefore can disseminate the results of research on technologies and processes that achieve greater water use efficiency.

SEC. 3. RESEARCH PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Assistant Administrator for Research and Development of the Environmental Protection Agency (in this Act referred to as the “Assistant Administrator”) shall establish a research and development program consistent with the plan developed under section 4 that promotes water use efficiency and conservation, including—

(1) technologies and processes that enable the collection, storage, treatment, and reuse of rainwater, stormwater, and greywater;

(2) water storage and distribution systems;

(3) behavioral, social, and economic barriers to achieving greater water use efficiency; and

(4) use of watershed planning directed toward water quality, conservation, and supply.

(b) CONSIDERATIONS.—In planning and implementing the program, the Assistant Administrator shall consider—

(1) research needs identified by water resource managers, State and local governments, and other interested parties; and

(2) technologies and processes likely to achieve the greatest increases in water use efficiency and conservation.

(c) MINORITY SERVING INSTITUTIONS.—In the execution of this program, the Assistant Administrator may award extramural grants to institutions of higher education and shall encourage participation by Minority Serving Institutions.

SEC. 4. STRATEGIC RESEARCH PLAN.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Assistant Administrator shall coordinate the development of a strategic research plan (in this Act referred to as the “plan”) for the water use efficiency and conservation research and development program established in section 3 with all other Environmental Protection Agency research and development strategic plans.

(b) PLAN CONTENTS.—The plan shall—

(1) outline research goals and priorities for a water use efficiency and conservation research agenda, including—

(A) developing innovative water supply-enhancing processes and technologies; and

(B) improving existing processes and technologies, including wastewater treatment, desalination, and groundwater recharge and recovery schemes;

(2) identify current Federal research efforts on water that are directed toward meeting the goals of improving water use efficiency, water conservation, or expanding water supply and describe how such efforts are coordinated with the program established in section 3 in order to leverage resources and avoid duplication; and

(3) consider and utilize, as appropriate, recommendations in reports and studies conducted by Federal agencies, the National Research Council, the National Science and Technology Council, or other entities in the development of the plan.

(c) SCIENCE ADVISORY BOARD REVIEW.—The Assistant Administrator shall submit the plan to the Science Advisory Board of the Environmental Protection Agency for review.

(d) REVISION.—The plan shall be revised and amended as needed to reflect current scientific findings and national research priorities.

SEC. 5. TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER.

The Assistant Administrator, building on the results of the activities of the program established under section 3, shall—

(1) facilitate the adoption of technology and processes to promote water use efficiency and conservation; and

(2) collect and disseminate information, including the establishment of a publicly accessible clearinghouse, on technologies and processes to promote water use efficiency and conservation, including information on—

(A) incentives and impediments to development and commercialization;

(B) best practices; and

(C) anticipated increases in water use efficiency and conservation resulting from the implementation of specific technologies and processes.

SEC. 6. ADVANCED WATER EFFICIENCY DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—As part of the program under section 3, the Assistant Administrator shall carry out at least 4 projects under which the funding is provided for the incorporation into a building of the latest water use efficiency and conservation technologies and designs. Funding for each project shall be provided only to cover incremental costs of water-use efficiency and conservation technologies.

(b) CRITERIA.—Of the 4 projects described in subsection (a), at least 1 shall be for a residential building and at least 1 shall be for a commercial building.

(c) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.—The designs of buildings with respect to which funding is provided under subsection (a) shall be made available to the public, and such buildings shall be accessible to the public for tours and educational purposes.

SEC. 7. REPORT.

Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, and once every 2 years thereafter, the Assistant Administrator shall transmit to Congress a report which details the progress being made by the Environmental Protection Agency with regard to—

(1) water use efficiency and conservation research projects initiated by the Agency;

(2) development projects initiated by the Agency;

(3) outreach and communication activities conducted by the Agency concerning water use efficiency and conservation; and

(4) development and implementation of the plan.

SEC. 8. WATER MANAGEMENT STUDY AND REPORT.

(a) STUDY.—

(1) REQUIREMENT.—The Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency shall enter into an arrangement with the National Academy of Sciences to complete a study of low impact and soft path strategies for management of water supply, wastewater, and stormwater.

(2) CONTENTS.—The study shall—

(A) examine and compare the state of research, technology development, and emerging practices in other developed and developing countries with those in the United States;

(B) identify and evaluate relevant system approaches for comprehensive water management, including the interrelationship of water systems with other major systems such as energy and transportation;

(C) identify priority research and development needs; and

(D) assess implementation needs and barriers.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency shall transmit to the Committee on Science and Technology of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Environment and Public Works of the Senate a report on the key findings of the study conducted under subsection (a). The report shall evaluate challenges and opportunities and serve as a practical reference for water managers, planners, developers, scientists, engineers, non-governmental organizations, Federal agencies, and regulators by recommending innovative and integrated solutions.

(c) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this section—

(1) the term “low impact” means a strategy that manages rainfall at the source using uniformly distributed decentralized micro-scale controls to mimic a site’s predevelopment hydrology by using design

techniques that infiltrate, filter, store, evaporate, and detain runoff close to its source; and

(2) the term “soft path” means a general framework that encompasses—

(A) increased efficiency of water use;

(B) integration of water supply, wastewater treatment, and stormwater management systems; and

(C) protection, restoration, and effective use of the natural capacities of ecosystems to provide clean water.

(d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency for carrying out this section \$1,000,000 for fiscal year 2010.

SEC. 9. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

There are authorized to be appropriated to the Assistant Administrator for carrying out this Act \$20,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2010 through 2014.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. GORDON) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HALL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Tennessee.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee. Mr. 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. 631, the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise today in support of H.R. 631, the Water Use Efficiency and Conservation Act, and I would like to thank Congressman JIM MATHESON for introducing this important legislation. I would also like to thank my colleagues on the Science and Technology Committee for their unanimous support in making this a good, bipartisan bill.

Water scarcity is a significant and growing problem in the United States and around the world. Americans use an average of 100 gallons of water per person each day, which results in a daily water use of approximately 26 billion gallons of water.

This increase demand has put additional stress on water supplies and distribution systems, threatening the environment and constraining economic activity.

Imbalances between supply and demand, combined with the degradation of ground water and surface water, negatively impact all regions of the country and all facets of life.

The biggest and cheapest source of water to meet our Nation's growing water demands is the water currently wasted by inefficient water practices.

Conserving water provides significant cost savings for water and wastewater systems. Water efficiency and reuse programs help water suppliers avoid, downsize and postpone expensive infrastructure projects.

H.R. 631 establishes a research and development program within the Environmental Protection Agency Office of Research and Development to promote water-use efficiency and conservation.

Through this program, EPA will be able to develop and encourage the adoption of technologies and processes that will achieve greater water-use efficiency, thus helping to address the water supply shortages.

In addition, H.R. 631 directs EPA to disseminate information on current water-use efficient technologies and conservation practices. Broad dissemination of this information will facilitate wider usage of these proven technologies and practices.

□ 1315

In order to meet the water demands of the 21st century, we need innovative solutions to maximize our available resources. Again, I want to thank my colleagues on the Science and Technology Committee for their bipartisan support and collaboration on this legislation, and I urge all Members to support this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HALL of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

According to the American Water Works Association, an international nonprofit scientific and educational organization, daily indoor per capita water consumption in a typical single family home is about 70 gallons. By installing more efficient water fixtures and checking for leaks, single family homes can reduce their daily per capita water consumption by, we are told, 35 percent.

Now, while some of these technologies are already on the market and being used, many water-saving ideas have not gotten past the research phase for lack of a coordinated Federal research program. While the Environmental Protection Agency is charged with protecting water sources, EPA's research and development program is not comprehensive or rationally organized and does not address water efficiency and conservation.

H.R. 631 establishes a research and development program for water efficiency technologies and conservation at the EPA. It instructs the Assistant Administrator of the Office of Research and Development to develop a single coordinated research plan.

EPA is tasked with using recommendations and existing reports from the National Academies and the National Science and Technology Council in the development of the plan. The EPA should develop a comprehensive strategic research plan for technologies that embodies our national priorities, particularly water efficiency and water conservation.

Mr. Speaker, at a time when our Nation is facing water shortages, we just can't afford to fall behind on technological research and development. We need to invest resources so that we can

better manage water shortages in the future. I urge all of my colleagues to support H.R. 631.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee. I yield myself 1 minute.

Mr. Speaker, Chairman OBERSTAR of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee has worked cooperatively with us on this legislation, and I would like to ask that an exchange of letters between us regarding H.R. 631 be placed in the RECORD.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE,

Washington, DC, February 11, 2009.

Hon. BART GORDON,

Chairman, Committee on Science and Technology, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN GORDON: I write to you regarding H.R. 631, the “Water Use Efficiency and Conservation Research Act.” This legislation authorizes the Environmental Protection Agency to establish a research and development program to promote water use efficiency and conservation technologies and practices.

H.R. 631 contains provisions that fall within the jurisdiction of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. I recognize and appreciate your desire to bring this legislation before the House in an expeditious manner and, accordingly, I will not seek a sequential referral of the bill. However, I agree to waive consideration of this bill with the mutual understanding that my decision to forego a sequential referral of the bill does not waive, reduce, or otherwise affect the jurisdiction of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure over H.R. 631.

Further, the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure reserves the right to seek the appointment of conferees during any House-Senate conference convened on this legislation on provisions of the bill that are within the Committee's jurisdiction. I ask for your commitment to support any request by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure for the appointment of conferees on H.R. 631 or similar legislation.

Please place a copy of this letter and your response acknowledging the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure's jurisdictional interest in the Congressional Record during consideration of the measure on the House Floor.

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

Sincerely,

JAMES L. OBERSTAR, M.C.,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY,

Washington, DC, February 11, 2009.

Hon. JAMES L. OBERSTAR,

Chairman, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN OBERSTAR: Thank you for your February 11, 2009 letter regarding H.R. 631, the Water Use Efficiency and Conservation Research Act. Your support for this legislation and your assistance in ensuring its timely consideration are greatly appreciated.

I agree that provisions in the bill are of jurisdictional interest to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. I acknowledge that by forgoing a sequential referral, your Committee is not relinquishing its jurisdiction and I will fully support your

request to be represented in a House-Senate conference on those provisions over which the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure has jurisdiction in H.R. 631. A copy of our letters will be placed in the Congressional Record during consideration of the bill on the House floor.

I value your cooperation and look forward to working with you as we move ahead with this important legislation.

Sincerely,

BART GORDON,
Chairman.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HALL of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. RADANOVICH).

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, the bill before us calls for the efficient use of water, and I think that is a very, very good goal. One place that water is not being efficiently used by the environmental community is in my district back in California. Due to drought conditions and the abuse of the Endangered Species Act, which is placing the needs of fish over the needs of farmers, the agriculture economy in our region stands to lose over 40,000 jobs and over \$1 billion in revenue.

Considering the bleak outlook for California's economy, one would think that this so-called economic stimulus legislation might do something to address this problem. Further, one might also think that if there was a way to address this problem without spending one dime of the taxpayers' money, this stimulus plan would include that option.

In fact, there is a way to save those 40,000 jobs in my district, and billions of dollars in lost income, at no cost. Just temporarily suspend the Endangered Species Act as it applies to the pumps in the Sacramento San Joaquin Delta Pumps.

But does this stimulus plan include that proposal? Of course not. Because the stimulus plan is not stimulus at all—it is a big spending bill of gigantic proportions. Heaven forbid that our friends on the other side of the aisle would try to save jobs without spending money.

Instead, we are spending money: \$4 billion per year on the voter fraud organization called ACORN. How can this be considered stimulus? Instead, we are going to spend barely 1 day passing a trillion-dollar stimulus bill that spends nearly \$300 million to purchase golf carts. Maybe the majority feels that the country club community are the people who are really hurting right now.

This bill only sends our country and our children deeper and deeper in debt, and the special interest spending contained within it are not in America's best interest. Please join me in voting "no" on this bill.

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HALL of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. TERRY).

Mr. TERRY. Water infrastructure is important. And certainly I see in the

stimulus bill, at least the version that the House passed, that there will be investment in that infrastructure. And I think it's probably a good thing, although there's a budgetary process, an appropriation process, an authorization process, called WRDA, where the same thing could be done, and in an appropriate way where we can have appropriate discussions on that merit.

What I have learned today during the 15-minute break I had to eat lunch is that there is now a deal that has been reached between the Speaker's office and the majority leader of the Senate's office on the stimulus bill—the conference.

We always knew or anticipated that the whole process was just going to be rammed down the throats of the Members of Congress and that, in all likelihood, the conference was going to be the Speaker's office and Harry Reid, the Senate majority leader's office.

Yesterday, they came out and said, We are going to have a conference. Even called our majority leader and said we are actually going to let two Republicans on the conference committee. Of course, none have been appointed. And, evidently, the deal has already been sealed, and now there's going to be some faux meeting, probably just for the television cameras to come out and display how great this process is, when the reality is not one opportunity has been given to the Republicans to be part of this process to talk about a stimulus plan that, yes, is different than the Pelosi-Reid-Obama stimulus plan that was put before this House and in a slightly different version in the Senate.

I think that we should be afforded the opportunity to at least discuss the merits of our stimulus plan that is different, is philosophically different, because what we say is instead of growing government and programs, we want to stimulate the growth of business, particularly small businesses. And so we have got a laundry list of tax breaks or relief and regulatory relief that would be focused on small businesses so they cannot only retain their employees but, hopefully, even grow.

Several economists have looked at our plan in comparison to the Pelosi-Reid-Obama-endorsed plan.

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

Mr. HALL of Texas. I yield the gentleman 1 additional minute.

Mr. TERRY. Thank you.

And those economists have said, when they have compared the two bills, the Republican one and the one that we are going to have rammed down our throats in the next day or two, if they give it 48 hours from now, that ours will be half the cost to the taxpayers, but yet create a million and a half new private sector jobs. Yet, we haven't even had the opportunity to have an open debate about which plan is better, even though we were promised that earlier.

So, what we are left with is to rifle through a monstrous bill where we

have uncovered money being funded to ACORN, door-to-door activities to find the 1.2 million people in the United States who evidently haven't bought their DTV converter box—\$650 million for that—and a health committee that is going to second-guess physicians. We need the opportunity to be heard and to show sunlight on this process.

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 30 seconds.

I want to give some comfort to my friend from Nebraska. The Republicans did have an opportunity to offer a substitute, which they did, on the floor, when the original bill came up, and it was rejected on a bipartisan vote. So I just want to bring that up.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HALL of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. INGLIS).

Mr. INGLIS. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Back to the nanotechnology bill for a moment. This bill is a good bill, and I wanted to congratulate the chairman, Mr. GORDON, for something that he said earlier in this debate about the need to help the public understand new technology.

Of course, use the example of nuclear power. In South Carolina, we use nuclear power very effectively. It does take some education to get people comfortable with the concept. The same with nanotechnology. An important part of this bill, I think, is enabling the public to begin to understand nanotechnology—all of us to understand nanotechnology.

It's a little bit difficult. But, as we do, we get more comfortable with it, the uses of the technology, the safe uses of that technology will benefit us and will drive, hopefully, an increase in productivity within our economy.

And that brings me, of course, to the other discussion that is going on here today about how to get the economy going. What is the best way to accomplish this sort of thing long term?

In this nanotechnology bill we are taking good steps that the House is wise to take. In the stimulus package I wish we were doing the same sort of things. I wish that we were setting up a trajectory forward where we are going to have higher productivity out of this economic downturn. The risk that we have got is what we are going to do is simply spend some money that we borrow, which means that we pile on the debt, and the result is that we don't really get the growth we are looking for because the growth will be eaten up in inflation and perhaps a risk of hyperinflation once this debt really comes to be digested by our economy.

So, the hope that I have is that we could actually come up with the same sort of approach we are using here in this nanotechnology bill, a collaborative approach, where we have Republicans and Democrats working together to accomplish something good for the long-term benefit of our economy and our country.

In the case of the stimulus, what we have is not that process. We have sort of the opposite, where this basically compromise, which is a zero sum game, as opposed to collaboration, which uses the strengths of both parties to come together and solve problems that America faces.

So, it's with excitement that I vote for the nanotechnology bill. It's with real disappointment that I vote against the stimulus package.

I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. HALL of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I urge passage of this bipartisan bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. GORDON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 631.

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.

□ 1330

SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF NATIONAL ENGINEERS WEEK

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 117) supporting the goals and ideals of National Engineers Week, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 117

Whereas engineers use their professional, scientific, and technical knowledge and skills in creative and innovative ways to fulfill society's needs;

Whereas engineers have helped meet the major technological challenges of our time—from rebuilding towns devastated by natural disasters to designing an information superhighway that will speed our country into the future;

Whereas engineers are a crucial link in research, development, and demonstration and in transforming scientific discoveries into useful products, and we will look more than ever to engineers and their knowledge and skills to meet the challenges of the future;

Whereas engineers play a crucial role in developing the consensus engineering standards that permit modern economies and societies to exist;

Whereas the 2006 National Academy of Sciences report entitled "Rising Above the Gathering Storm" highlighted the worrisome trend that fewer students are now focusing on engineering in college at a time when increasing numbers of today's 2,000,000 United States engineers are nearing retirement;

Whereas the National Society of Professional Engineers through National Engineers Week and other activities is raising public awareness of engineers' significant, positive contributions to societal needs;

Whereas National Engineers Week activities at engineering schools and in other forums are encouraging our young math and science students to see themselves as possible future engineers and to realize the practical power of their knowledge;

Whereas National Engineers Week has grown into a formal coalition of more than 70 engineering, education, and cultural societies, and more than 50 major corporations and government agencies;

Whereas National Engineers Week is celebrated during the week of George Washington's birthday to honor the contributions that our first President, a military engineer and land surveyor, made to engineering; and

Whereas February 15 to 21, 2009, has been designated by the President as National Engineers Week: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) supports the goals and ideals of National Engineers Week and its aims to increase understanding of and interest in engineering and technology careers and to promote literacy in math and science; and

(2) will work with the engineering community to make sure that the creativity and contribution of that community can be expressed through research, development, standardization, and innovation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. GORDON) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HALL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Tennessee.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H. Res. 117, the resolution now under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of House Resolution 117, supporting the goals and ideals of National Engineers Week. And I would first like to thank my colleague, Mr. LIPINSKI from Illinois, for introducing this resolution. As one of the only handful of engineers in Congress, Mr. LIPINSKI has and will continue to be a strong advocate for engineers and engineering on the Science and Technology Committee and here in the Congress.

As the sponsor of the bill, I now yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LIPINSKI).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from Illinois will control the time.

There was no objection.

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for yielding, and I rise today in support of H. Res. 117, supporting the goals and ideals of the National Engineers Week.

As an engineer, I am proud to sponsor this resolution again honoring National Engineers Week, and I would like to thank the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. EHLERS) for working

with me on this resolution and on so many other important issues. Mr. EHLERS and I are the coauthors of the STEM Ed, the Science, Technology, Engineering and Math Caucus. STEM Ed is really critical to the future of our country and the future of American technology and leadership in the world. And promoting STEM Ed, especially in engineering, is a big part of what National Engineers Week is all about.

I want to begin by sharing a few statistics: Three hours, 44 percent, and 45,000 teachers. Three hours is the average amount of weekly science instruction currently received by early elementary school students in the United States, 3 hours; 44 percent of districts cut the time devoted to elementary science education since the enactment of No Child Left Behind; and, at the end of 2000, the last year that we have good statistics for, 45,000 math and science teachers left the teaching profession.

Couple these statistics with the projection that, by 2012, about 46 percent of all engineering jobs could become vacant due to retirement by the aging workforce, and it becomes clear we need a renewed emphasis on educating and exciting America's youth about engineering and science.

Next week is the 18th annual Engineers Week, a week which features events aimed at educating youth and fostering public awareness about the vital contributions made by engineers to our quality of life and our economic prosperity. Through programs like the Future City Competition, Introduce a Girl to Engineering Day, and the first robotics competition, the National Engineers Week Foundation confronts the challenge of plugging the leaky pipeline and encouraging more students to pursue careers in engineering. We lose far too many students through this leaky pipeline, and we are not producing enough engineers right now through our educational system.

Engineers Week comprises numerous events. For example, students learn the value of teamwork as they work in groups to develop creative and practical solutions to some of the most important problems facing our world. Projects like designing future cities make engineering come alive for students, planting a seed that can lead to further studies or a career in engineering. Indeed, research shows that children's early experiences with science and engineering are a stronger predictor of long-lasting interest in science fields than aptitude tests.

I can attest that my own childhood experiences with science and engineering captivated me. As a child growing up in Chicago, I was fascinated with figuring out how mechanical devices worked. I remember that my high school calculus and physics teachers at St. Ignatius, Father Thul and Father Fergus, were the ones who helped mold this childhood fascination into an interest in engineering.

As a child, I also remember going to the Museum of Science and Industry. I