

Mr. POE of Texas. I thank the gentleman for yielding time.

This bill is about history, American history. And sometimes we forget our own history, no matter what it is. But if you recall, it all started in 1861, the War Between the States. And after the smoke cleared, there were 600,000 Americans from the North and from the South killed—250,000 from the South, 350,000 from the North, and many more died years later from wounds that they had received.

Many of those battles that took place took place in Virginia. One such battle was the Battle of the Wilderness on May 5-7 of 1864. In that battle, 145,000 troops from the Union and the South fought each other. Madam Speaker, that's the number of troops we have in all of Iraq. They assembled together in Orange County, near Fredericksburg, to do battle.

After that battle was over with, between 18,000 and 20,000 died in those 3 days of battle. And that is one of the areas that this bill would affect. It would help preserve the surrounding community to sellers that would willfully sell their land to help preserve the battlefield.

One such location near Fredericksburg is a location where the profit motive is moving in. None other than Wal-Mart wants to build a Wal-Mart on the very spot where Union troops assembled before that battle started. And this bill would help protect and preserve that location.

This bill is especially important to me and this battle is especially important to me because, although the casualties were great on both sides, the State of Vermont lost a great percentage of the soldiers from Vermont that fought in that battle. And being from Texas, Texas had the same result on the south; 86 percent of the Texans that went to battle in those 3 days were killed or wounded. And it would be important that battles such as the Battle of the Wilderness and all the other battles from the War Between the States be preserved for our heritage because history, Madam Speaker, is what we do in this country.

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

Mr. HOLT. Madam Speaker, I thank the distinguished gentleman, my friend and colleague from Texas, for those eloquent remarks reminding us that this is not just for land preservation, it is for values preservation that we are supporting Mr. MILLER's bill. And I thank my colleagues also for recognizing the work that Mr. MILLER has put into this.

With that, I urge my colleagues to pass this 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 New Jersey (Mr. HOLT) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 548, as amended.

The question was taken.

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

Mr. HOLT. 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.

MARINE MAMMAL RESCUE ASSISTANCE AMENDMENTS OF 2009

Mr. HOLT. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 844) to amend the provisions of law relating to the John H. Prescott Marine Mammal Rescue Assistance Grant Program, and for other purposes. The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 844

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 "Marine Mammal Rescue Assistance Amendments of 2009".

SEC. 2. STRANDING AND ENTANGLEMENT RESPONSE.

(a) COLLECTION AND UPDATING OF INFORMATION.—Section 402(b)(1)(A) of the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972 (16 U.S.C. 1421a(b)(1)(A)) is amended by inserting "or entangled" after "stranded".

(b) ENTANGLEMENT RESPONSE AGREEMENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 403 of such Act (16 U.S.C. 1421b) is amended—

(A) by amending the section heading to read as follows:

"SEC. 403. STRANDING OR ENTANGLEMENT RESPONSE AGREEMENTS.;

and

(B) in subsection (a) by inserting "or entanglement" before the period.

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents at the end of the first section is amended by striking the item relating to section 403 and inserting the following:

"Sec. 403. Stranding or entanglement response agreements."

(c) LIABILITY.—Section 406(a) of such Act (16 U.S.C. 1421e(a)) is amended by inserting "or entanglement" after "stranding".

(d) ENTANGLEMENT DEFINED.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 410 of such Act (16 U.S.C. 1421h) is amended—

(A) by redesignating paragraphs (1) through (6) in order as paragraphs (2) through (7); and

(B) by inserting before paragraph (2) (as so redesignated) the following:

"(1) The term 'entanglement' means an event in the wild in which a living or dead marine mammal has gear, rope, line, net, or other material wrapped around or attached to it and is—

"(A) on a beach or shore of the United States; or

"(B) in waters under the jurisdiction of the United States."

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 408(a)(2)(B)(i) of such Act (16 U.S.C. 1421f-1(a)(2)(B)(i)) is amended by striking "section 410(6)" and inserting "section 410(7)".

(e) JOHN H. PRESCOTT MARINE MAMMAL RESCUE ASSISTANCE GRANT PROGRAM.—

(1) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS FOR GRANT PROGRAM.—Section 408(h) of such Act (16 U.S.C. 1421f-1(h)) is amended—

(A) by striking "\$5,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2001 through 2003" and inserting "\$7,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2010 through 2013"; and

(B) in paragraph (1) by striking "\$4,000,000" and inserting "\$6,000,000".

(2) ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS AND EXPENSES.—Section 408 of such Act (16 U.S.C. 1421f-1) is amended—

(A) by adding at the end of subsection (a)(1) the following: "All funds available to implement this section shall be distributed to eligible stranding network participants for the purposes set forth in this paragraph and paragraph (2), except as provided in subsection (f)."; and

(B) by amending subsection (f) to read as follows:

"(f) ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS AND EXPENSES.—Of the amounts available each fiscal year to carry out this section, the Secretary may expend not more than 6 percent or \$80,000, whichever is greater, to pay the administrative costs and administrative expenses to implement the grant program under subsection (a). Any such funds retained by the Secretary for a fiscal year for such costs and expenses that are not used for such costs and expenses before the end of the fiscal year shall be provided as grants under subsection (a)."

(3) EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE.—Section 408 of such Act (16 U.S.C. 1421f-1) is amended—

(A) in subsection (a) by redesignating paragraph (2) as paragraph (3), and by inserting after paragraph (1) the following:

"(2) Subject to the availability of appropriations, the Secretary may also enter into cooperative agreements, contracts, or such other agreements or arrangements as the Secretary considers appropriate to address stranding events requiring emergency assistance."

(B) in subsection (d) by inserting "(1)" before the text, and by adding at the end the following:

"(2) Funding for emergency stranding projects shall not be subject to the funding limit established in paragraph (1).";

(C) in subsection (e)—

(i) in paragraph (1) by striking "The non-Federal" and inserting "Except as provided in paragraph (2), the non-Federal";

(ii) by redesignating paragraph (2) as paragraph (3); and

(iii) by inserting after paragraph (1) the following:

"(2) EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE.—No non-Federal contribution shall be required for funding for a response to an emergency stranding event."; and

(D) in subsection (g) by redesignating paragraph (2) as paragraph (3) and inserting after paragraph (1) the following:

"(2) EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE.—The term 'emergency assistance' means assistance provided for a stranding event that—

"(A) is not an unusual mortality event as defined in section 409(6);

"(B) leads to an immediate increase in required costs for stranding response, recovery, or rehabilitation in excess of regularly scheduled costs;

"(C) may be cyclical or endemic; and

"(D) may involve out-of-habitat animals."

(4) CONTRIBUTIONS.—Section 408 of such Act (16 U.S.C. 1421f-1) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(i) CONTRIBUTIONS.—For purposes of carrying out this section, the Secretary may solicit, accept, receive, hold, administer, and use gifts, devises, and bequests."

(f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS FOR MARINE MAMMAL UNUSUAL MORTALITY EVENT

FUND.—Section 409(3) of such Act (16 U.S.C. 1421g(3)) is amended by striking “fiscal year 1993” and inserting “each of fiscal years 2010 through 2013”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. HOLT) and the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. SMITH) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HOLT. 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 the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. HOLT. Madam Speaker, the pending measure, the Marine Mammal Rescue Assistance Amendments of 2009, was introduced by our esteemed colleague from Alaska, Representative DON YOUNG. The bill would extend through fiscal year 2013 the authorization of appropriations for the John H. Prescott Marine Mammal Rescue Assistance Grant Fund and the Marine Mammal Unusual Mortality Event Fund.

H.R. 844 would direct the relevant Secretary to collect and update procedures for rescuing and rehabilitating marine mammals entangled in fishing gear, rope, line, or entangled in any way other. The bill also authorizes the Secretary to enter into agreements for marine mammal stranding events requiring emergency assistance.

The 110th Congress passed a similar bill by voice vote, but the legislation did not pass the other body. We support this bill and commend Representative YOUNG for his leadership on this issue.

I ask Members on both sides to support passage of this legislation.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. I rise in support of H.R. 844, the Marine Mammal Rescue Assistance Amendments of 2009. This legislation, introduced by Congressman DON YOUNG, will extend the John H. Prescott Marine Mammal Rescue Assistance Grant Program.

The program was first authorized in 2000 to address the funding needs of facilities assisting in the recovery and rehabilitation of stranded marine mammals. The Prescott Grant Program has been very successful in supporting facilities around the Nation, volunteering facility space and staff time to rehabilitate stranded marine mammals and return many of them to the wild.

While the Prescott Grant Program has been successful in many areas, some areas of the country do not have appropriate coverage. The Alaska region and the southeast region are two examples. This legislation will provide funding for the Department of Commerce to help address the lack of cov-

erage in certain areas, and will also increase the number of grants that can be issued each year.

I urge an “aye” vote on H.R. 844.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HOLT. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG).

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. I thank the gentleman for yielding to me.

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 844, the Marine Mammal Rescue Assistance Amendments of 2009. This important piece of legislation continues to build upon the original legislation this body passed in 1972, the Marine Mammal Protection Act.

Continuing to recognize the importance of marine mammals and the fragile state of some of their populations, Congress passed the Marine Mammal Rescue Assistance Act in 2000 and created the John H. Prescott Marine Mammal Assistance Program.

Keeping with the spirit of these achievements in marine mammal protection, I introduced this legislation which builds upon our earlier successes and expands the Prescott Grant Program. This bill will allow the Secretary of Commerce to provide grants to participants who assist in removing ropes and other materials from marine mammals while at sea.

By providing grants to institutions such as the Alaskan Sealife Center, untold numbers of marine mammals have been positively impacted. Support for this bill will further invest in the health of our oceans and its numerous marine resources.

Again, I urge my colleagues to support marine mammals and the passage of H.R. 844.

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

Mr. HOLT. 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 New Jersey (Mr. HOLT) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 844.

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.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

WILLIAM BARRETT TRAVIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. POE of Texas. Madam Speaker, today is March the 2nd; and on March 2, 1836, my native State, Texas, declared independence from Mexico.

It all started back when Texas was a part of Mexico. Mexico revolted from the Spanish empire, won that revolution, and then Texas became a part of northern Mexico. And there was a constitutional republic in Mexico, it was the Constitution of 1824, drafted somewhat after the American Constitution. But things turned sour when a guy by the name of Santa Anna became dictator of Mexico, abolished the constitution, and eliminated civil rights. And people who lived in Texas, both white, brown and black, were offended by that, and so in 1835 revolution started in Texas, or northern Mexico. And on March 2, 1836, Texas declared independence from Mexico.

It was an interesting time of the year because, you see, on March the second, there were already 187 volunteers in a beat-up old Spanish church not far from where Texas independence was declared, that being Washington on the Brazos. In that beat-up old Spanish church, a mission, it was called the Alamo. And those 187 volunteers from every State in the Union, from 13 foreign countries, including Mexico, of all races stood defiant against Santa Anna's invading Army of about 6,000 that came in to quell the revolution.

□ 1445

We all know what happened at the Battle of the Alamo. For 13 days those 187 volunteers withheld the onslaught, and finally on March 6, 4 days hence, the Alamo fell.

The Alamo was commanded by my favorite person in all of history, William Barrett Travis. He was a 27-year-old lawyer from South Carolina, then Alabama, and then came to Texas. And one of his last letters from the Alamo pleading for other Texans to come to his help and help Texas' independence was written on February 24, 1836. It goes like this, Madam Speaker:

“To the people of the world and all of Texas, I am besieged by a thousand or more of the enemy under Santa Anna. I have sustained a continual bombardment and cannon fire for over 24 hours, but I have not lost a man. The enemy has demanded surrender at its discretion. Otherwise, the fort will be put to the sword. I have answered that demand with a cannon shot. And the flag still waves proudly over the wall.

“I shall never surrender or retreat. I call upon you, in the name of liberty and everything dear to our character, to come to my aid with all dispatch. If this call is neglected, I am determined to sustain myself for as long as possible and do what is necessary for my honor and my country. Victory or death.

“God and Texas, William Barrett Travis.”

That was one of the last letters he wrote, and except for 32 men from the small town of Gonzales, no one came to