

and say, well, we had a budget crunch and we just couldn't save them. So we hope we get this done.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Just for the record, I think it's important to note also that this legislation has the full support of the cochairs of the bipartisan International Conservation Caucus, which includes Congressman NORM DICKS, Congressman HAROLD ROGERS, Congressman JOHN TANNER and Congressman ED ROYCE, as well as the Safari Caucus.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that Members on both sides support the passage of this noncontroversial bill.

Mr. BERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 411, the Great Cats and Rare Canids Act of 2009. I strongly endorse this effort to provide financial resources and foster international cooperation to restore and perpetuate healthy populations of endangered species and to protect threatened habitats.

This bill establishes a fund to support specific conservation activities by "any wildlife management authority" of a foreign country that meets certain criteria, as well as groups and individuals with demonstrated, relevant expertise. While supporting such efforts is a key element of any effective conservation strategy, it seems to me that such funding in effect constitutes a new form of foreign assistance that ought to be carefully coordinated with our other foreign aid programs.

In the first place, it is essential that the Secretary of the Interior, who will be administering these programs, consult closely with the Secretary of State to ensure that these activities will not conflict with our overall foreign policy objectives. For instance, if there are problems with corruption or transparency and accountability in a particular government, the State Department would be in a better position to know which entities are reliable partners, and to ensure that funding is not diverted to unauthorized purposes. There may also be some countries to which all other government-to-government aid has been terminated for political or human rights reasons, and in which these conservation activities ought to be conducted exclusively through non-governmental organizations.

Secondly, the State Department, the United States Agency for International Development, the Millennium Challenge Corporation, the Peace Corps and other foreign policy agencies may be carrying out their own environmental programs in a given country. The conservation activities supported by this new fund must be coordinated with ongoing and planned efforts of such agencies in order to avoid duplication and overlap and to seize openings for collaboration. Without a mechanism for consultation with the State Department and USAID, opportunities to build synergy among programs will be lost and the risks of waste and inefficiency will escalate.

In light of these concerns, I would strongly urge that in implementing these new provisions, the Secretary of the Interior develop a mechanism for full and meaningful consultation with the State Department, USAID and the foreign policy agencies under the Department's guidance.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by

the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Mrs. CHRISTENSEN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 411, 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. GOHMERT. Mr. 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.

#### LAKE HODGES SURFACE WATER IMPROVEMENT AND RECLAMATION ACT OF 2009

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1219) to make amendments to the Reclamation Projects Authorization and Adjustment Act of 1992.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1219

*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 "Lake Hodges Surface Water Improvement and Reclamation Act of 2009".

#### SEC. 2. PROJECT AUTHORIZATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Reclamation Waste-water and Groundwater Study and Facilities Act (Public Law 102-575, title XVI; 43 U.S.C. 390h et seq.) is amended by inserting after section 16 the following:

"SEC. 16. LAKE HODGES SURFACE WATER IMPROVEMENT AND RECLAMATION PROJECT.

"(a) AUTHORIZATION.—The Secretary, in cooperation with the Olivenhain Municipal Water District, California, is authorized to participate in the design, planning, and construction of projects to treat, reclaim, and reuse impaired surface water from Lakes Hodges in San Diego County, California.

"(b) COST SHARE.—The Federal share of the costs of the projects authorized by this section shall not exceed 25 percent of the total cost.

"(c) LIMITATION.—The Secretary shall not provide funds for the operation or maintenance of a project authorized by this section."

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections in section 2 of the Reclamation Projects Authorization and Adjustment Act of 1992 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 16 the following: "Sec. 16. Lake Hodges surface water improvement and reclamation project."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Mrs. CHRISTENSEN) and the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. H.R. 1219 authorizes the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Bureau of Reclamation, to participate in the Lake Hodges Surface Water Improvement and Reclamation Project.

This project would pre-treat 13,000 acre-feet of impaired Lake Hodges water currently unavailable for consumptive use. We have no objection to this noncontroversial bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I would like to yield to the author of this piece of legislation, this bipartisan piece of legislation, as much time as he shall consume, the gentleman from California (Mr. BILBRAY).

Mr. BILBRAY. Mr. Speaker, this bill is one that is balanced in time and in effort. At a time when snow packs on Sierra Nevada are very low, at a time when the fact that the water supplies for Southern California have been cut off dramatically through a court order restriction or outright abolition on pumping in the Delta area of the San Joaquin Valley because of the endangered delta smelt, and especially due to the fact that this problem has run into Hodges, those of us in the Federal Government can take a little bit of responsibility here, seeing the fact that a major contributing factor to the pollution problem in this lake was our procedure in the Endangered Species Act, though meaning well to preserve the species, took time that created the problem.

And let me explain to you what happened here. The lake lowered to a level where habitat for the least Bell's vireo was able to grow on the dry land during that time.

When authorities realized that this was going to become a problem, they were not allowed, because of the permitting process for what had been designated a habitat that was great for the least Bell's vireo, an endangered species at that time, now threatened, but basically to explain it is the process took so long that the lake raised back up, flooded out this habitat, and now that habitat is decomposing and polluting the waters of Lake Hodges.

No one meant this to happen. There was no intention by either the environmental agencies involved or by the local community to address this issue. It was just as our regulations go, we create these less-than-appropriate situations.

This bill is one that not only recognizes the responsibility of the Federal Government to the problem, but really is one where the local community is saying we will take on the great majority of the responsibility of addressing this issue. For every dollar of Federal funds that is committed under this bill, there will be \$3 of local funds to address this.

And this is not an issue that only affects the 50th District, my district, and

a small section around Lake Hodges. The entirety of Southern California is desperate for the massive amounts of water—not massive—but large amounts of water that is not safe to drink at this time.

I think this is a good cooperative effort. The local community has said we will match you 3 to 1. We will hold harmless the fact that the procedures didn't work out like we would all like it to do, but we will be able to make available very safe drinking water in a very environmentally friendly way.

And that's basically one of those things that I think we can look to as Federal representatives of cooperating, not doing something for the local community but helping the local community do itself and addressing concerns and problems that we might have been part and parcel involved, sticking to our responsibility as long as the local community is willing to stand up and take care of theirs.

With that, I would ask passage of this bill, Mr. Speaker. I think it's one of those, as the chairwoman for the committee pointed out, it's a reasonable, balanced approach. And when we talk about a 3 to 1 match, a local, I think we have got a very strong statement here that the Federal Government is willing to participate, especially when a community is willing to match us 3 to 1 for a situation that everyone agrees no one was without fault on this.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. May I simply say in closing on our side that I have to commend the gentleman from California for coming up with this water recycling project that would basically pre-treat the impaired surface of Lake Hodges, California, so that consumer water needs are going to be met.

The drought has largely been made because of litigation to protect a 3-inch fish, and it will decrease Southern California's water supplies. As a result, there will be water rationing in some areas and water rates will increase for working families and businesses.

There will be less imported water to recycle. However, water recycling is still, in the long term, a necessity for California and other arid regions in the West. And all these projects together will help ensure that there will be no such thing as a waste of our water. So I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Mrs. CHRISTENSEN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1219.

The question was taken.

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

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. 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.

#### MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Ms. Evans, one of his secretaries.

#### REPEALING THE "BENNETT FREEZE"

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill (S. 39) to repeal section 10(f) of Public Law 93-531, commonly known as the "Bennett Freeze".

The Clerk read the title of the Senate bill.

The text of the Senate bill is as follows:

S. 39

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

#### SECTION 1. REPEAL OF THE BENNETT FREEZE.

Section 10(f) of Public Law 93-531 (25 U.S.C. 640d-9(f)) is repealed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Mrs. CHRISTENSEN) and the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the pending legislation would settle a longstanding dilemma faced by the people of the Navajo and Hopi Nations in Arizona. At the outset, I would commend our colleague from Arizona (Mrs. KIRKPATRICK) for her tenacity in working to have this measure considered by the House, and hopefully by the end of the day, passed and sent to the President for his signature.

The need for this legislation dates back to an executive order issued in 1882 which set aside land in northern Arizona for the Hopi Tribe and such other Indians as the Secretary of the Interior may see fit to settle thereon. A 1934 act of Congress setting aside some of the same lands for the Navajo Nation further complicated the matter.

In 1962, a Federal District Court ruled that both the Hopi Tribe and the

Navajo Nation had joint rights to use the land in dispute. This ruling created great tension between the two tribes over critical issues such as access to sacred sites and the development of lands in the joint use area. Because of this situation, in 1966 the Commissioner of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Robert Bennett, issued a freeze on any development on the disputed lands. This freeze extended to some of the core aspects of tribal life, including the building of homes, improvement to property, public works projects, power lines, and water and sewer access.

After nearly a century of dispute between the Navajo Nation and the Hopi Tribe, the Navajo-Hopi Settlement Act was enacted in 1974 in an attempt to settle rights and interests between the two Native nations. However, in 1980, Congress amended that act to codify the Bennett Freeze. As a result of this freeze on development, tribal citizens living in the Bennett Freeze region find themselves living in 1966 conditions. Only 3 percent of these families affected by the Bennett Freeze have electricity and only 10 percent have running water.

In 2005, the Navajo and the Hopi governments entered into an intergovernmental agreement that resolved all outstanding issues regarding the land in dispute. This agreement contains language which puts an end to the ban on development on the disputed lands. The Secretary of the Interior approved this agreement in September 2006.

This legislation will clarify the law so that it is in agreement with all of the land users and finally close this longstanding dispute between neighboring Indian tribes.

I once again commend our colleague, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, who has a companion bill here in the House for her work in getting this bill to the floor today. The aforementioned conditions of those living in the Bennett Freeze area are unacceptable. The tribes have resolved their issues and the administration has fulfilled its duties, and now it is time for us to pass this legislation and fulfill our trust responsibility to these two native nations.

I urge all of my colleagues to support the passage of Senate bill 39.

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

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise to support this bipartisan legislation that was authored by Senator JOHN MCCAIN. This bill would end more than 40 years of Federal restrictions placed upon native people living in the western area of the Navajo Nation. These restrictions have barred area residents from making any improvements and repairs to their homes and property.

Once this legislation becomes law, both Navajo and Hopi people will have the opportunity to move forward with critical development projects aimed at providing relief to their region. This