

convicted of mutiny were African Americans.

The injustice and the legal battles that followed strongly influenced the Navy's move toward desegregation in 1945, and President Truman's 1948 executive order desegregating the Armed Forces and guaranteeing "equality of treatment and opportunity for all persons in the armed services without regard to race, color, religion or national origin."

When this bill becomes law, the National Park Service will be able to budget for the memorial's needs, and an interpretive center authorized here will allow veterans, students, and other visitors to learn about Port Chicago even if they can't access the site all of the time, which is located currently within the Concord Naval Weapons Station.

This legislation was approved by the House last year as part of the National Defense Authorization Act earlier this year, and I want to thank the Committees on Natural Resources and Armed Services for helping to expedite its consideration again today.

In particular, I want to recognize Chairwoman MADELEINE BORDALLO for managing this legislation here today; Chairman RAHALL of the Natural Resources Committee for its timely consideration and presentation to the floor; DOC HASTINGS, ranking member of the Natural Resources Committee; Chairman RAÚL GRIJALVA of the National Parks, Forests, and Public Lands Subcommittee; ROB BISHOP, ranking member of that subcommittee; Chairman IKE SKELTON of the Armed Services Committee; JOHN MCHUGH, former member of Armed Services; and BUCK MCKEON, who now holds that position on the Armed Services Committee.

I also want to thank the staff for the two committees, including Leslie Duncan, David Watkins, and David Sienicki, and Ben Miller, my legislative director.

I urge all my colleagues to support H.R. 1044.

Again, I would like to thank the gentlewoman for yielding me this time.

□ 1430

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. I have no more speakers on my side, and if the gentlelady is the last speaker on that side, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 1044—The Port Chicago Naval Magazine National Memorial Enhancement Act of 2009. I would like to thank my colleague from California, Congressman GEORGE MILLER, for offering this resolution and for his lengthy and dedicated work to ensure that history records the real story of the bravery and heroism of those injured and killed at Port Chicago on July 17, 1944.

On that day, 320 sailors and civilians were killed when munitions caches being loaded onto ships at Port Chicago, California, accidentally detonated. In addition, 390 sailors and civilians were injured in the explosion. The

vast majority of the dead and injured were enlisted African Americans serving our country during World War II.

Following the accident, when servicemen protested the dangerous process of loading munitions and the apparent lack of interest or will to remedy the process, the men were court-martialed for being "mutinous" and sentenced to prison terms. The group came to be known as "The Port Chicago 50."

This accident happened during a time when segregation in all aspects of American life still raged in our country. Even men who put their lives on the line for our country were not spared from the effects of racism. Not surprisingly, both the ensuing reparations for family members and the shameful trial of these men were loaded with racial overtones.

The least we can do then is to upgrade the status of the Memorial erected in honor of those killed at Port Chicago to that of a National Park, so that we can direct appropriate Federal funds to repair and maintain the Memorial.

In addition, I hope we can take the additional step of exonerating these men and expunging their criminal records. In the meantime, let's honor the fallen of Port Chicago by supporting H.R. 1044.

I again thank my colleague, Mr. MILLER, for offering this bill.

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I again urge Members to support this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Guam (Ms. BORDALLO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1044, 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. BROUN of Georgia. 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.

NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS SUBMERGED LAND CONVEYANCE

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 934) to convey certain submerged lands to the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in order to give that territory the same benefits in its submerged lands as Guam, the Virgin Islands, and American Samoa have in their submerged lands, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 934

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

SECTION 1. CONVEYANCE OF CERTAIN SUBMERGED LANDS TO THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The first section of Public Law 93-435 (48 U.S.C. 1705) is amended by inserting "the Commonwealth of the North-

ern Mariana Islands," after "Guam," each place it appears.

(b) REFERENCES TO DATE OF ENACTMENT.—For the purposes of the amendment made by subsection (a), each reference in Public Law 93-435 (48 U.S.C. 1705) to the "date of enactment" shall be considered to be a reference to the date of the enactment of this section.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Guam (Ms. BORDALLO) and the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Guam.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which 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 Guam?

There was no objection.

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I call up for the consideration of the House H.R. 934, which is the first bill introduced by our colleague, the gentleman from the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Mr. KILILI SABLAN. I thank the gentleman for bringing the subject matter of this bill to our attention.

This measure provides equity to the CNMI. It is the only U.S. territory that does not control its submerged lands. The bill before us would simply convey the submerged lands surrounding the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands extending out to 3 nautical miles to the Government of the CNMI. This is the same treatment of submerged lands afforded to Guam, American Samoa, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

I would like to thank Mr. SABLAN for introducing this legislation and for making H.R. 934 one of his first legislative priorities as the delegate from the CNMI.

Mr. Speaker, I urge support for this important legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 934, and I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, under this legislation, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands will have parity with other U.S. territories by gaining jurisdiction over its submerged lands out to 3 geographic miles. The other territories were given jurisdiction over submerged lands out to 3 geographic miles in the 1974 Submerged Lands Act. It is time that the Commonwealth is given the same authority, and this legislation provides that.

And with that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the author of the bill and the gentleman from the CNMI, Mr. SABLAN, for as much time as he may consume.

Mr. SABLAN. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentlewoman from Guam,

the distinguished chairwoman of our subcommittee, MADELEINE BORDALLO, for her leadership on many matters pertaining to the insular areas and to the Mariana Archipelago islands that we represent here in Congress. I want to especially thank her for her support of H.R. 934.

On February 25, 2005, the people of the Northern Mariana Islands awoke to the news that the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals had affirmed a lower court ruling stating that the submerged lands and the waters above them surrounding our islands do not belong to us; rather, they are the property of the United States of America. The decision came as a shock.

For at least 3,500 years, the Chamorro and Refaluwasch people have lived on these islands and fished and sailed in the waters around them. Never did we think them not our own, nor did the people of the Northern Mariana Islands ever believe, in entering the Covenant of Political Union with the United States of America, that we were relinquishing our rights and title to the submerged lands and waters surrounding us. These lands and waters have always been an integral part of our existence, essential to our being and livelihood and to the sense of who we are; yet the Ninth Circuit ruled otherwise.

In doing so, the Court did, however, "recognize the importance of the submerged lands to the culture, history and future of the Northern Mariana Islands," and acknowledged that Congress, if it chose, could remedy the situation and return these lands to the people of the Northern Mariana Islands, and that is what H.R. 934 does.

The bill conveys to the people of the Northern Mariana Islands the submerged lands surrounding our islands and extending 3 geographic miles outward from their coastlines. The measure is supported by the elected leadership of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

I ask to enter into the RECORD this letter jointly signed by Governor Benigno R. Fitial, Speaker of the House Arnold I. Palacios, and Senate President Pete P. Reyes, in which the three confirmed their support of H.R. 934.

I would also like to add to the RECORD a second letter of support. This is from the Friends of the Monument, an organization that worked for and successfully achieved the designation of large areas of the waters and lands in the Marianas as the Marianas Trench Marine National Monument.

The Monument is one of the largest marine conservation areas in the world, which we share with our neighbor, Guam, 115,000 square miles, and protects the world's deepest ocean, the Marianas Trench, 35,813 feet deep.

It is the understanding of all parties that H.R. 934 gives the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands the same ownership rights over the submerged land surrounding our islands as

are possessed by Guam, the Virgin Islands and American Samoa.

This conveyance includes the three northernmost islands in the Northern Mariana Islands, which constitute the "Island Unit" in the Marianas Trench Marine National Monument by Presidential proclamation on January 6, 2009.

It is also understood that after this bill is enacted into law, the people of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands will have the option of exercising full control over the submerged lands surrounding these three islands, or deciding to include those submerged lands within the Monument under comanagement with responsible Federal agencies.

The proclamation committed the Federal Government to providing the Commonwealth with this option, and H.R. 934 expressly provides that it does not amend, repeal or otherwise alter the proclamation and the commitments attached to it.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 934 is the very first bill that a representative of the people of the Northern Mariana Islands has ever introduced in the United States Congress.

I ask my colleagues to support the measure. I thank the ranking member, Mr. HASTINGS, also for his support of the measure, and I express my hope that this bill giving back to the people of the Northern Mariana Islands what they always believed to be their own will be the first bill introduced by their own representative that is enacted into law.

COMMONWEALTH OF THE
NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
Saipan, MP, July 9, 2009.

Hon. GREGORIO C. SABLAN,
*CNMI Delegate to the United States,
Washington, DC.*

DEAR CONGRESSMAN SABLAN: We are jointly writing to inform you that we are completely united in our support for HR 934. We urge you to push for the passage of this legislation in order to give the CNMI control over the first three miles of its submerged lands.

We support this legislation with a certain understanding of the provisions of H.R. 934 that we urge you to include in the Congressional record, namely, that H.R. 934 would provide for the following: H.R. 934 will give the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands the same ownership rights over the submerged lands surrounding its islands as are possessed by Guam, the Virgin Islands, and American Samoa. This would include the submerged lands around the three northernmost islands in the Commonwealth, which constitute the "Islands Unit" in the Marianas Trench Marine National Monument established by Presidential Proclamation on January 6, 2009. After this bill is enacted into law, the people of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands will have the option of exercising full control over the submerged lands surrounding these three islands or deciding to include those submerged lands within the Monument under co-management with the responsible federal agencies. The Proclamation committed the federal government to providing the Commonwealth with this option and H.R. 934 expressly provides that it does not amend, repeal, or otherwise alter the Proclamation.

With this understanding of the contents of H.R. 934, we urge you to support H.R. 934 for the benefit of the people of the CNMI.

Sincerely,

BENIGNO R. FITIAL,
Governor.

PETE P. REYES,
Senate President.

ARNOLD I. PALACIOS,
Speaker of the House.

FRIENDS OF THE MONUMENT,
Saipan, MP, June 23, 2009.

Re Marianas Trench Marine National Monument.

Representative GREG CAMACHO SABLAN,
*House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.*

H.A.F.A. ADAI DELEGATE SABLAN, This letter is a follow-up to the letter we sent you dated April 17, 2009. In that letter we requested for "the state waters from 0-3 miles surrounding the islands of Uracas, Maug, and Asuncion (to) remain a part of the monument, under the jurisdiction (and ownership) of the Commonwealth and co-managed with the rest of the monument by the Commonwealth and the Departments of Commerce and Interior."

This was our stance before the declaration of the monument and it is our stance today.

Many promises made by the former Council on Environmental Quality Chairman James Connaughton in the lead up to creation of the monument have been kept. The Commonwealth has received untold amounts of positive media exposure. There is a renewed world-wide interest in exploring the depths of the deepest, darkest place on Earth, as evidenced by the recent expedition by Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute to the bottom of Challenger Deep, only the third such expedition in the history of mankind. The Northern Marianas are also now recognized as the home to one of the most iconic, recognizable geological features on the planet, adding to the richness of our culture and heritage. The creation of the monument will have everlasting positive effects on our economy and the health of our marine environment and will help preserve our unique culture. It has also brought the Commonwealth closer to achieving the goals of the Micronesia Challenge, which seeks to effectively conserve 30% of the near shore resources of all the islands in Micronesia. Most importantly, in the span of just a few months our people have become worldwide leaders in ocean conservation. Perhaps you saw the Friends of the Monument on NBC Nightly News during Earth Week?

Sadly, several promises remain unfulfilled. During his visit to the Commonwealth in October 2008, Chairman Connaughton promised the people of the Commonwealth that the designation of the monument would give our people (1) co-management of the monument, (2) a visitors center on Saipan, and (3) control of the submerged lands from 0-3 miles around the 14 islands of the Commonwealth.

We remain committed to fulfilling these promises, starting with the control of the submerged lands around all the islands of the Commonwealth. Just so that we are clear, it is our recommendation that "the state waters from 0-3 miles surrounding the islands of Uracas, Maug, and Asuncion remain a part of the monument, under the jurisdiction (and ownership) of the Commonwealth and co-managed with the rest of the monument by the Commonwealth and the Departments of Commerce and Interior."

Thank you for taking the time to listen to our concerns. Your staff has been very gracious in allowing us time to share our recommendations and concerns for the Marianas Trench Marine National Monument.

And on a final note, on behalf of the entire Friends of the Monument organization,

thank you for the recent Congressional Commendation. It is quite an honor to be one of the first organizations in the Northern Mariana Islands to be so recognized by the United States Congress.

Thank you and I look forward to your reply.

IGNACIO V. CABRERA,
Chairman, Friends of the Monument.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE).

Mr. FLAKE. I just want to welcome the gentleman from the Northern Marianas to this Chamber, and it's great to have him here. This is something that we have wanted for a long time, to have this territory represented here in the U.S. Congress.

This is a good bill. It's a bill that some of us have worked on for years to ensure that the submerged lands are where they belong, that the ownership is there, and that the rights that accrue to that attain to the Northern Marianas.

So I just stand in support of this legislation. Again, welcome, the gentleman from the Northern Marianas. We're glad he's here in Congress where he belongs.

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I have no additional requests for time, and reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. I have one additional speaker. I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. BROUN).

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman, my good friend, Mr. HASTINGS, for yielding some time on this issue, and I greatly appreciate the people of the Mariana Islands wanting to control their own property. And I congratulate them on the introduction of this legislation, and I certainly support it. And I think it's very laudable that we are bringing this forward, and I very much support it.

I think States and territories should control their own property. We have too much Federal control of State property and Federal property, and I am glad to see this legislation. And I congratulate you and my friends on the other side for bringing this forward.

I am also concerned about the submersion though of the American taxpayer in just a sea of debt. We have created more debt in this Congress, this administration has proposed more debt over the next 5 years than has been created by every single Presidency since George Washington all the way through George W. Bush. And the American people are drowning in a sea of debt, and we are creating more and more debt for those people. We are robbing our children and our grandchildren of their future. The American people are going to live at a lower standard than we live today because of the debt that we are creating, and I am very concerned about that.

We have got to stop the spending. It's egregious. It's absolutely outrageous the amount of money that's being spent by this Congress. And we see bill after bill, a nonstimulus bill, an omni-

bus bill, a Wall Street bailout that our previous administration brought to us and that this Congress and this administration continued and spent the other half.

We have a health care bill that's being introduced just today that is going to create more debt, and it's going to destroy the health care system and put a Washington bureaucrat between patients and their doctor. And Washington bureaucrats are going to be making health care decisions for their patients. And the American people need to stand up and say "no." It's going to overwhelm them, a tremendous sea of debt that's being created by this Congress, and it has to stop.

And, Mr. Speaker, I just hope that the American people will understand what's going on here and will rise up, call their Congressman, call their two U.S. Senators and say "no" to this health care bill that's being introduced today. "No" to the tax and cap, so-called cap-and-trade bill that's nothing but a revenue bill that's not about the environment. Say "no" to that. "No" to this continued tsunami of spending that's going on here.

We've got a spending addiction here in Congress. I'm an addictionologist. I've practiced addiction medicine in my family practice. In addiction medicine, we say where there is not denial there is not an addiction. Congress has an addiction, a spending addiction, and they are denying it. We are denying it, and the spending has to stop.

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I have no additional requests for time and would inquire of the minority whether they have any additional speakers.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman is the last speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. FALOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 934, recognizing the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands' (CNMIs') ownership of submerged lands lying three geographical miles outside of mainland coastlines.

First and foremost, I want to commend my good friend, Congressman SABLON of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, for taking the initiative to introduce this important legislation. This bill is an example of the continued efforts by the Congress to support the Territories.

H.R. 934 seeks to officially award the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands submerged lands that are located three geographical miles outside of mainland coastlines. Submerged lands qualify as lands permanently or periodically covered by tidal waters up to, but not above, the line of high tide. American Samoa, Guam, and the Virgin Islands were granted ownership over our own respective submerged lands by the 93rd session of the Congress, before the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands became a territory of the United States. The CNMI wishes to be afforded the same opportunities granted to the other territories by having these submerged lands officially recognized as a part of their Territory.

Mr. Speaker, by allowing these submerged lands to be recognized, they will fall under the

jurisdiction of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, as opposed to that of the U.S. Seeing as the submerged lands are located so closely to the mainland, having them fall within the jurisdiction of the CNMI will allow for sufficient justice to be served. Commonwealth citizens and officials, instead of officials residing thousands of miles away, will be implementing and enforcing laws that apply to their population.

The U.S. government will still have claim over gas, oil, and other mineral deposits that may be possibly found on these lands. It should be noted that H.R. 934 applies solely to those lands that are submerged; the U.S. government will still have full control and possession of lands above sea level that do not belong to the Commonwealth. Additionally, it does not circumvent any actions that may be taken or regulations that have been put forth by U.S. naval authorities regarding these submerged lands.

It is apparent that H.R. 934 serves to benefit the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and will not be detrimental to the United States. For these reasons, I urge my colleagues to pass H.R. 934. Again, I thank my colleagues for their support of this legislation.

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I again urge Members to support 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 Guam (Ms. BORDALLO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 934, 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. BROUN of Georgia. 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.

VALIDATING NEVADA LANDS TRANSFER

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 762) to validate final patent number 27-2005-0081, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 762

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

SECTION 1. FINAL PATENT AND LAND RECONFIGURATION IN CLARK COUNTY AND LINCOLN COUNTY, NEVADA.

Patent No. 27-2005-0081 and its associated land reconfiguration issued by the Bureau of Land Management on February 18, 2005, is hereby affirmed and validated as having been issued pursuant to and in compliance with the provisions of the Nevada-Florida Land Exchange Authorization Act of 1988 (Public Law 100-275), the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, and the Federal Land Policy Management Act of 1976 for the benefit of the desert tortoise and other species and their habitat to increase the likelihood of