

(A) establishing a population-based database that may be used for longitudinal and other research on paralysis and other disabling conditions;

(B) developing comprehensive paralysis and other physical disability action plans and activities focused on the items listed in subsection (b)(4);

(C) assisting State-based programs in establishing and implementing partnerships and collaborations that maximize the input and support of people with paralysis and other physical disabilities and their constituent organizations;

(D) coordinating paralysis and physical disability activities with existing State-based disability and health programs;

(E) providing education and training opportunities and programs for health professionals and allied caregivers; and

(F) developing, testing, evaluating, and replicating effective intervention programs to maintain or improve health and quality of life.

(2) To private health and disability organizations for the purpose of—

(A) disseminating information to the public;

(B) improving access to services for persons living with paralysis and other physical disabilities and their caregivers;

(C) testing model intervention programs to improve health and quality of life; and

(D) coordinating existing services with State-based disability and health programs.

(d) **COORDINATION OF ACTIVITIES.**—The Secretary shall ensure that activities under this section are coordinated as appropriate by the agencies of the Department of Health and Human Services.

(e) **AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**—For the purpose of carrying out this section, there is authorized to be appropriated \$25,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2008 through 2011.

TITLE XV—SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION FACILITIES AUTHORIZATION

SEC. 15101. LABORATORY AND SUPPORT SPACE, EDGEWATER, MARYLAND.

(a) **AUTHORITY TO DESIGN AND CONSTRUCT.**—The Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution is authorized to design and construct laboratory and support space to accommodate the Mathias Laboratory at the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center in Edgewater, Maryland.

(b) **AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section a total of \$41,000,000 for fiscal years 2009 through 2011. Such sums shall remain available until expended.

SEC. 15102. LABORATORY SPACE, GAMBOA, PANAMA.

(a) **AUTHORITY TO CONSTRUCT.**—The Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution is authorized to construct laboratory space to accommodate the terrestrial research program of the Smithsonian tropical research institute in Gamboa, Panama.

(b) **AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section a total of \$14,000,000 for fiscal years 2009 and 2010. Such sums shall remain available until expended.

SEC. 15103. CONSTRUCTION OF GREENHOUSE FACILITY.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution is authorized to construct a greenhouse facility at its museum support facility in Suitland, Maryland, to maintain the horticultural operations of, and preserve the orchid collection held in trust by, the Smithsonian Institution.

(b) **AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**—There is authorized to be appropriated \$12,000,000 to carry out this section. Such sums shall remain available until expended.

Amend the title so as to read: “An Act to designate certain land as components of the National Wilderness Preservation System, to authorize certain programs and activities in

the Department of the Interior and the Department of Agriculture, and for other purposes.”

The amendment (No. 686) was agreed to, as follows:

(Purpose: To amend the title)

Amend the title so as to read: “To designate certain land as components of the National Wilderness Preservation System, to authorize certain programs and activities in the Department of the Interior and the Department of Agriculture, and for other purposes.”

Mr. BINGAMAN. Madam President, today the Senate has passed H.R. 146, the Omnibus Public Lands Management Act of 2009. As I said during the debate, H.R. 146 includes over 160 bills from the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources and reflects many years of hard work.

This achievement would not have been possible without the hard work of our outstanding staff. Both our ranking member, Senator MURKOWSKI, and I are very fortunate to have a very dedicated and experienced professional staff. They service the committee and the Senate well. They deserve our thanks.

On the Democratic staff of the committee, I would like to thank the committee's staff director, Bob Simon, and chief counsel, Sam Fowler, for all of their work on this legislation, as on all the legislation that comes through our committee. I would also like to thank senior counsel Patty Beneke; counsel Mike Connor, who worked on all of the water issues included in the bill; counsels David Brooks, Kira Finkler, and Scott Miller, who coordinated all of the park and public lands bills; professional staff members Jorge Silva-Banuelos, who worked very hard on many of the New Mexico land bills; and Jonathan Epstein; and two National Park Service fellows, Karl Cordova, who worked on the committee last year, and Mike Gauthier, who is on the staff for the current year.

I would also like to thank the committee's chief clerk, Mia Bennett; executive assistant Amanda Kelly; communications director Bill Wicker; press secretary David Marks; and staff assistants Rachel Pasternack, Anna-Kristina Fox, Gina Weinstock, and Rosemarie Calabro.

On the Republican side, let me acknowledge Senator MURKOWSKI's new staff director, McKie Campbell, and chief counsel Karen Billups. I would also like to note my thanks to former Senator Domenici's staff director during the previous Congress, Frank Macchiarola, former minority chief counsel, Judy Pensabene, and former professional staff member Tom Lillie. I would also like to recognize counsel Kellie Donnelly; as well as professional staff members Frank Gladics, Josh Johnson, Chuck Kleeschulte, and Kaleb Froehlich, all of whom made significant contributions to this bill.

In addition, I am very grateful to the committee's nondesignated staff: Allison Seyfurth, Dawson Foard, Nancy

Hall, Amber Passmore, Monica Chestnut, and Wanda Green.

H.R. 146 contains over 1,200 pages of text, and was the subject of numerous revisions. I am grateful to the help of the Senate legislative counsel office, and Gary Endicott, Heather Burnham, and Colin Campbell in particular.

I would also like to thank Cliff Isenberg from the Senate Budget Committee for his help; as well as Deb Reis from the Congressional Budget Office, and Tyler Kruzich, formerly with CBO.

Finally, let me acknowledge the great help in bringing the bill to the floor we received from the majority leader and his staff: Neil Kornze, Chris Miller, Randy DeValk, Gary Myrick, and, as always, the secretary for the majority, Lula Davis, as well as Tim Mitchell, the assistant secretary for the majority. I would also like to thank the cloakroom staff, Joe Lapia, Meredith Melody, Brandon Durlflinger, and Estaban Galvan, for all of their assistance.

All of these fine staff members had a hand in putting H.R. 146 together and moving it through the legislative process. We would not have been able to pass the bill without their hard work and their professionalism. I wish to thank each and every one of them for their good work.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The Senator from California is recognized.

Mrs. BOXER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that after the conclusion of my remarks, Senator WHITEHOUSE have the floor, and then Senator SHAHEEN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PASSAGE OF H.R. 146

Mrs. BOXER. Madam President, we just took a very important vote on a very important bill that is good for our country and good for our families. It is good for our heritage. It is good for our economy because I would argue that when we preserve magnificent places in our land, it encourages people to come and see those places and spend time around those places and spend money around those places, and that helps our economy.

I thank the leaders of the Energy Committee on both sides of the aisle, Senators BINGAMAN and MURKOWSKI, and others on the committee. I also thank the staff who worked hard, and I want to take exception to a remark by Senator COBURN. After the staff was thanked, he got up and said, “Well, what staff works for the American people?” Well, I would argue that all the staff here and all of the Senators here work for the American people. And

even though Senator COBURN does not bless every provision in this bill, this bill has huge support because the bills in this package will protect some of the most breathtaking places in the Nation, areas that provide a refuge for birdwatchers, hikers, campers, equestrians, fishermen, and other visitors who are looking to escape our Nation's crowded, fast-passed cities to enjoy the tranquility of nature.

I am going to show a few pictures. This is in the Eastern Sierra, the bighorn sheep. We are protecting this magnificent creature that I know Senator HARKIN appreciates.

The bald eagle, which we know we have been doing a lot to save, will be preserved in the many acres we preserve in my home State of California.

In the Riverside bill, this is another magnificent scene of the mountains and the beautiful vegetation that grows without any water to speak of.

The Eastern Sierra, these White Mountains—imagine the beauty of this. So when people come and say we are not doing right by America to save areas such as this, all I say is, open your eyes and gaze upon God's creation. It is so magnificent.

I have one more photo I would like to show you. I know Senator SCHUMER feels the way I do about this. In the Eastern Sierras, this beautiful creek here, a beautiful place to come and enjoy the day, as I said, get away from our crowded cities, bring your family, and stay in the area.

Many bills in this package provide much needed water resources for our communities. It provides recycled water to areas suffering from drought, restoring major watersheds. We are experiencing one of the worst droughts in our State's history. That is why a coalition of 16 western water agencies and organizations wrote to Congress about the urgency of passing this bill that we happily just passed.

You saw some of the magnificent photos of some of the wilderness areas in California that have been saved. They are in what is called the California Desert and Mountain Heritage Act, the Sequoia-Kings Canyon National Park Wilderness Act, and the Eastern Sierra and Northern San Gabriel Wild Heritage Act.

I want to make a point to colleagues. On each of these wilderness areas, I worked with colleagues in the House, many of whom are Republicans, and I thank them enormously for their work: BUCK MCKEON, MARY BONO MACK, DEVIN NUNES. I also worked with many Democrats, including JIM COSTA. So we have had a wonderful working relationship across party lines.

There are 700,000 acres of wilderness and/or wilderness study areas and 105 miles of wild and scenic rivers in this bill in my home State. I would say again to Senator COBURN, although I suppose the best thing I can say to him is his argument did not win the day, is that it is our responsibility, I would say to him, to protect these magnifi-

cent areas so future generations can enjoy them exactly as we do. These are breathtaking places in California. They provide critically important habitat, as you saw, for the Peninsular bighorn sheep, the mule deer, mountain lions, desert tortoises, and bald eagles.

Again, the economics of this are very clear. In a time of recession, we want to look to the future for jobs, and we know that wilderness bills, just the three of mine in this bill, will produce an estimated 420 jobs and \$7 million in income to my State. I cannot say enough about the importance of opportunities such as this when you save the environment and you create jobs and everybody comes away a winner.

I would like to respond to some things Senator COBURN has been saying about one of these bills, the California Desert and Mountain Heritage Act. He has questioned why we are designating Beauty Mountain and the Pinto Mountains as wilderness in this bill even though the Bureau of Land Management failed to recommend them for wilderness back in 1990. Well, the answer is that a lot has changed since then—private lands have since been acquired by the BLM and dozens of mining claims have been retired. Without these restrictions, the BLM now supports wilderness designation for these areas and has testified before Congress in support of this bill. Also, Congress has repeatedly asserted its right to name wilderness areas—the agencies make recommendations but we make the final decision based on what we are hearing from the constituents we represent.

These three bills have bipartisan, bicameral, and diverse support. They would not impact the use of private lands, but would simply improve the protection of existing Forest Service, National Park Service, or Bureau of Land Management lands.

While preserving these areas, we have been careful to accommodate stakeholders' needs. For example, we worked to clarify that the Eastern Sierra and Northern San Gabriel Wild Heritage bill's designation of a Wild and Scenic River on segments of Piru Creek will not affect the operations of the United Water Conservation District or Pyramid Dam on the creek, including any rights they may have to modify water releases.

I will close by thanking my colleague, Senator FEINSTEIN, for not only supporting my wilderness bills that are in here but for her leadership in the San Joaquin River Restoration Settlement Act, which is included in this bill.

Senator COBURN tried to remove it from this bill. I do not understand his motivation. The settlement ended 18 years of litigation over the impacts of the Friant Dam on Chinook salmon populations. Why on Earth would anyone try to derail a settlement and drive us back into the courthouse?

What is in here is a carefully crafted compromise solution that is good for

our environment, for our agricultural economy, and for our urban communities.

Again, there is more to be said on this matter. I will say again, to see Senator COBURN get up and try to torpedo this important legislation was kind of shocking to me because once in a while I say we should come together here to preserve our Nation's heritage and to try to avoid litigation.

You know, the fact is, the San Joaquin settlement had broad bipartisan support, has it in my State, from the Governor. We even have the support of the outgoing Bush administration, bipartisan House Members, water agencies, conservation groups, elected officials.

So it is a happy day, frankly, for my State of California, a very happy day—700,000 acres of wilderness, the settlement over the San Joaquin River—and for this whole Nation it is a wonderful moment because we addressed the drought some of our areas are facing.

The areas in this bill are truly magnificent places representing California's and the Nation's incredible range of landscapes and habitats. I look forward to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to enact this bill into law and protect these treasures for future generations of Americans.

I hope this bill will get much attention. I hope the President will have a ceremony when he signs this bill because it deserve far more attention than it has been getting. It is good for the environment, it is good for the economy, and it shows a spirit of bipartisanship that I know our President and all of us encourage.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

THE BUDGET

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Madam President, I thank the distinguished chairman of the Environment and Public Works Committee for her passionate defense of our natural resources. She is a constant ally of the very best we cull forth from each other as Senators where our most precious environmental concerns are engaged. It is an honor to follow her.

Before I yield the floor to the distinguished Senator from New Hampshire, who has already made an impact here, I wanted to say a few words about the President's new budget.

Across the country, families sit at their kitchen tables and talk and make tough choices about their own family budget, about what they can afford to spend, about what they have to save. What will they do when it is time for the kids to go to college? What will they do if the car breaks down? What will they do if an elderly parent becomes ill? How will they use their finances wisely to plan for the future? This year, those choices are more difficult than ever. We have families in Rhode Island, as I am sure we have