

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. HASTINGS of Washington. 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, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

AMENDMENT TO PUBLIC LAW 93-435 WITH RESPECT TO NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 256) to amend Public Law 93-435 with respect to the Northern Mariana Islands, providing parity with Guam, the Virgin Islands, and American Samoa.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 256

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

SECTION 1. AMENDMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The first section and section 2 of Public Law 93-435 (48 U.S.C. 1705, 1706) are amended by inserting “the Commonwealth of the Northern 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 to the “date of enactment” shall be considered to be a reference to the date of the enactment of this section.

SEC. 2. ADJUSTMENT OF SCHEDULED WAGE INCREASES IN THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS.

Section 8103(b)(1)(B) of the Fair Minimum Wage Act of 2007 (29 U.S.C. 206 note; Public Law 110-28) is amended by striking “2011” and inserting “2011, 2013, and 2015”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) and the gentleman from the Northern Mariana Islands (Mr. SABLAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Washington.

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, S. 256 would amend the 1974 law to convey certain submerged lands in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Under this bill, the territory would have the administrative authority over lands covered by tidal waters out to 3 nautical

miles, giving it parity with the other United States territories of Guam, the Virgin Islands, and American Samoa. Comparable control of the seabed has been also granted to coastal States under the Submerged Lands Act. On May 15, the House passed similar legislation by a voice vote.

S. 256 also contains an amendment to delay in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands an annual minimum wage increase of 50 cents. Under the new formula in this bill, a 50-cent minimum wage bump would still occur in 2014, with annual increases starting in 2016, until the Federal minimum wage is reached. The territory has asked for a deferral on this because its economy cannot currently sustain the minimum wage increases that are current law at this time.

I want to thank Chairman KLINE of the Committee on Education and the Workforce and his able staff for their assistance in scheduling this bill for consideration today as the minimum wage matter is under that committee's jurisdiction.

Mr. Speaker, I urge adoption of the measure, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I rise in support of S. 256. The bill conveys to the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands 3 miles of surrounding submerged lands, providing parity with America's other coastal States and territories.

S. 256 also provides for a hiatus in 2013 and 2015 of the annual 50-cent increase in minimum wage in the Northern Marianas, while retaining the mandate to reach the Federal level.

I want to thank the chairman of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, RON WYDEN, and Ranking Member LISA MURKOWSKI for introducing S. 256 at my request. Its companion, H.R. 573, passed the House unanimously in May of this year, as did predecessor bills in the 111th and the 112th Congresses.

Thanks also to leaders and staff from both sides of the aisle: Chairman DOC HASTINGS of the House Natural Resources Committee and Ranking Member PETER DEFAZIO; Chairman JOHN FLEMING on the Fisheries, Wildlife, Oceans, and Insular Affairs Subcommittee; and the chairman on the Education and the Workforce Committee, JOHN KLINE, and Ranking Member GEORGE MILLER. Their assistance reflects a longstanding tradition of treating territorial issues as essentially nonpartisan.

To summarize briefly, the Northern Mariana Islands is the only U.S. coastal jurisdiction that does not have ownership of the submerged lands off its coast. S. 256 corrects that irregularity and provides the same ownership rights over the submerged lands surrounding the Northern Marianas as are provided by Federal law to Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and American Samoa.

Additionally, S. 256 reschedules the rate of increase of the minimum wage in the Northern Mariana Islands, but it retains the mandate to reach the Federal minimum wage level, which will occur in 2018. The wage has risen 82 percent since 2007—16.5 percent each year.

The Government Accountability Office has reported uncertainty over how this rapid change affects the local economy, especially given the negative GDP in most of those years. Congress previously provided for the scheduled 2011 increase to be skipped. In light of continuing unpredictability of the impact of annual increases on an economy where as much as 80 percent of the hourly paid workforce will be affected, similar deferrals of the 2013 and 2015 increases are advisable.

I ask for Members to support S. 256 today as the House has supported these same proposals in the past.

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

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. HARPER).

Mr. HARPER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S. 256, and would like to speak also in support of the bill just considered, S. 304, a bill sponsored by a senior Senator of Mississippi, THAD COCHRAN.

This legislation authorized the transfer of approximately 67 acres of unused Federal land originally envisioned to be part of the Natchez Trace Parkway to the State of Mississippi.

The city of Natchez plans to use 37 acres for recreational purposes. It will improve the quality of life for the city's residents.

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Without this legislation, this tract will continue to set idle.

I would like to thank Chairman HASTINGS for his work in bringing this commonsense and worthy legislation to the House floor. I also would like to thank our senior Senator, THAD COCHRAN, for his tireless leadership for the State of Mississippi. There are numerous individuals behind the scenes that have worked tirelessly for the city of Natchez to gain access to and the right to utilize this land over the years, and S. 304 will show that their hard work has finally paid off.

I urge my colleagues to continue to support this legislation.

Mr. SABLAN. Mr. Speaker, at this time I would like to yield such time as he may consume to my friend, the distinguished gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA).

(Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I would first like to thank and commend the chairman of our Natural Resources Committee, DOC HASTINGS, for his leadership and for his support of this piece of legislation, and especially

also my good friend, the gentleman representing the Northern Mariana Islands.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of S. 256, a bill to amend Public Law 93-435 with respect to the Northern Mariana Islands, providing parity with Guam, the Virgin Islands, and American Samoa. I want to thank Chairman WYDEN and Ranking Member MURKOWSKI of the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources for their work on this bipartisan piece of legislation. I also want to thank the Senate for finally taking action on this issue and passing S. 256 via unanimous consent last month.

As I said earlier, I would be remiss if I did not commend my good friend, Congressman SABLAN, for his tireless efforts on this issue and all other matters affecting the Northern Mariana Islands since he took office in 2009.

Mr. Speaker, this piece of legislation will appropriately convey 3 miles of offshore submerged lands to the Northern Mariana Islands. As you may know, submerged lands qualify as lands permanently or periodically covered by tidal waves up to but not above the line of high tide. The territories of American Samoa, Guam, and the Virgin Islands were granted ownership over our own respective submerged lands when the Congress passed the Territorial Submerged Lands Act in 1974. This was before CNMI became a territory of the United States.

S. 256 is in response to an unfortunate decision by the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in 2005 that ruled that the submerged lands off the coast of CNMI did not belong to the Commonwealth but belonged to the Federal Government. The language guarantees that the Federal Government maintains the same rights over navigation, international affairs and commerce. Furthermore, it does not circumvent any actions that may have been taken or regulations that have been put forward by U.S. naval authorities regarding these submerged lands.

This issue is not new to us. The House has passed similar legislation since the 111th Congress. The citizens and officials of CNMI, instead of officials residing thousands of miles away, should be implementing and enforcing laws that apply to their population. We should move forward and allow CNMI to utilize these resources that are rightfully theirs and allow them to engage and promote economic activities in these areas. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I would advise my friend from the Northern Marianas that I have no more requests for time, and I am prepared to yield back if the gentleman is prepared to yield back.

Mr. SABLAN. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, but I would like to thank DOC HASTINGS for a wonderful way of managing bills. This is probably at the fastest pace, and we should do this more often.

I yield back the balance of my time. Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. I thank the gentleman for his compliment, and I urge adoption of the bill.

I yield back the balance of my time. Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S. 256.

This legislation includes provisions adjusting the minimum wage schedule for the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands in a way that I think is appropriate and fair for both workers and businesses there.

Current law requires CNMI to increase its minimum wage 50 cents a year until it reaches the Mainland's federal minimum wage level of \$7.25. Current law also requires the GAO to regularly report to Congress on economic conditions in Commonwealth over the course of these minimum wage adjustments.

These GAO reports are intended to give the public information so that, based on sound economic analysis, Congress can adjust the minimum wage schedule for the territories if warranted.

The next GAO report is due in April of 2014.

Since 2007 the Commonwealth's minimum wage has increased from \$3.05 an hour to \$5.55 an hour, an 82% increase in the past 5 years. This has brought new purchasing power and a higher standard of living for many workers than they could have negotiated on their own.

This bill would skip an increase in the minimum wage in CNMI for 2013 and 2015, while still requiring increases in 2014, 2016 and subsequent years.

This approach was recommended by the Saipan Chamber of Commerce.

The Chamber stated in a May 8th letter that given the fragile economy in CNMI "spreading the wage jumps over a two-year period seems prudent."

This legislation is also recommended by Congressman SABLAN, a tireless advocate for workers and for improving the Commonwealth's economy.

Because CNMI's wages had been depressed for so long, it is a long march of nearly a decade to more than double their minimum wage. In a territory like CNMI, we have recognized that we would need to be flexible with the wage rate schedule over that time frame, as conditions warranted.

Today's bill reflects that need for flexibility. It allows us to review the next GAO economic analysis for CNMI before another wage increase takes effect.

Because of CNMI's unique economic circumstances and relatively undiversified economy, it is appropriate for Congress to adjust the minimum wage schedule in response to changing economic conditions, while keeping our long-term commitment to reaching parity with the federal minimum wage.

I urge my colleagues to support S. 256.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 256.

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. HASTINGS of Washington. 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, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

MINUTEMAN MISSILE NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE BOUNDARY MODIFICATION ACT

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 459) to modify the boundary of the Minuteman Missile National Historic Site in the State of South Dakota, and for other purposes. The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 459

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 "Minuteman Missile National Historic Site Boundary Modification Act".

SEC. 2. BOUNDARY MODIFICATION.

Section 3(a) of the Minuteman Missile National Historic Site Establishment Act of 1999 (16 U.S.C. 461 note; Public Law 106-115) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (3) and (4) as paragraphs (4) and (5), respectively; and
(2) by inserting after paragraph (2) the following:

“(3) VISITOR FACILITY AND ADMINISTRATIVE SITE.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—In addition to the components described in paragraph (2), the historic site shall include a visitor facility and administrative site located on the parcel of land described in subparagraph (B).

“(B) DESCRIPTION OF LAND.—The land referred to in subparagraph (A) consists of—

“(i) approximately 25 acres of land within the Buffalo Gap National Grassland, located north of exit 131 on Interstate 90 in Jackson County, South Dakota, as generally depicted on the map entitled ‘Minuteman Missile National Historic Site Boundary Modification’, numbered 406/80,011A, and dated January 14, 2011; and

“(ii) approximately 3.65 acres of land located at the Delta 1 Launch Control Facility for the construction and use of a parking lot and for other administrative uses.

“(C) AVAILABILITY OF MAP.—The map described in subparagraph (B) shall be kept on file and available for public inspection in the appropriate offices of the National Park Service.

“(D) TRANSFER OF ADMINISTRATIVE JURISDICTION.—Administrative jurisdiction over the land described in subparagraph (B) is transferred from the Secretary of Agriculture to the Secretary, to be administered as part of the historic site.

“(E) BOUNDARY ADJUSTMENT.—The boundaries of the Buffalo Gap National Grassland are modified to exclude the land transferred under subparagraph (D).”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) and the gentleman from the Northern Mariana Islands (Mr. SABLAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Washington.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative