

make it more effective for those who need help. It reduces roadblocks for both job-seekers and employers trying to find the right candidates.

While our economy has been changing, the way we help prepare our workers has not. With so many Americans still asking the question “where are the jobs?” it is clearly past time that we do this.

Unfortunately, not only have Senate Democrats failed to act on this measure, their focus continues to be on improving unemployment. Our focus should be on improving employment, making it easier to create jobs and to boost wages.

To help the nation’s long-term unemployed, the Senate should pass the SKILLS Act as soon as possible.

IRAN

(Mr. HOLDING asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, it is hard to find anyone outside the Obama administration singing high praises for the nuclear deal with Iran.

In fact, the regime in Tehran has on more than one occasion taken to the media to declare how the Obama administration is overselling the terms of the agreement, how there will be no dismantling of centrifuges, how the United States “surrendered to the Iranian nation’s will.”

So while this administration, Mr. Speaker, gives back access to billions of dollars in frozen assets and relaxes sanctions on the world’s leading state sponsor of terrorism, Iran, their centrifuges will continue to spin.

History has taught us that we are not dealing with an honest broker in Tehran. The election of President Rouhani does nothing to change the fact that the Supreme Leader is still in charge. Nothing in this agreement denuclearizes a hostile and an oppressive regime.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. COLLINS of New York). Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 5:30 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 2 o’clock and 8 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1730

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. MEADOWS) at 5 o’clock and 30 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair

will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later.

GOOD SAMARITAN SEARCH AND RECOVERY ACT

Mrs. LUMMIS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2166) to direct the Secretary of the Interior and Secretary of Agriculture to expedite access to certain Federal lands under the administrative jurisdiction of each Secretary for good Samaritan search-and-recovery missions, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2166

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 “Good Samaritan Search and Recovery Act”.

SEC. 2. EXPEDITED ACCESS TO CERTAIN FEDERAL LANDS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall develop and implement a process to expedite access to Federal lands under the administrative jurisdiction of the Secretary for eligible organizations and eligible individuals to request access to Federal lands to conduct good Samaritan search-and-recovery missions. The process developed and implemented pursuant to this subsection shall include provisions that clarify that—

(1) an eligible organization or eligible individual granted access under this section shall be acting for private purposes and shall not be considered a Federal volunteer;

(2) an eligible organization or eligible individual conducting a good Samaritan search-and-recovery mission under this section shall not be considered a volunteer under section 3 of the Volunteers in the Parks Act of 1969 (16 U.S.C. 181);

(3) the Federal Torts Claim Act shall not apply to an eligible organization or eligible individual carrying out a privately requested good Samaritan search-and-recovery mission under this section; and

(4) the Federal Employee Compensation Act shall not apply to an eligible organization or eligible individual conducting good Samaritan search-and-recovery mission under this section and such activities shall not constitute civilian employment.

(b) RELEASE OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT FROM LIABILITY.—The Secretary shall not require an eligible organization or an eligible individual to have liability insurance as a condition of accessing Federal lands under this section if the eligible organization or eligible individual—

(1) acknowledges and consents, in writing, to the provisions listed in paragraphs (1) through (4) of subsection (a); and

(2) signs a waiver releasing the Federal Government from all liability related to the access granted under this section.

(c) APPROVAL AND DENIAL OF REQUESTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall notify an eligible organization and eligible individual of the approval or denial of a request by that eligible organization and eligible individual to carry out a good Samaritan search-and-recovery mission under this section not more than 48 hours after the request is made.

(2) DENIALS.—If the Secretary denies a request from an eligible organization or eligible individual to carry out a good Samaritan search-and-recovery mission under this section, the Secretary shall notify the eligible organization or eligible individual of—

(A) the reason for the denial request; and

(B) any actions that eligible organization or eligible individual can take to meet the requirements for the request to be approved.

(d) PARTNERSHIPS.—The Secretary shall develop search-and-recovery focused partnerships with search-and-recovery organizations to—

(1) coordinate good Samaritan search-and-recovery missions on Federal lands under the administrative jurisdiction of the Secretary; and

(2) expedite and accelerate good Samaritan search-and-recovery mission efforts for missing individuals on Federal lands under the administrative jurisdiction of the Secretary.

(e) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit a joint report to Congress describing—

(1) plans to develop partnerships described in subsection (d)(1); and

(2) efforts being taken to expedite and accelerate good Samaritan search-and-recovery mission efforts for missing individuals on Federal lands under the administrative jurisdiction of the Secretary pursuant to subsection (d)(2).

(f) DEFINITIONS.—For the purposes of this section, the following definitions apply:

(1) ELIGIBLE ORGANIZATION AND ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUAL.—The terms “eligible organization” and “eligible individual” means an organization or individual, respectively, that—

(A) is acting in a not-for-profit capacity; and

(B) is certificated in training that meets or exceeds standards established by the American Society for Testing and Materials.

(2) GOOD SAMARITAN SEARCH-AND-RECOVERY MISSION.—The term “good Samaritan search-and-recovery mission” means a search for one or more missing individuals believed to be deceased at the time that the search is initiated.

(3) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of the Interior or the Secretary of Agriculture, as appropriate.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Wyoming (Mrs. LUMMIS) and the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GRIJALVA) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Wyoming.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. LUMMIS. 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 gentlewoman from Wyoming?

There was no objection.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

In the Natural Resources Committee, we heard testimony from Jodi Goldberg, who shared a story about the search for her brother Keith, who had been murdered and whose body was presumed to be in the vicinity of the Lake Mead National Recreation Area.

A nonprofit search-and-rescue team attempted to search within the recreation area but was delayed by the National Park Service for over a year. By the time the search-and-recovery team was allowed access to search for Mr. Goldberg's remains, they were found in a matter of hours.

The bureaucratic delays and roadblocks constructed by the National Park Service are at best unnecessary. Much worse than that, they have caused undue suffering to families who simply want to look for their loved ones.

This bipartisan bill makes perfect sense. The Good Samaritan Search and Recovery Act, sponsored by Congressman JOE HECK, would require the Federal land management agencies to quickly issue permits to qualify search-and-recovery groups. This would also eliminate the requirement to obtain costly insurance provided they waive liability against the Federal Government.

I urge my colleagues to support this commonsense legislation.

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

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

In January 2012, when Keith Goldberg went missing, finding him was all his family wanted. Investigators presumed that he had been murdered and his remains were somewhere in the Lake Mead National Recreation Area, a unit administered by the National Park Service. After several months passed, local law enforcement was unable to recover Mr. Goldberg's remains, and they gave up the search.

His family, wanting what any family would want, reached out to a private, nonprofit search-and-rescue outfit for assistance. Unfortunately, it took 15 months for the professional search-and-rescue company to acquire the permits and insurance required to conduct a search. However, within 2 hours of receiving the necessary credentials, Mr. Goldberg's body was recovered.

H.R. 2166 will help speed up the process for granting private Good Samaritan search-and-rescue companies access to Federal lands. The bill strikes a fair balance between guaranteeing safety and sufficient liability insurance for the American taxpayer and improving the process. Under H.R. 2166, private search-and-rescue operations, when appropriate, can have, and should have, timely access to public lands under H.R. 2166.

I support the legislation and urge its adoption.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Nevada, Dr. HECK, the sponsor of the bill.

Mr. HECK of Nevada. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the chairman and the ranking member of the House Natural Resources Committee, as well as the chairman of the subcommittee, the gentleman from Arizona, and the gentleman from Utah for working with me

in a bipartisan manner to bring H.R. 2166, the Good Samaritan Search and Recovery Act, to the floor.

H.R. 2166 tears down the bureaucratic roadblocks that are preventing families from receiving closure when their loved ones go missing on Federal land.

This issue was first brought to my attention by the separate, but similarly tragic, cases of Las Vegas taxi driver Keith Goldberg and Air Force Staff Sergeant Antonio Tucker.

Mr. Goldberg and Staff Sergeant Tucker were presumed dead, and their remains were believed to be missing somewhere within the Lake Mead National Recreation Area. In both cases, local, experienced search-and-recovery groups volunteered their time and resources to help locate the remains of these missing individuals.

Unfortunately, due to unnecessary bureaucratic hurdles from the Federal Government, the group volunteering to help locate and recover Mr. Goldberg's remains was denied access to Park Service land for over 15 months. The group volunteering to help locate the remains of Staff Sergeant Tucker was denied access for 10 months, needlessly delaying the closure both families deserved.

These stories are heart-wrenching, these actions are unacceptable, and they must change. Once these bureaucratic hurdles were finally cleared and these Good Samaritan search-and-recovery groups were allowed access to Park Service land, Mr. Goldberg's remains were recovered in less than 2 hours, and the remains of Staff Sergeant Tucker were recovered in less than 2 days.

As a former member of the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department's Search and Rescue Team, I introduced this bill because unnecessary red tape simply must not continue to get in the way of providing closure for families faced with tragic circumstances.

After a hearing, this bill passed out of the House Natural Resources Committee with a unanimous vote, showing real bipartisan support for the measure, so I ask my colleagues to pass this bill so that other families won't have to needlessly suffer the way the families of Keith Goldberg and Antonio Tucker did.

Again, I want to thank the chairmen and the ranking members of the full committee and of the subcommittee for working diligently to bring this bill to the floor. I urge its passage.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Speaker, let me acknowledge and thank the gentleman from Nevada for his sponsorship of the legislation. It is very needed and very important.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. LUMMIS. I thank the gentleman from Arizona.

Mr. Speaker, I now yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP), the chairman of the subcommittee.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. I appreciate all of those who have been involved in this

piece of legislation, which is very important.

Mr. Speaker, 100 years ago, the National Park Service was established to try and help people enjoy these natural wonders for, indeed, if people are not visiting our national parks, they do not fulfill the measure of their creation. It fills no purpose. Unfortunately, in the last 100 years, it seems like there has been an attitude shift amongst many of those who are involved in our national parks and other wonders that we have, especially in the West, in which people who originally were supposed to be the reason for having these parks have now been placed last.

The horrific example of what happened at Lake Mead in Nevada is a horrible thing to take place. Were it the only example we have of these types of negative things taking place, this legislation would still be well-deserved and well overdue. Unfortunately, it is not. It is just an example of significant issues that keep coming back in which our administration seems to be putting people last and doing things which are not positive and not helpful.

Let me give you a couple of examples.

In Washington State, we have another national park in which there is an open area, almost like a community park within the National Park System, and yet the land manager in Washington decided to cancel a traditional annual church picnic because it would make too much noise for the rest of the national park. They also canceled a youth soccer tournament because it would make too much noise and disturb the rest of the national park.

During our shutdown, whether, indeed, they were told to try to make life miserable or not, they seemed to be able to do that on their own. The effort for the Park Service was to shut down the parking lot at Mount Vernon until someone had to remind them that Mount Vernon is not Federal property, that it is private property. At the same time, they were able to shut down a road in the Smokies to stop a schoolbus from making its rounds to pick up kids and take them to school and back again.

At Yellowstone, an armed guard came upon a busload of seniors to try and escort them off of the Federal property, not allowing them to make any kind of stops, even for restroom breaks. At Lake Mead, at the same time, residents who were living on their private houseboats were escorted off the lake and were told they could not come back. We have in this particular area the Claude Moore farm and the restaurant over on the Blue Ridge Parkway. Even though they were private establishments, the Park Service was doing everything it could to stop people from attending those areas and allowing them to make a success of the particular business.

This doesn't happen to be just in the shutdown period. This was happening well before that time.

In Alaska, on the Yukon-Charley Rivers, a private boater was stopped by the Park Service personnel. They took him over to the shore. He was held at gunpoint and was told that he could not continue on up the river because they said he couldn't continue on up the river. The unfortunate reality is that they didn't have the right to tell him he couldn't go on up the river. They were simply wrong and eventually were replaced in that particular area.

Other agencies of the Federal Government seem to be doing the same thing. We have a Wyoming rancher who did not want to give an easement to the BLM. Instead, he was threatened; they trespassed his property; they followed him and his guests; they photographed what he was doing, including his female guests, who were trying to relieve themselves at the time; they were harassed and punished, and were told they would not have any of his permits renewed if he did not accede to the Federal request.

At Cape Hatteras, the Park Service went into a sue-settlement agreement, which shut down areas that had never been before even though the local people were opposed to that particular effort and even though it had a devastating impact on the economy.

The Forest Service, unfortunately, has done the same thing with ski resorts and, in California, on another ski resort where they closed summer activities unless they renegotiated the water rights of those resorts. Then there are the grazing permits in the West. They refused to, once again, renew the grazing permits unless they were willing to renegotiate their water rights.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mrs. LUMMIS. I yield the gentleman an additional 2 minutes.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. All of these are examples which, unfortunately, continue to go on.

What the good Representative from Nevada has presented us is a terrific case in which the Park Service actually disrespected individuals and did not allow them to do what is humanitarily appropriate. Yet, when they were allowed to go in there and they found these bodies, they could have overcome all of this if they had just cared about people first, but they did not.

With the Keystone pipeline, the Park Service, once again, made a comment that the Keystone pipeline would have a devastating impact on parklands that were adjacent to the Keystone pipeline. Unfortunately, the nearest Federal land—the nearest national parkland—to the Keystone pipeline is 30 miles away. That is some kind of buffer zone we have.

If, indeed, we decided that this agency—the Department of this administration—were to put people first, we would have a much better relationship. Unfortunately, time after time, we see

where actually people are being put last and bureaucratic responsibility is taking the place of that. That is simply wrong. This bill is an example of what is happening, and it is one that should be passed. I appreciate that both the majority and the minority realize the significance of passing this piece of legislation.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Mr. Speaker, having completed our presentation and all of our speakers, I urge the adoption of the bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Wyoming (Mrs. LUMMIS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2166, 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.

Mrs. LUMMIS. 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.

RANCH A CONSOLIDATION AND MANAGEMENT IMPROVEMENT ACT

Mrs. LUMMIS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1684) to convey certain property to the State of Wyoming to consolidate the historic Ranch A, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1684

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 "Ranch A Consolidation and Management Improvement Act".

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) SECRETARY.—The term "Secretary" means the Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the Chief of the Forest Service.

(2) STATE.—The term "State" means the State of Wyoming.

SEC. 3. CONVEYANCE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Upon the request of the State submitted to the Secretary not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall convey to the State, without consideration and by quitclaim deed, all right, title and interest of the United States in and to the parcel of National Forest System land described in subsection (b).

(b) DESCRIPTION OF LAND.—The parcel of land referred to in subsection (a) is approximately 10 acres of National Forest System land located on the Black Hills National Forest, in Crook County, State of Wyoming more specifically described as the E½ NE¼ NW¼ SE¼ less the south 50 feet, W½ NW¼ NE¼ SE¼ less the south 50 feet, Section 24, Township 52 North, Range 61 West Sixth P.M.

(c) TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—The conveyance under subsection (a) shall be—

(1) subject to valid existing rights; and

(2) made notwithstanding the requirements of subsection (a) of section 1 of Public Law 104-276.

(d) SURVEY.—If determined by the Secretary to be necessary, the exact acreage and legal description of the land to be conveyed under subsection (a) shall be determined by a survey that is approved by the Secretary and paid for by the State.

SEC. 4. AMENDMENTS.

Section 1 of the Act of October 9, 1996 (Public Law 104-276) is amended—

(1) by striking subsection (b); and

(2) by designating subsection (c) as subsection (b).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Wyoming (Mrs. LUMMIS) and the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GRIJALVA) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Wyoming.

□ 1745

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. LUMMIS. 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 Wyoming?

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, my bill, the Ranch A Consolidation and Management Improvement Act, would convey approximately 10 acres of National Forest Service land to the State of Wyoming to allow for consolidation and improvement of the Ranch A site.

Ranch A is a historic property that was first developed in the 1930s and later came under Federal ownership and was used as a fish hatchery. The property had fallen into significant neglect under Federal ownership. The Ranch A Restoration Foundation was created to restore and operate Ranch A as a center for learning and interpretation of Western heritage.

However, when Ranch A was conveyed to the State of Wyoming in 1997, an oversight kept 10 acres under Federal ownership. The Babcock House, seen in this picture, is owned by the State of Wyoming. This is in Crook County, very near the South Dakota border. So we are talking about the Black Hills. It is a very pretty area, but the land under the Babcock House was not properly conveyed. The Forest Service testified that ownership of this isolated parcel has presented "management challenges" and unknown costs associated with administering the property. It is an isolated tract of 10 acres upon which this house, owned by the State of Wyoming, is built. H.R. 1684 would address this issue by correcting the conveyance and would also allow for the Restoration Foundation to make further improvement for the use and enjoyment of Ranch A.

This bill would provide more flexibility for the use of the property,