

Under current law, the families of individuals serving a public agency in an official capacity as a law enforcement officer, firefighter, or chaplain receive compensation if their loved one is killed in the line of duty.

The same is true for families of employees of the Federal Emergency Management Agency and members of rescue squads or ambulance crews.

Unfortunately, the law has not been updated to include Transportation Security Officers within the definition of what constitutes a public safety officer.

As a result, the families of TSOs who are killed in the line of duty are not eligible for funds from the Public Safety Officer's Benefits Program.

While I am pleased the Appropriations Committee has included language in its Homeland Security bill addressing this issue for the Hernandez family, I would note that the legislation has not come to the House floor.

There is another, more direct effort underway. H.R. 4026, a bill introduced by Representative BROWNLEY of California, would address this issue directly by designating Officer Hernandez, and his fellow Transportation Security Officers as public safety officers.

That bill, which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary, has thirty-seven cosponsors.

Unfortunately, not a single Republican has signed on to support the measure.

I implore my colleagues to support that legislation so that the families of the men and women on the front lines of protecting our aviation sector are properly compensated should tragedy strike.

With that Mr. Speaker, I urge support for H.R. 4802.

Mr. MCCAUL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4802, the Gerardo Hernandez Airport Security Act of 2014. As Chairman of the Committee on Homeland Security, I am proud to be a cosponsor of this important legislation, which builds on some of the most important lessons from the tragic shooting at LAX last November, by helping airports nationwide learn from what happened and make improvements to their own security and emergency response plans.

Having traveled to LAX in March for the site visit and field hearing held by my good friend from North Carolina, Mr. HUDSON, and having had the opportunity to meet with the widow of Officer Hernandez during that trip, I strongly believe we owe it to the traveling public, emergency first responders, law enforcement, and our TSA screening personnel to ensure that the airport environment is as secure as possible and is adequately prepared to respond to security incidents within the airport perimeter.

I would like to commend the Chairman of the Subcommittee on Transportation Security, Mr. HUDSON, for his diligent efforts to address this important issue, and his dedication to strengthening the state of airport security nationwide. I also wish to commend the bipartisan efforts of both the Ranking Member of the Full Committee, Mr. THOMPSON, and the Ranking Member of the Subcommittee, Mr. RICHMOND, whose support of this legislation is greatly appreciated. I also commend the hard work done by TSA Administrator Pistole to learn from the shooting, honor the victims, and engage with the TSA workforce and airport community to ensure we are constantly improving our ability to respond to these types of tragic events.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for the time. I would also like to thank Homeland Security Committee Chairman MICHAEL MCCAUL, Ranking Member BENNIE THOMPSON, Transportation Security Subcommittee Chairman RICHARD HUDSON, and Ranking Member CEDRIC RICHMOND for introducing this bill and bringing it to the floor.

I rise to support the passage of H.R. 4802, the Hernandez Airport Security Act.

This bipartisan bill was introduced in response to last year's horrific November 1st shooting incident at Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) in my congressional district. The bill was named in honor of Gerardo Hernandez, the Transportation Security Officer (TSO) who was killed in the line of duty on that tragic day. As we debate this bill, we offer our deepest condolences to the family of Gerardo Hernandez, and we honor all of the TSO's, police officers, and other first responders who risked their lives to stabilize the situation and protect the public during that terrible incident.

Following the shooting, Congress conducted several congressional hearings, including a field hearing in my district on March 28, 2014. These hearings revealed serious security lapses at LAX, which interfered with incident response efforts. For example, there were emergency phones and panic buttons that did not work properly, problems in coordination between various police and fire departments, and incompatible radio systems. These security failures are unacceptable.

The Hernandez Airport Security Act requires the Department of Homeland Security to conduct outreach to airports to verify that they have working plans to respond to security incidents, including active shooter incidents, acts of terrorism, and incidents that target passenger-screening checkpoints like the one where Officer Hernandez was killed.

It is imperative that major airports like LAX have a state-of-the-art emergency response system. The safety and security of our nation's airports and all of the workers and travelers who pass through them is of paramount importance.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill and send it to the President's desk.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. R. 4802, The Gerardo Hernandez Airport Security Act of 2014, which improves intergovernmental planning and communication during security incidents at domestic airport.

As a former chair and ranking member of the Homeland Security Committee Transportation Security Subcommittee, I understand how important this bill will be in enhancing safety and protection in the air transit industry, not just for our citizens but for our Transportation Security Officers working in the line of duty.

This legislation, which requires the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) to devote more resources for planning and communication during and in case of threats or emergencies, is prompted by the tragic death of Gerardo I. Hernandez, a Transportation Security Officer who was killed in the line of duty at Los Angeles International Airport in November of 2013.

At just 39 years old, Gerardo Hernandez was the first TSA officer to lose his life in the line of duty in the 12 year history of the agency.

He died from several gunshot wounds inflicted by an assailant while on duty at the Los Angeles International Airport

Gerardo Hernandez was among those thousands of TSA employs carrying out their mission to keep the airways safe for traveling citizens, and their work across the nation cannot be understated.

On average, TSA officers screen 1.7 million air passengers at more than 450 airports across the nation, which averaged over 637.5 million passengers in 2012.

H.R. 4802 will help ensure that all screening personnel have received training in how to handle potential shooting threats.

The bill also requires TSA to verify that all airports have plans in place to respond to any security threats, and provide technical assistance as necessary to improve those plans.

The bill also directs the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Office of Cybersecurity and Communication to report to Congress the capacity of law enforcement, fire, and medical response teams' communication and response to security threats at airports.

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimates the implementation of H.R. 4802 would cost about \$2.5 million in 2015. Of the \$2.5 million, an estimated \$1.5 million would serve to provide additional technical assistance to airports, and the remaining \$1 million would be used to evaluate the interoperability of communication systems used by emergency response teams.

Mr. Speaker, it has been almost 13 years since our country suffered the tragedy of the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

We will never forget how that day changed our lives, and the lives of every American generation to follow.

Security measures in airports across the country have been enhanced dramatically, and the resulting inconvenience is a small price to pay for the protective measures needed to keep the travelling public safe.

It is people like Gerardo Hernandez who do their best to make the necessary screening as least intrusive and burdensome as possible, consistent with the mission of ensuring the security of all members of the flying public.

TSA officers willingly risk their lives to make sure the job gets done, and for that we owe these men and women a debt of gratitude.

In honor of Gerardo Hernandez's contribution to his country, I strongly support this bill and urge all my colleagues to join me in voting for its passage.

□ 1630

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HUDSON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4802, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### HONOR FLIGHT ACT

Mr. HUDSON. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4812) to amend title 49, United States Code, to require the Administrator of the Transportation Security

Administration to establish a process for providing expedited and dignified passenger screening services for veterans traveling to visit war memorials built and dedicated to honor their service, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.  
The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4812

*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 "Honor Flight Act".

**SEC. 2. HONOR FLIGHT PROGRAM.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Title 49, United States Code, is amended by adding after section 44927 the following new section:

**"§ 44928. Honor Flight program**

"The Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration shall establish, in collaboration with the Honor Flight Network or other not-for-profit organization that honors veterans, a process for providing expedited and dignified passenger screening services for veterans traveling on an Honor Flight Network private charter, or such other not-for-profit organization that honors veterans, to visit war memorials built and dedicated to honor the service of such veterans."

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents of title 49, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 44927 the following new item:

"44928. Honor Flight program."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HUDSON) and the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. RICHMOND) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina.

**GENERAL LEAVE**

Mr. HUDSON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within 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 gentleman from North Carolina?

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 4812, the Honor Flight Act. This bill would improve the airport screening processes for veterans traveling to visit our war memorials by providing expedited and dignified passenger screening services.

I am pleased TSA is currently implementing the requirements outlined in this bill by working with the Honor Flight Network to expedite the screening process for veterans visiting war memorials here in Washington, D.C. Codifying this commonsense policy will ease airport access for our Nation's heroes, who have made incredible sacrifices and deserve our utmost respect.

Not only will this legislation help to simplify their passage through airports, it will also improve efficiency by

freeing up TSA screeners to focus on real threats. This is a positive step for our veterans and ultimately our transportation and national security.

I would like to commend the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. RICHMOND) for his work on this issue, as well as Chairman MCCAUL for moving this bill through the committee.

The Committee on Homeland Security has long advocated for less burdensome airport screening for our men and women in uniform and our veterans. In fact, this bill builds upon previous bipartisan legislation promoted by the committee and signed into law requiring TSA to provide expedited screening to Active Duty military traveling on official orders, as well as severely injured or disabled veterans and members of the Armed Forces.

Each and every day, we are humbled and inspired by the incredible sacrifices of all our veterans. This should serve as a powerful reminder of our duty to do all we can to honor the sacrifices they have made for our freedoms and treat them with the dignity and respect they deserve.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. RICHMOND. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume and rise in strong support of H.R. 4812, the Honor Flight Act.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by thanking Chairman MCCAUL, Ranking Member THOMPSON, and the chairman of the Subcommittee on Transportation Security, Mr. HUDSON, for cosponsoring and supporting this bipartisan legislation.

The Honor Flight Act is a measure that seeks to pay a debt of gratitude to a group of Americans who were willing to make the ultimate sacrifice to ensure that we are able to enjoy the freedoms that we have today. Although we may never be able to fully repay our veterans for their bravery, sites such as the National World War II Museum, which we are proud to have in the city of New Orleans, bring into focus their lasting contribution and their impact on American history.

The Honor Flight Network is a non-profit organization that works with airlines and other nonprofits to transport veterans to Washington, D.C., to visit memorials dedicated to honoring their service and sacrifice. The organization was created in 2005 by Earl Morse, a former physician's assistant with the Department of Veterans Affairs and a private pilot who saw his patients' desire to visit the newly built World War II Memorial and recognized that many of them lacked the resources or support to make the trip on their own.

By the end of 2013, the Honor Flight Network had transported approximately 117,000 of our Nation's heroes to visit their memorials. Estimates from the Honor Flight Network show that number to be well over 120,000 people today. The Honor Flight Network currently prioritizes transporting World War II veterans and veterans who are

terminally ill but intends to expand the program to transport veterans of subsequent wars in the future.

Presently, the Transportation Security Administration, under the leadership of Administrator Pistole, expedites the screening process for veterans visiting their memorials in Washington, D.C., via the Honor Flight Network private charter flights, saving them time and showing them the due respect and appreciation they deserve.

This legislation will authorize the collaboration between TSA and the Honor Flight Network in law, thereby ensuring that it becomes a permanent practice.

Before yielding back, I would note that I am especially proud of the bipartisan manner in which this legislation has come to the floor, from its inception and its handling in the subcommittee to today, and I am especially proud that this legislation received unanimous support in committee. I am sure it received unanimous support because it wasn't a political thing to do, it was the right thing to do, and truly bestowing honor on people in this country who truly deserve this honor. But for them, we would not be here today in the capacity that we are. We have to understand and we recognize that it is their sacrifice and their shoulders that we stand upon as a Nation. With that, I urge all of my colleagues to support this legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HUDSON. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, as we walk around our Nation's Capital and visit the numerous war memorials, we are reminded of the incredible sacrifices that have been made by our veterans over many decades. H.R. 4812 is a simple and commonsense way to recognize and honor those sacrifices.

Mr. Speaker, I again want to commend the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. RICHMOND) for his work authoring this legislation. I am proud that we moved this forward in a bipartisan way. As the gentleman said earlier, this is not a political issue, this is not a partisan issue; this is an issue of right or wrong, and it is right for us to honor our veterans and it is right for us to expedite their travel when they visit Washington, D.C. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 4812, the "Honor Flight Act."

Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend the gentleman from Louisiana, the Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Transportation Security, Mr. RICHMOND, for introducing this bipartisan legislation.

We owe a great debt to the men and women of this country who have served to defend our liberty and freedom.

The Honor Flight Network is one organization that attempts to repay these veterans, by bringing them to Washington, DC, to visit the war memorials commemorating their dedication and sacrifice.

I have seen how these trips have enriched the lives of veterans. In my district, fifty (50) servicemen and women registered with the Honor Flight-Mid South in Tunica, Mississippi.

Enactment of this legislation will, in some small way, express the tremendous appreciation and gratitude that we have for these veterans and their families.

We are all aware of the steps that the Transportation Security Administration takes to ensure the security of the flying public, as well as the amount of time that this process can consume.

We are also aware that the veterans that the Honor Flight Network currently serves are mostly World War II veterans.

These heroes, who in some instances require additional assistance, are often wheelchair-bound, and have other ailments that can make security screening very time-consuming.

To provide these veterans with the dignity and respect they deserve, since 2005, the Honor Flight Network has partnered with TSA to expedite the screening for veterans.

The legislation before us today will ensure that these veterans continue to receive the respect and consideration they deserve when traveling to the capital.

H.R. 4812 represents one of many pieces of legislation that Democratic members of the Committee on Homeland Security have proposed to support veterans.

Former Representative Hochul's "Clothe a Homeless Hero Act", signed into law last Congress, ensures that unclaimed clothes that TSA collects at airports is provided to homeless or needy veterans.

Earlier this Congress, Representative GABBARD's "Helping Heroes Fly Act" was signed into law by President Obama.

That legislation ensures that severely-injured service members and veterans are provided expedited screening by TSA.

Now we have the opportunity to extend such treatment to our veterans of World War II and, in years to come, to the other selfless men and women who served our country.

Mr. Speaker, we recently commemorated the seventieth anniversary of the D-Day invasion as well as 238 years of American independence.

Let us continue to support and honor the men and women who made these commemorations possible by enacting the "Honor Flight Act."

With that Mr. Speaker, I urge support for this measure.

Mr. MCCAUL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 4812, the Honor Flight Act. This bill would require TSA to establish a process for providing expedited and dignified screening for veterans traveling to visit war memorials built and dedicated to honor their service.

As the son of a World War II veteran, I'd like to commend the Congressman from Louisiana, Mr. RICHMOND for his work on this issue, as well as the important work of the Congressman from North Carolina, Mr. HUDSON, Chairman of the Transportation Security Subcommittee.

Having recently witnessed the arrival of an honor flight at Reagan National Airport, I can honestly say that there is nothing more inspiring than seeing these heroic men and women who have made a tremendous sacrifice arriving in our Nation's capital to visit war memorials that are dedicated to their service.

This bill codifies current TSA policy and ensures that TSA continues to take a proactive approach to expediting screening for veterans traveling on Honor Flights. In doing so, it would ensure that TSA spend less time scrutinizing this lower-risk population and more time and energy screening higher-risk passengers and focusing on the real threats to our aviation sector.

As Chairman of the Committee on Homeland Security, I am pleased to support such a bipartisan, commonsense effort.

I urge my colleagues to support the bill.

Mr. MICHAUD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support H.R. 4812, the Honor Flight Act, which honors our World War II veterans, who have sacrificed much for this country, with a small but significant token of gratitude.

H.R. 4812 requires the Administrator of the Transportation Security Authority to ensure expedited and dignified screening for veterans travelling through airports on special chartered flights to visit war memorials built in their honor.

The Honor Flight program was created in 2005 by Earl Morse, a private pilot and former physician's assistant at the Department of Veterans Affairs. Mr. Morse realized the depth of his patients' desire to visit the newly-built World War II Memorial. However, he realized many of these patients lacked the financial resources to pay for the long trip on their own. Mr. Morse understood what seeing this memorial meant to his patients, so he found a way to facilitate them having that opportunity.

The average soldier in World War II was 26 years old, making many of them in their nineties today. Long airport lines and invasive TSA procedures are tiring for anyone. For our soldiers who fought in war 40, 50, and 60 years ago, especially those now in wheel chairs, it is arduous. Sadly, these long and frustrating security protocols often discourage veterans from making these wonderful and meaningful journeys. Mr. Speaker, our World War II veterans have done their duty. It is our duty now to reduce the hardship they might face in any way we can.

The TSA is doing a wonderful job of ensuring that our airports are secure and safe. Nothing in the Honor Flight Act would change that. The bill seeks to work entirely within their security requirements to ensure safety while minimizing the stress felt by our veterans when visiting a memorial through the Honor Flight program. It is a simple, low cost way to recognize our veterans' service.

I want to thank the Homeland Security Committee for bringing this bill before us today and offer my strong support.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, as a senior member of the Homeland Security Committee and the former ranking member and chair of the Subcommittee on Transportation Security, I rise in strong support of H.R. 4812, the Honor Flight Act of 2014.

H.R. 4812 authorizes the collaboration between the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) and the Honor Flight Network, as well as other non-profit organizations that transport veterans to visit memorials, to ensure continued expedited and dignified passenger screening for veterans travelling to Washington, D.C. to visit memorials and other tributes to their bravery, heroism, and sacrifice in the cause of freedom.

Mr. Speaker, thousands of veterans across the country fought to protect the freedoms we

take for granted and to keep our nation safe. They are deserving of our gratitude for the valor and courage they displayed in risking their lives to keep us free and to liberate captive peoples in other lands.

They are veterans of World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, and the Gulf Wars—Desert Storm, Enduring Freedom, and Iraqi Freedom.

With each passing day, the number of World War II and Korea veterans declines by the hundreds. For many of these heroes, one of their last wishes is to visit the national war memorials in Washington, D.C.

Honoring and facilitating that request is the least we can do for those who did so much for us.

TSA works with the Honor Flight Network in expediting the screening process for veterans visiting the national war memorials, saving the veterans' time and showing them their due respect and appreciation.

The Honor Flight Network is a non-profit organization dedicated to transporting veterans on charter flights operated by commercial airlines to Washington, D.C. to visit memorials built in honor of their service.

Currently, the Honor Flight Network gives priority to WWII veterans and those from any war who have been diagnosed with a terminal illness.

The Honor Flight Network plans to expand the program in the future to include the veterans who served during the Korean and Vietnam Wars, followed by veterans of the wars in the Persian Gulf.

Mr. Speaker, my home state of Texas has the second largest number of veterans of any state in the nation, with just over 1.6 million veterans. My home city of Houston is proud to be the residence of more than 300,000 veterans.

I strongly support the bill before us because I strongly support the efforts of TSA and the Honor Flight Network in making real the dreams, and in many cases the last wishes, of thousands of veterans who wish to visit the memorials dedicated by the nation in their honor.

I urge all members to join me in supporting H.R. 4812 so that our veterans continue to receive the security accommodations they need and deserve as they travel to Washington, D.C. to view the national memorials consecrated by their sacrifice in defense of our country.

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 4812, the Honor Flight Act.

The Honor Flight Network is a non-profit organization dedicated to transporting our military veterans to Washington, D.C. to visit the memorials of their respective wars. The brave men and women who have fought for our country deserve the chance to see the memorials erected in honor of their sacrifices and contributions, and the Honor Flight Network provides that chance.

I have had the opportunity to greet Honor Flights a few times, most recently last October. It truly is a privilege to shake hands with our nation's heroes as they arrive to see their memorials, and I was honored to participate in greeting them. These men and women put their lives on the line to protect our freedoms, and they deserve our deepest gratitude. I believe one small measure we can take to show that gratitude is to make the travel process for

Honor Flight participants as smooth and easy as possible.

The commonsense legislation before us today is a step to achieving that goal. It sets in motion a process for expedited passenger screening services by TSA for veterans traveling on an Honor Flight Network charter. It simply makes sense to authorize and facilitate collaboration between TSA and the Honor Flight Network to ensure that our veterans are treated with the respect they have earned and deserve when they come to visit the memorials dedicated to their service.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 4812 as a token of appreciation for our veterans' service.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HUDSON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4812, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### EAST BENCH IRRIGATION DISTRICT WATER CONTRACT EXTENSION

Mr. DAINES. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4508) to amend the East Bench Irrigation District Water Contract Extension Act to permit the Secretary of the Interior to extend the contract for certain water services.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4508

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

#### SECTION 1. EAST BENCH IRRIGATION DISTRICT CONTRACT EXTENSION.

Section 2(1) of the East Bench Irrigation District Water Contract Extension Act (Public Law 112-139; 126 Stat. 390) is amended by striking "4 years" and inserting "10 years".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Montana (Mr. DAINES) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. HOLT) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Montana.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. DAINES. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within 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 gentleman from Montana?

There was no objection.

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

Hearing that water services delivery could be in jeopardy for 60,000 acres of some of the most productive farmland in my home State of Montana, I was happy to introduce this legislation that ensures that irrigation in southwest Montana is protected.

H.R. 4508 protects irrigation and water supplies in the Beaverhead Valley by extending the district's contract while an updated contract is pending approval by the Montana Water Court. This contract extension is necessary since the Montana court system is in the middle of conducting a necessary State-required review of the new contract between the irrigation district and the United States. This bill does not prejudice the outcome of that examination but keeps in place the existing 1958 contract so area farmers and ranchers in the Beaverhead Valley of Montana have water supply certainty for nearly 60,000 acres.

The legislation has no cost to the Federal Government and is based on congressional precedent. In fact, Congress has extended this 1958 contract a number of times, since an extension provides an irrigation district with an absolute right under Federal law to negotiate a new contract with the Bureau of Reclamation. This bill simply adds 6 additional years to the last extension, thereby extending the 1958 contract until December 31, 2019, or until a new contract is executed.

This bill is the result of hard work that is being done in Montana. I especially want to thank Mr. Bill Hritsco and the East Bench Irrigation District for their leadership and for working with me on this legislation to provide Montana farmers and Montana ranchers with much-needed certainty about their water supply.

Mr. Hritsco, the Dillon, Montana-based attorney representing the Irrigation District, provided expert testimony on this bill before the House Natural Resources Committee earlier this year. The Irrigation District's work with me on this bill represents how Montanans can roll up their sleeves and get good things done. As a result, water will continue to flow in the Beaverhead Valley's fields for years to come if this legislation is enacted. I urge adoption of the bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

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

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 4508, introduced by the gentleman from Montana (Mr. DAINES), would extend the East Bench Irrigation District's water contract, as he has said, for 6 years, pending a judicial ruling. The extension will allow the water to continue to be delivered to nearly 60,000 acres in the Beaverhead Valley of Montana, will protect the right for contract renewal, and will be useful to the residents of the area while the court confirmation process is given time for completion.

I support this legislation. I ask my colleagues to support it as well.

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

Mr. DAINES. Mr. Speaker, I urge adoption of the 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 Montana (Mr. DAINES) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4508.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### AUTHORIZING EARLY REPAYMENT OF CONSTRUCTION COSTS TO BUREAU OF RECLAMATION

Mr. DAINES. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4562) to authorize early repayment of obligations to the Bureau of Reclamation within the Northport Irrigation District in the State of Nebraska.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4562

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

#### SECTION 1. EARLY REPAYMENT OF CONSTRUCTION COSTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding section 213 of the Reclamation Reform Act of 1982 (43 U.S.C. 390mm), any landowner within the Northport Irrigation District in the State of Nebraska (referred to in this section as the "District") may repay, at any time, the construction costs of project facilities allocated to the landowner's land within the District.

(b) APPLICABILITY OF FULL-COST PRICING LIMITATIONS.—On discharge, in full, of the obligation for repayment of all construction costs described in subsection (a) that are allocated to all land the landowner owns in the District in question, the parcels of land shall not be subject to the ownership and full-cost pricing limitations under Federal reclamation law (the Act of June 17, 1902, 32 Stat. 388, chapter 1093), and Acts supplemental to and amendatory of that Act (43 U.S.C. 371 et seq.), including the Reclamation Reform Act of 1982 (13 U.S.C. 390aa et seq.).

(c) CERTIFICATION.—On request of a landowner that has repaid, in full, the construction costs described in subsection (a), the Secretary of the Interior shall provide to the landowner a certificate described in section 213(b)(1) of the Reclamation Reform Act of 1982 (43 U.S.C. 390mm(b)(1)).

(d) EFFECT.—Nothing in this section—

(1) modifies any contractual rights under, or amends or reopens, the reclamation contract between the District and the United States; or

(2) modifies any rights, obligations, or relationships between the District and landowners in the District under Nebraska State law.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Montana (Mr. DAINES) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. HOLT) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Montana.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

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