

rural and tribal communities, and support a research network that facilitates studies in pediatric emergency care.

Last week, as the chairman said, the House approved a similar bill to reauthorize the Emergency Medical Services for Children program by voice vote. By advancing the Senate's companion legislation today, the EMSC program will be able to continue for another 5 years at its currently appropriated funding level.

I want to thank Senators HATCH and CASEY for sponsoring this bill in the Senate, Congressmen MATHESON and KING for sponsoring the House companion bill, and leaders on the Energy and Commerce Committee and the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee for making it possible to have a consensus bill before us today—Chairman UPTON, Chairman PITTS, Ranking Member WAXMAN, Ranking Member PALLONE, Chairman HARKIN, and Ranking Member ALEXANDER.

I urge Members to support S. 2154 so we can send this bill to the President for his signature.

I yield back the balance of my time. Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, I urge all Members to support this bipartisan legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S. 2154, the Emergency Medical Services for Children Reauthorization Act of 2014.

The Emergency Medical Services for Children (EMSC) program aims to reduce the number of deaths of children and adolescents due to severe illness or trauma. This program supports a number of grant programs to advance pediatric emergency care. It is the only federal program that specifically focuses on improving emergency services for children and adolescents.

The House of Representatives approved legislation reauthorizing the EMSC program last week. The Senate bill before us today reauthorizes the program for another five years at the level of funding it received in fiscal year 2014.

I want to commend the sponsors of this bill and of the House companion legislation—Senators CASEY and HATCH and Congressmen MATHESON and KING—for their leadership on this issue. I would also like to thank Chairman UPTON, Chairman PITTS, and Ranking Member PALLONE for their work on this legislation in the Energy and Commerce Committee, and Chairman HARKIN and Ranking Member ALEXANDER for their work in the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee.

I support S. 2154 and urge my colleagues to do the same.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PITTS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 2154.

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. PITTS. 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.

INSULAR AREAS AND FREELY ASSOCIATED STATES ENERGY DEVELOPMENT

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 83) to require the Secretary of the Interior to assemble a team of technical, policy, and financial experts to address the energy needs of the insular areas of the United States and the Freely Associated States through the development of action plans aimed at reducing reliance on imported fossil fuels and increasing use of indigenous clean-energy resources, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 83

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

SECTION 1. INSULAR AREAS AND FREELY ASSOCIATED STATES ENERGY DEVELOPMENT.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) COMPREHENSIVE ENERGY PLAN.—The term “comprehensive energy plan” means a comprehensive energy plan prepared and updated under subsections (c) and (e) of section 604 of the Act entitled “An Act to authorize appropriations for certain insular areas of the United States, and for other purposes”, approved December 24, 1980 (48 U.S.C. 1492).

(2) ENERGY ACTION PLAN.—The term “energy action plan” means the plan required by subsection (d).

(3) FREELY ASSOCIATED STATES.—The term “Freely Associated States” means the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau.

(4) INSULAR AREAS.—The term “insular areas” means American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Virgin Islands.

(5) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of the Interior.

(6) TEAM.—The term “team” means the team established by the Secretary under subsection (b).

(b) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall establish a team of technical, policy, and financial experts—

(1) to develop energy action plans addressing the immediate, near-term, and long-term energy and environmental needs of each of the insular areas and Freely Associated States; and

(2) to assist each of the insular areas and Freely Associated States in implementing an energy action plan.

(c) PARTICIPATION OF REGIONAL UTILITY ORGANIZATIONS.—In establishing the team, the Secretary shall consider including regional utility organizations.

(d) ENERGY ACTION PLANS.—In accordance with subsection (b), the energy action plans shall include—

(1) recommendations, based on the comprehensive energy plan where applicable, to—

(A) promote access to affordable, reliable energy;

(B) develop indigenous, nonfossil fuel energy resources; and

(C) improve performance of energy infrastructure and overall energy efficiency;

(2) a schedule for implementation of such recommendations and identification and prioritization of specific projects;

(3) a financial and engineering plan for implementing and sustaining projects; and

(4) benchmarks for measuring progress toward implementation.

(e) REPORTS TO SECRETARY.—Not later than 1 year after the date on which the Secretary establishes the team and annually thereafter, the team shall submit to the Secretary a report detailing progress made in fulfilling its charge and in implementing the energy action plans.

(f) ANNUAL REPORTS TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 30 days after the date on which the Secretary receives a report submitted by the team under subsection (e), the Secretary shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a summary of the report of the team.

(g) FUNDING.—No additional funds are authorized to be appropriated for the purpose of carrying out this section, and this section shall be carried out using amounts otherwise available for such purpose.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) and the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Mrs. CHRISTENSEN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to insert extraneous material in the RECORD on the bill.

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

There was no objection.

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

I would like to include an exchange of letters between the Committee on Energy and Commerce and the Committee on Natural Resources.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES,
Washington, DC, June 19, 2014.

Hon. FRED UPTON,
Chairman, Committee on Energy and Commerce,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: I write in regard to H.R. 83. As you are aware, the bill was primarily referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, but the Committee on Natural Resources has a jurisdictional interest in the bill and has requested a sequential referral.

I recognize and appreciate your desire to bring this legislation before the House in an expeditious manner, and, accordingly, I agree not to insist on a referral of H.R. 83. I do so with the understanding that by foregoing such a referral, the Committee on Natural Resources does not waive any future jurisdictional claim on this or similar matters. Further, the Committee on Natural Resources reserves the right to seek the appointment of conferees, if it should become necessary.

I ask that you insert a copy of our exchange of letters into the Congressional Record during consideration of this measure on the House floor.

Thank you for your courtesy in this matter and I look forward to continued cooperation between our respective committees.

Sincerely,

DOC HASTINGS,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE,
Washington, DC, June 20, 2014.

Hon. DOC HASTINGS,
Chairman, Committee on Natural Resources,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN HASTINGS, Thank you for your letter regarding H.R. 83, to require the Secretary of the Interior to assemble a team of technical, policy, and financial experts to address the energy needs of the insular areas of the United States and the Freely Associated States through the development of action plans aimed at reducing reliance on imported fossil fuels and increasing use of indigenous clean-energy resources, and for other purposes. As you noted, H.R. 83 was referred to both the Committee on Energy and Commerce and the Committee on Natural Resources.

I appreciate your willingness to discharge the H.R. 83 from further consideration by the Committee on Natural Resources so that it may proceed expeditiously to the House floor for consideration.

I agree that by discharging the bill, the Committee on Natural Resources does not waive any future jurisdictional claim on this or similar matters. Further, I agree that the Committee on Natural Resources preserves its right to seek the appointment of conferees, if it should become necessary.

Finally, I would be pleased to insert a copy of our exchange into the Congressional Record during consideration of this measure on the House floor.

Thank you again for your assistance with this matter.

Sincerely,

FRED UPTON,
Chairman.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, first of all, I want to thank Dr. CHRISTENSEN for being the primary author of this important legislation.

H.R. 83 requires the Secretary of the Interior to assemble a team of technical, policy, and financial experts to address the energy needs of the insular areas of the United States and the freely associated states of Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands through the development of energy action plans aimed at promoting access to affordable and reliable energy.

□ 1615

These U.S. territories have few conventional energy resources, and they are dependent upon imports to meet a significant portion of their energy needs. As a result the resident of those areas pay unusually high electricity bills. In addition, because these areas are isolated from areas that provide their energy fuels, as well as the added cost of transporting these fuels, they face higher energy costs and greater threat of supply interruption than areas that are energy independent or have a more convenient source of energy fuels.

Dr. CHRISTENSEN has done a great job of bringing to the attention of our committee the unique challenges faced in those areas. H.R. 83 will assist these

important U.S. territories in addressing their energy needs by establishing a team of energy experts to help develop and implement an energy action plan for each of these areas.

Congress certainly has an ongoing interest in the energy needs of the Nation, as well as the insular areas of the U.S. and the freely associated states. Helping these territories develop affordable and reliable sources of energy are hallmarks of a thriving economy that can improve the quality of life for all.

H.R. 83 will not entirely solve these issues, but it will help facilitate the efforts.

I would urge all Members to support this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I rise in very strong support of H.R. 83, a bill which I introduced on the very first day of this Congress. This legislation, as you have heard, would require the Secretary of the Interior to assemble a team of technical, policy, and financial experts to address our energy needs through the development of action plans to promote access to affordable, reliable energy all while increasing the use of indigenous clean-energy resources in the insular areas of American Samoa, the Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, Guam, the Virgin Islands, and the freely associated states.

Before I go any further, I want to take this opportunity to thank Subcommittee Chairman WHITFIELD and Ranking Member RUSH and Committee Chairman UPTON and Ranking Member WAXMAN who, on hearing the high cost of electricity in my district, the U.S. Virgin Islands, immediately offered to support my efforts to bring relief.

I recall the very first time I shared how much we paid for electricity during one of our earlier Energy and Power Subcommittee meetings. Chairman WHITFIELD actually followed me outside of the room to confirm that he had heard the right figure and then pledged to do whatever he could as chairman to help on this issue.

We thank you for your help and your support. With their support Energy and Commerce actually passed this bill in July of last year, and we have been trying to bring it to the floor for passage since then.

I also want to thank Natural Resources Chair DOC HASTINGS and Ranking Member DEFazio for releasing the bill from their jurisdiction so that we could bring it to the floor today.

We have come a long way since 2008 when the Subcommittee on Insular Affairs, which I chaired at that time, and the Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources, chaired then by Congressman JIM COSTA, held an official hearing in Frederiksted, St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands.

Its specific purpose was to highlight the high cost of energy in the Virgin

Islands and other territories and to explore and offer alternative and renewable sources. It was at that hearing that we first called for a project like the Energy Development for Island Nations which then only existed in Hawaii.

Within a year the Department of the Interior and the Governor brought this project to the Virgin Islands. This initiative is what assisted our water and power authority to plan and implement the transition to propane and solar which will begin to lower costs later this year or earlier next year. It has also prepared the way for wind energy.

Today EDIN is no more, and we still have miles to go before we can see the significant reductions in cost that our families and our businesses must bear, and that is why we are here asking this body to pass H.R. 83 today.

This measure will help my district and our Nation's other insular areas become less reliant on expensive foreign-imported fuel and address our longstanding energy challenges which have become increasingly complicated by price shocks and instability in the oil markets over the past few years.

The bill requires that the energy action plans identify and offer remedies to our immediate, near-term, long-term, and environmental needs along with recommendations on how to improve the performance of energy infrastructure, how to improve overall energy efficiency, and how to set a schedule for implementation of those recommendations.

Just to give you a little more context to our ongoing dilemma, on every occasion when I am in my district, I hear business owners tell me that they are not sure how much longer they can hold on before closing. In fact, many have closed, and the high electricity costs make it very difficult to attract new ones at a time when our economy needs the stimulus.

At one social event I recall a mother of five pleading with me to keep seeking help as her almost \$500 a month bill is making it difficult for her to provide for the needs of her family. Our seniors are foregoing medicine and basic essentials. Many are living in darkness.

In some communities it would appear as though many have moved away when in actuality they are simply turning to candles and kerosene lamps because they simply cannot afford to turn on the lights. This presents risks to health and safety that are just unacceptable.

According to the Energy Information Administration, the national average cost of energy is 9.94 cents per kilowatt hour in the United States. Residential ratepayers in my district pay around 51.2 cents per kilowatt hour while commercial ratepayers incur a charge of approximately 54.3 cents.

This is nearly 500 times the national average, a cost that is unsustainable and crippling to our economy and the health and safety of our families. Residents in other territories and the State

of Hawaii pay rates that vary from 26 cents in Puerto Rico to over 40 cents in the smaller islands of Hawaii, costs which are still unacceptable and unsustainably high.

Despite our challenges and obstacles, our territories are steadfastly working to identify opportunities to adopt a diverse portfolio of energy options. This bill remains extremely necessary to support us in those endeavors because it recognizes the need for immediate short-term action.

H.R. 83 also recognizes the crisis that the current 30th legislature of the Virgin Islands has declared for energy in our territory and directs focus to the short-term needs of our community as well as to ensuring that, when the transactions are made, we will be putting together the right mix of fuel sources that will provide the most efficient electricity at the lowest possible cost.

As all of these factors converge, we know there is no better time than the present to aggressively pursue the deployment of solar, wind, LNG, LPG, geothermal, ocean wave, and thermal energy as well as storage systems. I am encouraged that this can be made a reality with the guidance of a team of experts dedicated solely to mitigating and resolving these issues.

Given our geographic locations, we don't have the privilege of tapping into nearby grid systems in times of crisis. This bill will arm us with the tools necessary to help us to transition along with the rest of our country to resources that are much more affordable, reliable, efficient, and clean.

President Obama has led the way. Many States have enacted strong energy plans that chart a way forward. Considering all of the options available to them, it is only fair that our territories also join in the race for energy independence and clean energy leadership.

On behalf of my district and all of the other territories and insular areas, I would like to also thank the Democratic leadership for helping me with H.R. 83, a bill that is critically important to the energy future of the U.S. Virgin Islands and all of our Nation's territories and freely associated states.

I also want to thank my colleagues for their support as we work through these challenges and issues. My constituents are encouraged and heartened by the support that we have received thus far.

I ask all of my colleagues to support the passage of H.R. 83, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, in conclusion I would once again urge everyone to support H.R. 83. I want to thank Chairman UPTON and Ranking Member WAXMAN and staff on both sides of the aisle for working to bring this important legislation to the floor. I urge its passage, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. PIERLUISI. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 83, and commend my colleague,

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, for her leadership in sponsoring this legislation. I am a cosponsor of this bill, and want to express my support for its passage by the full House of Representatives. The bill requires the Secretary of the Interior to establish a team of experts to develop, and help implement, a plan for each territory to reduce reliance on imported oil and to transition to cleaner energy sources that will improve the environment and lower electricity costs.

A typical territory resident pays two to four times more for electricity than the U.S. national average. As an island that does not produce oil, coal or natural gas, Puerto Rico faces inherent energy challenges. Notwithstanding the progress that was made under the last administration in San Juan, which oversaw a nearly 15 percent increase in the use of natural gas and a doubling of the use of renewable sources, Puerto Rico still generates most of its electricity from imported oil.

Burning oil pollutes the air and explains why Puerto Rico has the highest rate of asthma and other respiratory illnesses in the nation. Oil is expensive and subject to sudden price shocks. The high cost of electricity strains family budgets and harms businesses.

The plan called for by H.R. 83 will help the governments of Puerto Rico and the other territories diversify their energy portfolios and reduce electricity rates. It is for these reasons that I urge passage of this bill. I thank the Chairman and Ranking Member of the House Committee on Energy and Commerce for working with us to advance this bill.

Mr. SABLAN. Mr. Speaker, lowering the cost of electricity is extremely important to the people I represent in the Northern Mariana Islands. Residential customers in my district pay 40 cents per kilowatt-hour—three times the U.S. average. And those electricity bills are eating away at families' paychecks.

That's why I support H.R. 83.

H.R. 83 will help local governments develop and implement plans to reduce reliance on the expensive fossil fuels that make electricity so expensive in America's insular areas, including the Northern Mariana Islands.

The plans will propose technical, financial, and policy actions that island governments and local utilities can take to move the islands towards alternative sources of energy—especially renewables. The plans will show how to improve efficiency beginning with production, through distribution, and at the point of use, so that every kilowatt generated in the islands goes unwasted.

Last year, Congresswomen DONNA CHRISTENSEN and MADELINE BORDALLO, Congressman ENI FALEOMAVAEGA, Resident Commissioner PEDRO PIERLUISI and I were successful in convincing Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius to increase funding for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program in our islands. About 120 families were added to the rolls in the Northern Marianas and the assistance that all 420 families now receive is as much as double the previous amount.

But helping some families with the high cost of energy is only a partial fix. We need to lower costs for everyone. That's what Ms. CHRISTENSEN's bill promises to do.

I want to thank Congresswoman CHRISTENSEN for her years of work to move this important bill forward and congratulate her for bringing the bill to the floor today.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 83.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 83 to require the Secretary of the Interior to assemble a team of technical, policy, and financial experts to address the energy needs of the insular areas of the United States and the Freely Associated States through the development of action plans aimed at reducing reliance on imported fossil fuels and increasing use of indigenous clean energy resources, and for other purposes.

This bill was introduced by my good friend, Congresswoman DONNA CHRISTENSEN, and I thank her for her leadership. I also commend my fellow Territorial Delegates for their support. I am proud to be an original cosponsor, and I commend Chairman FRED UPTON and Ranking Member HENRY WAXMAN of the Committee on Energy and Commerce for bringing this legislation to the floor today.

H.R. 83 is critical in order to provide a comprehensive approach in addressing the high cost of energy in our island Territories and in the Freely Associated States. Given our remote locations, we rely solely on imported fuel has an adverse effect on our local economies.

As discussed at 3rd International Conference of Small Island Developing States that was held in Apia, Samoa a few weeks ago, we should also be concerned about the effects of climate change on our communities. It is crucial that we develop action plans aimed at reducing our reliance on imported fossil fuels.

H.R. 83 is an important first step in addressing our challenges and I urge my colleagues to support and pass H.R. 83.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 83, as amended.

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

The title was amended so as to read: "A bill to require the Secretary of the Interior to assemble a team of technical, policy, and financial experts to address the energy needs of the insular areas of the United States and the Freely Associated States through the development of energy action plans aimed at promoting access to affordable, reliable energy, including increasing use of indigenous clean-energy resources, and for other purposes."

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

□ 1630

TRANSFER OF YELLOW CREEK PORT PROPERTIES

Mr. CRAWFORD. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3044) to approve the transfer of Yellow Creek Port properties in Iuka, Mississippi.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3044

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

SECTION 1. TRANSFER OF YELLOW CREEK PORT PROPERTIES.

In accordance with section 4(k) of the Tennessee Valley Authority Act of 1933 (16