

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

U.S.C. 831c(k)), Congress approves the conveyance by the Tennessee Valley Authority, on behalf of the United States, to the State of Mississippi of the Yellow Creek Port properties owned by the United States and in the custody of the Authority at Iuka, Mississippi, as of the date of enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. CRAWFORD) and the gentlewoman from Maryland (Ms. EDWARDS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arkansas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CRAWFORD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on H.R. 3044.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, the Tennessee Valley Authority was created by Congress in 1933 to provide wholesale electric power and create economic development opportunities for those States in the Tennessee Valley region.

The State of Mississippi initiated development of Yellow Creek Port in 1971 on 116 acres purchased from the TVA. Industrial growth, high-paying jobs, associated spinoff companies, and increased traffic on the Nation's inland waterway system have occurred because of the development of Yellow Creek Port.

I would like to thank Congressman ALAN NUNNELEE for introducing H.R. 3044, legislation that will convey land from TVA to the State of Mississippi to provide economic development opportunities in the region. Nunnelee has been a leader on these types of activities since he was elected to Congress in 2010.

The land being conveyed through this legislation will be used solely for industrial purposes and allow the State of Mississippi to expand the Yellow Creek Port to meet increasing demand.

H.R. 3044 will execute the conveyance of the remaining 173 acres of property from TVA to the State of Mississippi to complete the development of Yellow Creek Port and fulfill one of TVA's missions of ensuring economic development opportunities in the TVA service area.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all Members to support H.R. 3044, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

H.R. 3044 will allow the transfer of 173 acres of Tennessee Valley Authority lands to the State of Mississippi for industrial and economic development.

The Tennessee Valley Authority Act of 1933 withdrew lands from the Tennessee River System to provide for fu-

ture development of power plants, industrial sites, ports, and supporting infrastructure.

In 1971 at the confluence of the Tennessee and the Tombigbee Rivers, the Yellow Creek Port project was initiated. The purpose of the Yellow Creek Port project was to support economic development and local jobs in northeast Mississippi. The TVA and the State of Mississippi have jointly supported the development and growth of the port.

TVA initially transferred 289 acres of land to the Yellow Creek Port to facilitate development back in 1971. H.R. 3044 would transfer an additional 173 acres of the land to the State of Mississippi.

The acreage includes industrial, highway, and railroad easements and 54 acres of undeveloped land. The TVA has attempted to sell this land since 1984, with no interested buyers.

Mr. Speaker, the TVA Act allows TVA, with appropriate congressional approvals, to dispose of property for particular uses. According to TVA, the agency places reversionary interest clauses in transfers and sales to ensure that those uses specified by Congress in the TVA Act are carried out. TVA then retains the right to retake possession of the property if the use condition is breached.

In February the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee considered and passed S. 212, by a voice vote, which supported the transfer of these same 173 acres. The Congressional Budget Office has concluded that the net impact of the transfer would be insignificant and would not affect direct spending. TVA has confirmed that the transferred lands would be used for industrial development; and again, if for some reason the lands are instead proposed for some nonindustrial purpose, the TVA can legally have the lands returned to them.

Mr. Speaker, I am not aware of any opposition to H.R. 3044, and as we have heard, the construction of the Yellow Creek Port in 1971 initially involved approximately 289 acres.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support the passage of H.R. 3044.

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

Mr. CRAWFORD. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Maryland for her support. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this important legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. CRAWFORD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3044.

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.

CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT ACT OF 2014

Mr. KLINE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 1086) to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 1086

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 "Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014".

SEC. 2. SHORT TITLE AND PURPOSES.

Section 658A of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9801 note) is amended to read as follows:

"SEC. 658A. SHORT TITLE AND PURPOSES.

"(a) SHORT TITLE.—This subchapter may be cited as the 'Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990'.

"(b) PURPOSES.—The purposes of this subchapter are—

"(1) to allow each State maximum flexibility in developing child care programs and policies that best suit the needs of children and parents within that State;

"(2) to promote parental choice to empower working parents to make their own decisions regarding the child care services that best suit their family's needs;

"(3) to encourage States to provide consumer education information to help parents make informed choices about child care services and to promote involvement by parents and family members in the development of their children in child care settings;

"(4) to assist States in delivering high-quality, coordinated early childhood care and education services to maximize parents' options and support parents trying to achieve independence from public assistance;

"(5) to assist States in improving the overall quality of child care services and programs by implementing the health, safety, licensing, training, and oversight standards established in this subchapter and in State law (including State regulations);

"(6) to improve child care and development of participating children; and

"(7) to increase the number and percentage of low-income children in high-quality child care settings."

SEC. 3. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

Section 658B of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858) is amended by striking "subchapter" and all that follows through the period at the end, and inserting "subchapter \$2,360,000,000 for fiscal year 2015, \$2,478,000,000 for fiscal year 2016, \$2,539,950,000 for fiscal year 2017, \$2,603,448,750 for fiscal year 2018, \$2,668,534,969 for fiscal year 2019, and \$2,748,591,018 for fiscal year 2020."

SEC. 4. LEAD AGENCY.

(a) DESIGNATION.—Section 658D(a) of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858b(a)) is amended—

(1) by striking "chief executive officer" and inserting "Governor"; and

(2) by striking "designate" and all that follows and inserting "designate an agency (which may be an appropriate collaborative agency), or establish a joint interagency office, that complies with the requirements of subsection (b) to serve as the lead agency for the State under this subchapter."

(b) COLLABORATION WITH TRIBES.—Section 658D(b)(1) of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858b(b)(1)) is amended—