

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Act, and I urge all my colleagues to join me in voting for this needed legislation.

In Michigan, we're blessed to be surrounded by the Great Lakes. In so many ways, the Lakes define our state, and our region, as well. For many years, though, we did not treat them as if they were very great. For the better part of a century, the Lakes and their tributaries were polluted to the point that they were dying.

A century of environmental harm cannot be undone overnight, but we've made considerable progress. That's where the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative comes in. Through the GLRI, we are finally addressing longstanding problems, such as toxic hotspots, invasive species like the Asian carp, habitat restoration, and runoff pollution.

The GLRI was created by the Obama Administration and, since 2010, Congress has wisely funded it. Now it is time for Congress to take the next step and formally authorize this vital program. Congress must remain a full partner in the restoration effort in the Great Lakes, and authorizing GLRI is the best way to do that.

I wish to acknowledge the efforts of my colleagues who have worked so hard to support GLRI over the last five years, especially Representative JOYCE, LOUISE SLAUGHTER, and my good friend JOHN DINGELL. I would also like to underscore the longstanding efforts of Senator CARL LEVIN and his staff in the area of Great Lakes restoration.

As we continue to make meaningful progress on restoration of the Great Lakes, this will be a hopeful sign that other difficult environmental redemptions are also achievable. Let us move forward together today by passing the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Act.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, as a co-Chair of the House Great Lakes Task Force, I rise in strong support of H.R. 5764, The Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Act.

This bipartisan legislation authorizes the popular Great Lakes Restoration Initiative. This program is critical to restoring and protecting the Great Lakes, which hold over 20 percent of the world's surface freshwater and are the source of drinking water, jobs, and recreation for millions of Americans.

I have represented districts that span the southern coast of Lake Ontario all the way to the City of Buffalo on Lake Erie and I know first hand the special bond the people of the Great Lakes basin share with these lakes. These magnificent bodies of water are truly unique and we must do all that we can to protect these national treasures for future generations. I urge my colleagues to support the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. GIBBS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5764.

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.

RELEASE OF RESTRICTIONS, CONDITIONS, AND LIMITATIONS ON THE USE, ENCUMBRANCE, CONVEYANCE, AND CLOSURE OF THE ST. CLAIR REGIONAL AIRPORT

Mr. GIBBS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 2759) to release the City of St. Clair, Missouri, from all restrictions, conditions, and limitations on the use, encumbrance, conveyance, and closure of the St. Clair Regional Airport.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 2759

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

SECTION 1. RELEASE OF RESTRICTIONS, CONDITIONS, AND LIMITATIONS ON THE USE, ENCUMBRANCE, CONVEYANCE, AND CLOSURE OF THE ST. CLAIR REGIONAL AIRPORT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The United States, acting through the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration, shall release the City of St. Clair, Missouri, from all restrictions, conditions, and limitations on the use, encumbrance, conveyance, and closure of the St. Clair Regional Airport, as described in the most recent airport layout plan approved by the Federal Aviation Administration, to the extent such restrictions, conditions, and limitations are enforceable by the Administrator.

(b) LIMITATION.—The release under subsection (a) shall not be executed before the City of St. Clair, or its designee, transfers to the Department of Transportation of the State of Missouri—

(1) the amounts described in subsection (c), to be used for capital improvements within the meaning of airport development (as defined in section 47102(3) of title 49, United States Code) and consistent with the obligations of the Department of Transportation of the State of Missouri under the State block grant program of the Federal Aviation Administration; and

(2) for no consideration, all airport and aviation-related equipment of the St. Clair Regional Airport owned by the City of St. Clair and determined by the Department of Transportation of the State of Missouri to be salvageable for use.

(c) AMOUNTS DESCRIBED.—The amounts described in this subsection are the following:

(1) An amount equal to the fair market value for the highest and best use of the St. Clair Regional Airport property determined in good faith by an independent and qualified real estate appraiser on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(2) An amount equal to the unamortized portion of any Federal development grants other than land paid to the City of St. Clair for use at the St. Clair Regional Airport, which may be paid with, and shall be an allowable use of, airport revenue notwithstanding section 47107 or 47133 of title 49, United States Code.

(3) An amount equal to the airport revenues remaining in the airport account for the St. Clair Regional Airport as of the date of the enactment of this Act and otherwise due to or received by the City of St. Clair after such date of enactment pursuant to sections 47107(b) and 47133 of title 49, United States Code.

(d) REQUIREMENT TO REMOVE RUNWAY LIGHTING SYSTEM.—The Federal Aviation Administration shall remove the runway end indicator lighting system at St. Clair Regional Airport.

(e) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to limit the applicability of—

(1) the requirements and processes under section 46319 of title 49, United States Code;

(2) the requirements under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.);

(3) the requirements and processes under part 157 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations; or

(4) the public notice requirements under section 47107(h)(2) of title 49, United States Code.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. GIBBS) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. BISHOP) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Ohio.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GIBBS. 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 material on S. 2759.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, S. 2759 releases the city of St. Clair, Missouri, from all restrictions, conditions, and limitations on the use, encumbrance, conveyance, and closure of the St. Clair Regional Airport.

The bill will require the city to pay fair market value for the airport property to the Missouri Department of Transportation, repay the unamortized value of Federal grants to the Missouri Department of Transportation, and transfer any remaining revenue to the Missouri Department of Transportation.

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

Mr. BISHOP of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I wish my Republican colleagues were not rushing to consider this bill without more deliberation. The other body just passed this bill last week. We have had no hearings on the bill, no committee meetings, no markups.

I understand that several general aviation groups have expressed concerns about the bill, and I would have liked the opportunity to hear from them and study their specific reservations.

Each of the Nation's federally-assisted airports is part of a system—a national system—that is greater than the sum of its parts. The Federal Government invests \$3.35 billion a year in airport improvements because each airport in the system not only drives economic growth, but also is a safe harbor for a pilot in distress.

For those reasons, the general rule is that we invest in airports, not close them; nevertheless, I understand that the airport in St. Clair, Missouri, which this bill would allow to close, presents some unique circumstances.

Although the Federal Government has invested almost \$1.1 million in the

airport since 1963, the airport has not received a Federal grant since 2006 when it received \$300,000. There are now only about eight aircraft movements at the airport a day. Community leaders believe that there are simply higher and better uses for the airport land.

Based on these extraordinary circumstances, this bill would allow the city of St. Clair to close the airport and would release the city from its obligations as a recipient of Federal airport improvement funds, provided the city transfers remaining grant funds and the market value of the land to the Missouri Department of Transportation.

While I have serious reservations about the precedent that this bill could set, I recognize the unique situation in this particular case. Going forward, I urge my colleagues to think long and hard about what it means for our national system of airports when we start permitting airports to shut down without working through the Federal Aviation Administration's administrative process.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GIBBS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. LUETKEMEYER).

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of S. 2759. This bill, introduced by Senators MCCASKILL and BLUNT from Missouri, authorizes the closure of the St. Clair Regional Airport in St. Clair, Missouri, once all obligations to Federal taxpayers have been repaid. St. Clair is a small town of 4,700 in my district, about 50 miles southwest of St. Louis.

The city has operated an airport since the sixties, but in the past decade, a consensus within the community has been reached that the airport should be closed and the land utilized as part of a larger economic development plan for the region. This effort has broad support in the city of St. Clair from the mayor, the city council, the school board, the fire district, and the local chamber of commerce.

The only thing holding up this plan is the continued reluctance of Federal regulators to give the go-ahead. The city approached the Missouri Department of Transportation in 2008 and the FAA in 2012, seeking closure of the airport, but the FAA keeps moving the goalposts, giving itself multiple extensions and leaving this small town confused and frustrated, with no end in sight.

As a small business owner myself from a town even smaller than St. Clair, I can tell you that red tape from Federal regulators is one of the biggest obstacles to economic growth in small communities. This legislation provides a simple fix to what has become an unnecessarily complicated issue in this community's attempt to provide growth opportunities in its area.

I should note that there are three other general aviation airports within a 30-mile radius of St. Clair, and the

Missouri Department of Transportation has indicated the closure of the airport will not have an adverse effect on aviation in Missouri.

Under the bill, in order for the city to qualify for the release from the FAA, it must transfer amounts previously used for the airport's capital improvements toward the improvement of other general aviation facilities in the area. Under S. 2759, taxpayers will be made whole, and the city will be permitted to move forward with new economic development plans.

S. 2759 is bipartisan and has passed the Senate unanimously. Mr. Chairman, I ask my colleagues to join me in supporting this important legislation so we can take a step forward in cutting through this red tape for the people of St. Clair, Missouri.

Mr. BISHOP of New York. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GIBBS. Mr. Speaker, in closing, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this important piece of 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 Ohio (Mr. GIBBS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 2759.

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.

JAMES M. CARTER AND JUDITH N. KEEP UNITED STATES COURTHOUSE

Mr. GIBBS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1378) to designate the United States courthouse located at 333 West Broadway in San Diego, California, as the "James M. Carter and Judith N. Keep United States Courthouse", as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1378

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

SECTION 1. JUDICIAL CENTER DESIGNATION.

The United States Federal Judicial Center located at 333 West Broadway in San Diego, California, shall be known and designated as the "John Rhoades Federal Judicial Center". The Judicial Center includes the Federal property located at 221 West Broadway, 333 West Broadway, 880 Front Street, 325 West F Street, 808 Union Street, and the adjoining plaza.

SEC. 2. COURTHOUSE BUILDING DESIGNATION.

The United States courthouse located at 333 West Broadway in San Diego, California, shall be known and designated as the "James M. Carter and Judith N. Keep United States Courthouse".

SEC. 3. REFERENCES.

Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the United States Federal

Judicial Center referred to in section 1 shall be deemed to be a reference to the "John Rhoades Federal Judicial Center". Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the United States courthouse referred to in section 2 shall be deemed to be a reference to the "James M. Carter and Judith N. Keep United States Courthouse".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. GIBBS) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. BISHOP) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Ohio.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GIBBS. 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 material on H.R. 1378, as amended.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 1378 designates the United States Federal Judicial Center located at 333 West Broadway in San Diego, California, as the John Rhoades Federal Judicial Center. The bill also designates the United States Courthouse in San Diego, California, as the James M. Carter and Judith N. Keep United States Courthouse.

John S. Rhoades, Sr., was a United States Federal judge on the United States District Court for the Southern District of California for 22 years. Before Judge Rhoades began practicing law, he served in the United States Navy during World War II. Early in his career, he practiced law for the city of San Diego, California, as a prosecuting attorney and as deputy city attorney.

Judge Rhoades was nominated by President Ronald Reagan in 1985 to serve as a Federal judge on the United States District Court for the Southern District of California, where he served until his death in 2007.

Judith N. Keep was nominated as a judge to the United States District Court for the Southern District of California in 1980 by President Jimmy Carter and served for 24 years. She was the first female Federal judge in her district. She later became its first female chief judge, serving in that capacity from 1991 to 1998. She continued to serve until her death in 2004.

James M. Carter was nominated by President Harry S. Truman as a judge on the United States District Court for the Southern District of California and served for 17 years, including 2 years as chief judge. In 1967, President Lyndon B. Johnson nominated Carter to a seat on the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, where he served until his death in 1979.

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All three of these judges demonstrated their dedication to the Nation and the law. It is fitting to honor