

Mr. Speaker, during the last Congress, while I served on the Natural Resources Committee, we held an oversight hearing regarding the child protection crisis on the Spirit Lake Indian Reservation in North Dakota in response to the numerous child deaths, as well as whistleblower reports that were detailing unsafe tribal placement of almost 40 foster children in abusive homes, many of which were headed by known convicted child sex offenders.

In an effort to protect these children and children around the country, I introduced the Native American Children's Safety Act, a bill that Senator JOHN HOEVEN of North Dakota has also introduced in the United States Senate.

This bill implements across-the-board minimum protections for children placed in foster care at the direction of a tribal court. These standards, Mr. Speaker, mirror existing national requirements for nontribal foster care placements, ensuring that tribal children receive at least the same, if not higher, standards of foster care as nontribal children placed in foster care.

This bill is bipartisan. I believe it is noncontroversial. It was reported out of the Natural Resources Committee in both this Congress and the last Congress with unanimous consent.

I also want to take the time to thank several members of the administration, particularly the BIA, as well as Health and Human Services, for their assistance in refining the bill. I also want to thank the National Indian Child Welfare Association, which assisted in refining the bill, as well as the National Congress of American Indians.

All of these refinements to the bill help make the bill better. More importantly, it provides flexibility to the tribes in fulfilling the obligations of the bill, and I think it makes it a much better bill.

I thank everybody who was involved, as well as my colleagues, and hope that we can pass it without objection today.

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

Currently, Native America tribes and their tribal courts use procedures and guidelines that vary significantly from tribe to tribe when placing a Native American child in a foster home.

Current law does not require that the Federal Government or Indian tribe perform vigorous background checks on foster parents or foster homes in order to ensure the safety, health, and protection of Native children.

Consequently, there have been appalling cases of Native American children ending up in dangerous and unsafe living conditions because they were placed in an overburdened foster care system that failed to ensure sufficient background checks of placement homes. We critically need background checks of individuals and institutions selected to foster Native youth.

H.R. 1168 strengthens background checks on prospective foster care parents prior to placement of Native chil-

dren into foster homes and sets forth a uniform manner in which Federal and tribal agencies serving tribes may conduct such checks.

I ask my colleagues to stand with me in support of Native American children by supporting passage of Mr. CRAMER's bill, H.R. 1168, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, this has been fully explained. To protect Indian foster children and provide these background checks is a wonderful thing. It is well overdue. I appreciate and commend the gentleman from North Dakota, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1168.

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.

REVOCATION OF MIAMI TRIBE OF OKLAHOMA CHARTER

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 533) to revoke the charter of incorporation of the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma at the request of that tribe, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 533

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

SECTION 1. REVOCATION OF CHARTER OF INCORPORATION.

The request of the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma to surrender the charter of incorporation issued to that tribe and ratified by its members on June 1, 1940, pursuant to the Act of June 26, 1936 (25 U.S.C. 501 et seq.; commonly known as the "Oklahoma Welfare Act"), is hereby accepted and that charter of incorporation is hereby revoked.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BEYER) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Utah.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, we have another piece of legislation that does wonderful

things. It should have been done earlier than this, but this time we are going to get it all the way through the system.

I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. MULLIN) to explain his legislation.

Mr. MULLIN. I thank the chairman for yielding.

The Miami Tribe's current charter of incorporation is an outdated governing structure that harms business and economic development. We wrote this bill because these charters can only be removed literally by an act of Congress.

The Miami Tribe has said that the outdated charter is inoperable. It imposes restrictions on business operations that are unmanageable and unnecessary.

Oklahoma is known for its entrepreneurial spirit, especially among our State's tribes. It is important that Congress remove these hurdles for investors, business partners, and potential customers.

As lawmakers, it is our job in Congress to foster an atmosphere that promotes economic growth across the country. I take this responsibility very seriously, and I hope that you will join me today in eliminating a needless economic burden on the Miami Tribe in my home State of Oklahoma.

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

Mr. Speaker, at the request of the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma, H.R. 533 simply revokes a corporate charter issued to it by the Federal Government.

Under the Oklahoma Indian Welfare Act and the Indian Reorganization Act, many tribes were issued corporate charters in the 1930s and 1940s that were aimed at enabling them to better manage their own affairs and pursue business relationships with private entities.

For some tribes, these corporate charters have proven unnecessary and end up hindering their business opportunities, as they will inevitably come up in negotiations with private entities and are looked upon with suspicion.

The charter must be revoked by an act of Congress, and Mr. MULLIN, on behalf of his constituents, is simply being a good Congressman and complying with the tribe's request through this bill.

Similar legislation has passed over the years without event, and I ask my colleagues to stand with me in support of Mr. MULLIN's noncontroversial bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Let me say just a few words about this particular piece legislation by myself. It is a one-page piece of legislation that should be easy to read—and those are always dangerous because they are easy to read—that grants the request from the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma to revoke a charter of incorporation which was issued back in the New Deal era—a 1936 law that was implemented

in 1940. And as we know, any of those pieces of legislation that age that well have got to be reviewed at a specific period of time.

Right now, we have a situation in which this tribe funds itself in a cumbersome situation with an outdated document that puts on limitations and uncertainty in the tribe business when they don't have to, because they are dealing instead with the business activities that come through their tribal constitution.

They are doing it the right way. And unfortunately, it requires an act of Congress to allow them to do what they ought to be doing and are doing in the first place and just clean up this act. So only we can do that.

It is in accordance with the tribal wishes, and it is in accordance with Congressman MULLIN, who represents this particular tribe in the House. He has sponsored this. This is a good bill. The Department of the Interior does not object to this piece of legislation. An identical version passed in the House in the 113th Congress by a voice vote. I would hope we would do it again, and this time make sure we go all the way through the system and do what is right for this particular tribe.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I am going to speak very slowly as I am waiting for someone else to show up on the next bill and would, therefore, yield as much time as he may consume to the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. MULLIN) for another couple of anecdotes as to why this piece of legislation is needed. I will tug on the gentleman's coat when he shows up and he can quit.

Mr. MULLIN. Mr. Speaker, you know, this is a piece of legislation that unfortunately we have tried 2½ years, way too long, to try to get through this body; but it also opens an important conversation about taking a look at all of these charters.

Why is it that Congress has to come together to pass commonsense legislation that should be up to the tribes themselves to make the decision? When they are hindering the businesses and the atmosphere that these tribes are able to operate under, they are not able to go out and provide jobs to not just their members but, also, to the communities which they live in and they thrive in.

Miami Tribe is a large employer of the city of Miami. The city of Miami has been in a situation where they have lost two major employers, and they look to these tribes like this in the community to create not just jobs at a casino, but manufacturing jobs, jobs that help our national defense. Yet they are hindered constantly by the effect that they can't simply do the work without asking Congress' permission.

They are a sovereign nation. Why is it that they would have to continue to

come back on something that isn't needed, something that dates all the way back to the 1930s? Unfortunately, this is exactly where we find ourselves today.

I am so glad that this is actually one of those things that is a bipartisan approach. Common sense does prevail in these Halls sometimes when we can come together and we can work at something that is noncontroversial. Even at that, we started this in the 113th Congress; and now we are in the 114th Congress, and we are still talking about it. We are 6 months into the 114th Congress, and we are trying to get a commonsense piece of legislation passed.

If I remember correctly, last year, when we tried to put this through, there was only one "no" vote. If that is not bipartisanship, then, what is? This should have been on the President's desk already.

So I join my colleagues in supporting this bill, but I also want to thank them for their patience, for the city of Miami and the tribe of Miami for their patience and the opportunity to bring this up again.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I certainly don't want to break any protocols we may have. So, therefore, I want to echo what the gentleman from Oklahoma so brilliantly and so fluently and obviously not slowly enough said.

With that, Mr. Speaker, once again, we will go through this concept that hopefully—does the gentleman from Virginia, even though I realize he has yielded back, would the gentleman like some of my time?

Mr. BEYER. I would be happy to take some if the chairman wouldn't mind.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Bless you.

I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BEYER).

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to extend my gratitude to the Congressman from Oklahoma for teaching me how to say "Miami." I have been mispronouncing "Miami" all through my short presentation. I also want to thank him for his leadership and being so responsive.

I think that there are perhaps many other laws on the books that we should look at in a very simple way to revoke the charters, as necessary.

I would also like to offer my help to the Congressman from Miami with our two Virginia Senators. It sounds like, if it passed this House with only one negative vote last year, that perhaps the Senate is the place where this is being held up. If we can provide some support to him in his moving this through the Senate side, I would be delighted to do that.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire how much time I have?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman has 12½ minutes remaining.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG).

(Mr. YOUNG of Alaska asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, this bill is a good piece of legislation. I want to thank Mr. MULLIN for bringing it up.

While we are on the subject, I would like to talk about the necessity of ICWA, the Child Welfare Act of this Congress past which I was a sponsor of.

The gentleman is here. So we won't talk about ICWA today. We will just let Mr. MCCLINTOCK get in here and make his statement. Eventually, Mr. Speaker, I will talk about the foster care homes, the need for volunteers, so we don't have 300 children in my State staying with State supervision instead of adopted. So we will talk about that later.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, with great appreciation to my good friends from Oklahoma and Virginia and Alaska, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 533.

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.

DESIGNATING A MOUNTAIN IN THE JOHN MUIR WILDERNESS AS SKY POINT

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 979) to designate a mountain in the John Muir Wilderness of the Sierra National Forest as "Sky Point".

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 979

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

SECTION 1. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

- (1) Staff Sergeant Sky Mote, USMC, grew up in El Dorado, California.
- (2) Staff Sergeant Mote graduated from Union Mine High School.
- (3) Upon graduation, Staff Sergeant Mote promptly enlisted in the Marine Corps.
- (4) Staff Sergeant Mote spent 9 years serving his country in the United States Marine Corps, including a deployment to Iraq and two deployments to Afghanistan.
- (5) By his decisive actions, heroic initiative, and resolute dedication to duty, Staff Sergeant Mote gave his life to protect fellow Marines on August 10, 2012, by gallantly rushing into action during an attack by a rogue Afghan policeman inside the base perimeter in Helmand province.
- (6) Staff Sergeant Mote was awarded the Navy Cross, a Purple Heart, the Navy-Marine Corps Commendation Medal, a Navy-Marine Corps Achievement Medal, 2 Combat Action Ribbons and 3 Good Conduct Medals.
- (7) The Congress of the United States, in acknowledgment of this debt that cannot be repaid, honors Staff Sergeant Mote for his ultimate sacrifice and recognizes his service to his country, faithfully executed to his last, full measure of devotion.
- (8) A presently unnamed peak in the center of Humphrey Basin holds special meaning to