

Bear Valley, and by the local chapter of the Sierra Club.

I thank my colleague, Representative COOK, for working to address some of our concerns with earlier drafts of this bill. Thanks to his efforts, we have ensured this exchange will be subject to existing law, that it will preserve critical and occupied habitat for endangered species, and that the exchange will have minimal impacts on the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail.

H.R. 5513 demonstrates how a collaborative process can meet the interests of local stakeholders, while protecting the integrity of our environment and public lands.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this piece of legislation, 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 is a perfect example of how to do something well. I commend Congressman COOK for listening to his local constituents, trying to get their input, and getting a bill that has total local support. It is the way things should be done, solving a problem for both the Forest Service, as well as San Bernardino County.

Not only will the Forest Service get a small parcel of land which solves the problem of in-holdings within their property, but San Bernardino County gets the ability of solving significant problems they have in the area of public safety. This is one of those things that is a win-win situation: a win-win situation which actually provides safety, as well as the changing of that trail, if absolutely necessary, but that has to be worked out before any of this is concluded.

The bottom line here is that we have realized there is a significant problem, we have recognized this is a significant problem, and, by working with local communities to get their input trying to come up with a locally-driven solution to that problem, this is the way government should operate. Unfortunately, it doesn't operate that way all the time, but Congressman COOK has worked very hard to make sure that this is one of those positive efforts. This bill is one of those things that is a win for all of us.

Mr. Speaker, I heartily ask my colleagues to vote in favor of this, 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. 5513, 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.

PRESERVING AMERICA'S BATTLEFIELDS ACT

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the

bill (H.R. 6108) to provide for partnerships among State and local governments, regional entities, and the private sector to preserve, conserve, and enhance the visitor experience at nationally significant battlefields of the American Revolution, War of 1812, and Civil War, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 6108

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 "Preserving America's Battlefields Act".

SEC. 2. CIVIL WAR BATTLEFIELD PRESERVATION ACT OF 2002.

Section 2 of the Civil War Battlefield Preservation Act of 2002 (Public Law 107-359) is amended to read as follows:

"SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSES.

"(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

"(1) Battlefields of the American Revolution, War of 1812 and the Civil War—

"(A) provide a means for the people of the United States to understand our Nation's turbulent first century;

"(B) serve as living memorials to those who fought and sacrificed in these conflicts to establish and maintain our freedom and liberty;

"(C) serve as training grounds for our Nation's Armed Forces; and

"(D) serve as heritage tourism destinations, generating revenue for local economies.

"(2) According to the Report on the Nation's Civil War Battlefields, prepared by the National Park Service and updated in 2010, of the 383 Civil War battlefields identified as national preservation priorities—

"(A) only at 31 battlefields is more than half of the surviving landscape permanently protected;

"(B) at 227 battlefields, less than half of the surviving landscape is permanently protected;

"(C) 65 battlefields have no protection at all; and

"(D) 113 battlefields have been severely hampered by development since the Civil War or are on the verge of being overwhelmed.

"(3) According to the 2007 Report to Congress on the Historic Preservation of Revolutionary War and War of 1812 Sites in the United States, prepared by the National Park Service, of the 243 principal Revolutionary War and War of 1812 battlefields identified as national preservation priorities—

"(A) almost 70 percent lie within urban areas as denoted in the 2000 U.S. Census;

"(B) 141 are lost or extremely fragmented, with residential and commercial development being the chief threats;

"(C) 100 other battlefields retain significant features and lands from the period of battle, although on average these battlefields retain only 37 percent of the original historic scene;

"(D) of these 100 surviving but diminished battle landscapes, 82 are partially owned and protected by public and nonprofit stewards, although the extent of that protection varies from site to site;

"(E) 18 are without any legal protection;

"(F) the condition of two battlefields is unknown, with additional research and survey being required to determine their exact location and condition; and

"(G) the paucity of existing battlefield landscapes necessitates preservation and maintenance of what precious little remains today.

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

"(1) to act quickly and proactively to preserve and protect nationally significant battlefields of the American Revolution, War of 1812, and Civil War through conservation easements and fee-simple purchases of those battlefields from willing sellers; and

"(2) to create partnerships among State and local governments, regional entities, and the private sector to preserve, conserve, and enhance the visitor experience at nationally significant battlefields of the American Revolution, War of 1812, and Civil War."

SEC. 3. PRESERVATION ASSISTANCE.

Section 308103(f) of title 54, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

"(f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary to provide grants under this section \$15,000,000 for each fiscal year through 2025, of which not more than 10 percent may be used each fiscal year as follows:

"(1) Not more than \$1,000,000 for projects and programs that modernize battlefield interpretive and educational assets through the deployment of technology, disbursed through the competitive grant process to non-profit organizations.

"(2) Not more than \$1,000,000 for grants to organizations described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and exempt from taxation under section 501(a) of such Code to be used for projects that restore day-of-battle conditions on land preserved through Battlefield Land Acquisition Grant Program funds."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) and the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GALLEGOS) 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 material 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 such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JODY B. HICE), the sponsor of this excellent piece of legislation that protects our heritage and our battlefields.

Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for the opportunity to speak on behalf of my bill, H.R. 6108, the Preserving America's Battlefields Act.

Mr. Speaker, the American Battlefield Protection Program was first authorized in 1996 by Congress in order to promote and protect significant American battlefield sites, as well as to provide an educational platform for current and future generations of Americans. Since the inception of this program, Battlefield Land Acquisition Grants have been used extensively to preserve portions of dozens of battlefield sites that have played a significant role in the American Revolution,

the War of 1812, and the American Civil War.

These dollar-for-dollar matching land grants have saved more than 30,000 acres of battlefields across 20 States. Just this past year, in my own district, this program assisted in securing 180 acres of battlegrounds surrounding the site of Kettle Creek Battlefield, which is the site of the only significant patriot victory in Georgia during the Revolutionary War.

This bill would reauthorize the successful bipartisan Federal grant programs, and would dedicate a portion of that authorization for educational purposes and for the restoration and interpretation of high-priority battlefield sites.

This will help make these battlefields beautiful, historic, and educational tourist destinations. This program has been one of the most successful and efficient land grant programs in our Nation's history, continually receiving bipartisan support. Both former Presidents George W. Bush and Barack Obama supported the program's authorization and subsequent reauthorizations, respectively. I am very proud to say that this bill has continued in that rich tradition of bipartisan support here in the 115th Congress.

With the 250th anniversary of our Nation's founding fast approaching, there is no better time to protect our battlefields and prepare them for the influx of visitors expected during that time.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman BISHOP, the minority, our hardworking Natural Resources Committee staff, and the American Battlefield Trust for helping us get this bill across the finish line.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 6108, which authorizes additional funding for the Battlefield Acquisition Grant Program.

This program has a long track record of efficiently and cost-effectively preserving battlefield sites from the American Revolution, the Civil War, and the War of 1812.

By utilizing public-private funding matches, through which Federal contributions are leveraged with private sector funds, the program maximizes the preservation impact of every dollar spent. It is critical that we extend this grant matching program because many of these historic battlefield sites lack permanent protection and are under threat from encroaching development. If we don't act swiftly, we could soon lose access to sites of significant historical importance.

By extending additional funding to this program, and by allowing a portion of this new funding to go towards educational and interpretive upgrades at these sites, we ensure that future generations of Americans will always remember the sacrifices made to preserve our Nation.

Unfortunately, I worry that this legislation, as important as it is for pre-

serving our Nation's history, rings somewhat hollow.

We need to recognize that the grant program H.R. 6108 extends is funded through the Land and Water Conservation Fund, which expired in September for the second time this Congress.

At our committee's hearing on H.R. 6108, our distinguished witness from the American Battlefield Trust recognized that this proposal doesn't hold water unless LWCF is reauthorized.

Mr. Speaker, while I rise in support of H.R. 6108, I also urge my colleagues to support the permanent reauthorization of LWCF.

Mr. Speaker, 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 is one of those bills that makes an old history teacher's heart fill with joy. It is one of the right things to do. We are talking about areas that are living memorials to the heroism and to the sacrifice of those people who made this country what it is.

This bill is about preserving our history, helping us know, understand, and retain the story of who we are as a nation, and also how we arrived there as a nation. All of that is significant.

It is significant in that it will reauthorize the program through 2025, it is significant because it also will reauthorize an authorization level, which is, in practicality, what we have available to spend on this particular program, but, more importantly, it also involves the private sector becoming involved in this. Indeed, if our history is to be maintained, it is not going to be done simply by the government mandating it. We have to involve the private sector to become part of understanding why these areas are significant and what is the lesson to be learned there.

Not only will his bill talk about acquisition of land for these battlefield areas, but also about how we restore this land to the way it was at the time that history was being made on these properties, and, more importantly, how do we improve the education resources. So the story of what we are as a Nation, the story of what this specific site meant as we become a unified Nation as we move forward, that is retained and passed on from generation to generation. That is a significant issue and is a significant process.

□ 1545

Mr. Speaker, I commend the gentleman from Georgia for his commitment to understanding how important battlefields are to the history of this country and how important it is that that history is passed on to future generations. That is why this is a significant program that needs to go forward.

Mr. Speaker, once again, I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of this particular 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 Utah (Mr. BISHOP) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 6108, 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.

GEORGE W. BUSH CHILDHOOD HOME STUDY ACT

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3008) to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a special resource study of the George W. Bush Childhood Home, located at 1412 West Ohio Avenue, Midland, Texas, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3008

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 "George W. Bush Childhood Home Study Act".

SEC. 2. SPECIAL RESOURCE STUDY.

(a) STUDY.—The Secretary of the Interior shall conduct a special resource study of the George W. Bush Childhood Home, located at 1412 West Ohio Avenue, Midland, Texas (referred to in this section as the "site").

(b) CONTENTS.—In conducting the study under subsection (a), the Secretary shall—

(1) evaluate the national significance of the site;

(2) determine the suitability and feasibility of designating the site as a unit of the National Park System;

(3) consider other alternatives for preservation, protection, and interpretation of the site by Federal, State, or local governmental entities, or private and nonprofit organizations;

(4) consult with interested Federal, State, or local governmental entities, private and nonprofit organizations or any other interested individuals;

(5) determine the effect of the designation of the site as a unit of the National Park System on existing commercial and recreational uses, and the effect on State and local governments to manage those activities;

(6) identify any authorities, including condemnation, that will compel or permit the Secretary to influence or participate in local land use decisions (such as zoning) or place restrictions on non-Federal land if the site is designated a unit of the National Park System; and

(7) identify cost estimates for any Federal acquisition, development, interpretation, operation, and maintenance associated with the alternatives.

(c) APPLICABLE LAW.—The study required under subsection (a) shall be conducted in accordance with section 100507 of title 54, United States Code.

(d) STUDY RESULTS.—Not later than 3 years after the date on which funds are first made available for the study under subsection (a), the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate the results of the study and any conclusions and recommendations of the Secretary.