

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, section 202(b) of S. 245, the "Tribal Biomass Demonstration Project Act," amends the Tribal Forest Protection Act of 2004 (TFPA) to include new authority that directs the Secretary (of Agriculture or the Interior) to enter into a minimum number of contracts or agreements with Indian tribes to enable the tribes to carry out various activities on Federal land. Unlike the current TFPA, which is discretionary, the Secretary must enter into agreements with tribes under this new authority. These activities will benefit the Indian tribes that enter into the agreements as well as the surrounding communities, and they will promote healthy forests to stem the plague of wildfires afflicting many Western communities, tribal and non-tribal alike.

As an initial matter, Section 202(e) requires the Secretary to consult with tribes and tribal organizations in developing the eligibility criteria and to make the criteria public within 120 days of enactment. It is critical that the Secretary meet this deadline to ensure that tribes are able to submit applications for projects in the remainder of fiscal year 2019.

As provided in the bill, in evaluating tribal projects, the Secretary is directed to weigh several factors. Given the severe impact of wildfires over the past decade, the importance of one of the factors, improving the forest health of Federal land, cannot be emphasized enough. For example, in August of 2015, two wildfires burned more than 255,000 acres of the Colville Indian Reservation in Washington State. The fires burned nearly 20 percent of the reservation land base and more than 800 million board feet of timber, making it the most damaging fire event in history in terms of board feet of timber lost on any Indian reservation. As noted in a November 8, 2015, column in the Seattle Times by then-Colville Chairman Jim Boyd and the Gentlelady from Washington, the Honorable CATHY MCMORRIS RODGERS, the damage to the Colville Reservation was amplified because major fire-suppression resources were tied up suppressing fires on undermanaged areas of nearby National Forest land, leaving the Colville Reservation with little protection. The Secretary should, accordingly, give strong weight to tribal proposals that will improve the forest health on Federal land and protect tribal lands.

Finally, Section 202(b) requires the Secretary to incorporate, at a tribe's request and to the maximum extent practicable, the tribe's on-reservation management plans in the contracts or agreements under which the tribe will perform the activities on Federal land. The requirement that on-reservation management plans be incorporated into tribal activities on Federal land is an extension of what Congress has already required. For example, since its enactment in 1976, Section 202(b) of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act has required the U.S. Forest Service to coordinate the lands use plans for National Forest System lands with tribal management practices.

As highlighted over the years in numerous Committee on Natural Resources hearings, tribal land management practices are widely acknowledged as more flexible and as having forest health outcomes superior to those in effect on non-tribal Federal land. The Committee on Natural Resources examined this at an April 10, 2014, oversight hearing on tribal for-

est management. Compared to federal land managers, tribes find increased forest management efficiencies in the tiered environmental compliance afforded by tribal Integrated Resource Management Plans and the limitation on third party appeals in Bureau of Indian Affairs forestry regulations (which are incorporated into tribal forest management plans). These and other on-reservation management practices could and should be included in agreements under Section 202 at a tribes' request.

On a final note, nothing in the TFPA or the amendments made to the TFPA under Sec. 202 of S. 245 provide, or imply a provision, for tribal management of non-tribal interests in Federal land (and non-tribal users of such land) beyond the specific forest management-related functions set forth in the Act.

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, S. 245.

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.

SOUTHEAST ALASKA REGIONAL HEALTH CONSORTIUM LAND TRANSFER ACT OF 2017

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 825) to provide for the conveyance of certain property to the Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium located in Sitka, Alaska, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 825

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 "Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium Land Transfer Act of 2017".

SEC. 2. CONVEYANCE OF PROPERTY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—As soon as practicable, but not later than 2 years, after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Health and Human Services (referred to in this Act as the "Secretary") shall convey to the Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium located in Sitka, Alaska (referred to in this Act as the "Consortium"), all right, title, and interest of the United States in and to the property described in section 3 for use in connection with health and social services programs.

(b) EFFECT ON ANY QUITCLAIM DEED.—The conveyance by the Secretary of title by warranty deeds under this section shall, on the effective date of the conveyance, supersede and render of no future effect any quitclaim deed to the property described in section 3 executed by the Secretary and the Consortium.

(c) CONDITIONS.—The conveyance of the property under this Act—

- (1) shall be made by warranty deed; and
- (2) shall not—

(A) require any consideration from the Consortium for the property;

(B) impose any obligation, term, or condition on the Consortium; or

(C) allow for any reversionary interest of the United States in the property.

SEC. 3. PROPERTY DESCRIBED.

The property, including all land and appurtenances, described in this section is the property included in U.S. Survey 1496, Lots 3, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11A, 11A Parcel A, and 11B, partially surveyed Township 55 South, Range 63 East of the Copper River Meridian, containing 19.07 acres, in Sitka, Alaska.

SEC. 4. ENVIRONMENTAL LIABILITY.

(a) LIABILITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Consortium shall not be liable for any soil, surface water, groundwater, or other contamination resulting from the disposal, release, or presence of any environmental contamination on any portion of the property described in section 3 on or before the date on which the property is conveyed to the Consortium, except that the Secretary shall not be liable for any contamination that occurred after the date on which the Consortium controlled, occupied, and used such property.

(2) ENVIRONMENTAL CONTAMINATION.—An environmental contamination described in paragraph (1) includes any oil or petroleum products, hazardous substances, hazardous materials, hazardous waste, pollutants, toxic substances, solid waste, or any other environmental contamination or hazard as defined in any Federal or State of Alaska law.

(b) EASEMENT.—The Secretary shall be accorded any easement or access to the property conveyed under this Act as may be reasonably necessary to satisfy any retained obligation or liability of the Secretary.

(c) NOTICE OF HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCE ACTIVITY AND WARRANTY.—In carrying out this Act, the Secretary shall comply with subparagraphs (A) and (B) of section 120(h)(3) of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 (42 U.S.C. 9620(h)(3)).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG) and the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GALLEGOS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Alaska.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. 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 the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of S. 825, the Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium Land Transfer Act of 2017.

The consortium provides comprehensive healthcare to Native communities throughout Alaska's panhandle. It also delivers healthcare on behalf of the Federal Government through self-determination compacting.

The consortium operates Mt. Edgecumbe Hospital in Sitka, a 25-bed,

critical-access facility. The hospital was constructed towards the end of World War II. It is in dire need of updating due to its age and condition.

For the consortium to secure financing for the project to update the conditions of the facilities, they need land on the hospital campus, which is currently held by IHS, conveyed by warranty deed.

S. 825 is a companion bill to my bill, H.R. 1901. Simply, it would transfer 19 acres of Federal land to the consortium, allowing them to update and improve healthcare services for Alaska Natives.

From the 112th to the 114th Congress, three of my bills that authorized similar land transfers for different entities were signed into law. These bills were nearly identical to S. 825.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Chairman BISHOP and his staff for moving this bill through committee. I would also like to thank Ranking Member GRIJALVA and his staff for their bipartisan work on this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the passage of this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, the Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium, composed of 18 Native communities, is one of the oldest and largest Native-run health organizations in the Nation. The consortium operates the Mt. Edgecumbe Hospital in Sitka, Alaska, which serves as a regional hospital for people throughout southeast Alaska.

At 67 years old, the Mt. Edgecumbe Hospital is the oldest facility in Alaska and one of the oldest in the Nation. As such, it is in dire need of updates and repairs.

However, the title to the hospital is currently held by the Indian Health Service. In order to obtain the financing necessary to facilitate the renovations, it is necessary for the consortium to hold unencumbered warranty title to the land. S. 825 will convey the land to the consortium by warranty title to ensure that the process moves forward.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I have no more speakers, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 825.

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. YOUNG of Alaska. 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.

COMMERCIAL ENGAGEMENT THROUGH OCEAN TECHNOLOGY ACT OF 2018

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 2511) to require the Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere to carry out a program on coordinating the assessment and acquisition by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration of unmanned maritime systems, to make available to the public data collected by the Administration using such systems, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 2511

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the “Commercial Engagement Through Ocean Technology Act of 2018” or the “CENOTE Act of 2018”.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

Sec. 2. Definitions.

Sec. 3. Coordination regarding assessment and acquisition by National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration of unmanned maritime systems.

Sec. 4. Regular assessment of unmanned maritime systems to support National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration missions.

Sec. 5. Acquisition of unmanned maritime systems.

Sec. 6. Reports on unmanned maritime systems and usage for mission of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

Sec. 7. Funding and additional authorities.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) ADMINISTRATION.—The term “Administration” means the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

(2) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term “Administrator” means the Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere and Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

(3) COOPERATIVE ACTIVITIES OF THE ADMINISTRATION.—The terms “cooperative activities of the Administration” means cooperative activities between the Administration and an external entity, such as the Cooperative Institutes, Sea Grant Colleges, National Estuarine Research Reserves, the National Oceanographic Partnership Program established under chapter 665 of title 10, United States Code, and regional associations of the Integrated Ocean Observing System.

(4) DATA SPECIFICATIONS.—The term “data specifications” shall refer to the type, resolution, periodicity, and quality of data required by an program of the Administration.

(5) TEST OR TRAINING RANGE.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The term “test or training range” means an area designated for operating unmanned maritime systems and other types of systems for the purpose of—

(i) evaluating the performance of such systems; or

(ii) training personnel on operating procedures for such systems.

(B) INCLUSIONS.—The term “test or training range” may include specialized fixed or

portable instrumentation for the operation of unmanned maritime systems and other types of systems.

(6) UNMANNED MARITIME SYSTEMS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The term “unmanned maritime systems” means remotely operated or autonomous vehicles produced by the commercial sector—

(i) designed to function without an on-board human presence; and

(ii) that may include associated components such as control and communications, instrumentation, data transmission, and processing systems.

(B) EXAMPLES.—The term “unmanned maritime systems” includes the following:

(i) Unmanned undersea vehicles.

(ii) Unmanned surface vehicles.

(iii) Autonomous underwater vehicles.

(iv) Autonomous surface vehicles.

(C) TREATMENT OF AERIAL VEHICLES.—The term “unmanned maritime systems” includes unmanned aerial vehicles and autonomous aerial vehicles that are used to address maritime issues to the extent the Administrator determines it is necessary and appropriate to achieve the purposes of this Act.

SEC. 3. COORDINATION REGARDING ASSESSMENT AND ACQUISITION BY NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION OF UNMANNED MARITIME SYSTEMS.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Administrator shall direct the Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research (in this Act referred to as “OAR”) and the Office of Marine and Aviation Operations (in this Act referred to as “OMAO”)—

(1) to coordinate the Administration’s research, assessment, and acquisition of unmanned maritime systems; and

(2) to consider the use of unmanned maritime systems in cooperative activities of the Administration.

(b) COORDINATION WITHIN THE ADMINISTRATION.—

(1) UNMANNED SYSTEMS EXECUTIVE OVERSIGHT BOARD.—In meeting the requirements described in subsection (a), the Administrator shall—

(A) utilize the Unmanned Systems Executive Oversight Board (in this Act referred to as the “USEOB”) as the coordinating mechanism; and

(B) ensure that OAR and OMAO address requirements throughout the Administration.

(2) INCLUDED.—In utilizing the USEOB under paragraph (1), the Administrator shall ensure that representation on the USEOB is included from the following:

(A) The Office of Ocean Exploration (OER).

(B) The program office of the Integrated Ocean Observing System.

(C) Such other offices of the Administration as the Administrator determines are actively engaged with unmanned maritime systems.

(c) COORDINATION WITH THE NAVY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In carrying out this Act, the Administrator shall—

(A) make efforts to coordinate with the Secretary of the Navy to leverage expertise in the development and operational transition of unmanned maritime systems;

(B) align with, utilize, and inform the Deputy Under Secretary of Commerce for Operations and the Oceanographer of the Navy’s strategic and operational priorities, particularly for missions and geography within the Administration’s purview;

(C) seek to utilize Naval unmanned systems test or training ranges, such as the Gulf of Mexico Unmanned Systems Test and Training Range of the Naval Meteorology and Oceanography Command, and maximize interagency cooperation and sharing of best practices; and