

I know that it is never the wrong time to bear witness and tell the truth. The United States should never be complicit in denying genocide.

As a proud member of the bipartisan Armenian Caucus, co-chaired by my friend, Chairman FRANK PALLONE, I will continue working hard in Congress for justice on behalf of New Jersey and the Fifth Congressional District's great Armenian American community.

GRAND CANYON CENTENNIAL PROTECTION ACT

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to insert extraneous material on H.R. 1373.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WELCH). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Arizona?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 656 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 1373.

The Chair appoints the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SÁNCHEZ) to preside over the Committee of the Whole.

□ 1227

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 1373) to protect, for current and future generations, the watershed, ecosystem, and cultural heritage of the Grand Canyon region in the State of Arizona, and for other purposes, with Ms. SÁNCHEZ in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered read the first time.

General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed 1 hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Natural Resources.

The gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GRIJALVA) and the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GOSAR) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GRIJALVA).

Mr. GRIJALVA. Madam Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Chair, I want to start today with a story.

Near the south rim of the Grand Canyon sits Canyon Mine, a breccia pipe uranium mine in the middle of the Kaibab National Forest, only a few miles from the boundary of the Grand Canyon National Park.

This mine opened in 1986 after assurances that its operations would have minimal impact and that they wouldn't impact groundwater.

Mind you, since it opened three decades ago, uranium production has

never occurred at the site. Uranium ore has never come out of the mine.

What has come out of the mine is over 20 million gallons of groundwater, polluted with uranium and arsenic from the ore body. The water has flowed into the mine ever since the mine operator pierced a groundwater aquifer in 2016.

Again, the mine operator had assured regulators its mine shaft would be dry.

The situation is so dire that the mine operator regularly resorts to spraying this uranium-contaminated water into the air to speed evaporation. On windy days, this spray has been known to travel off the site and into the surrounding areas and environment.

Meanwhile, the mine shaft continues to fill with contaminated water.

There are really only a few places that water might go if it escapes the mine shaft: down toward other aquifers, including those that feed the water to the Supai Village and Havasu Falls, or to the seeps and springs that flow into the Grand Canyon and, eventually, to the Colorado River itself.

□ 1230

Supai village has been the home of the Havasupai people for more than 1,000 years. They have made this canyon their home. Their history is there. Their homes are there. Their lives are there. Yet this mine puts all that at risk.

Again, no ore production has occurred at this site, but it has already degraded millions of gallons of clean water and put lives and culture at risk. And that contamination risk will only get worse once mining commences and the water is exposed to more and more uranium ore.

This isn't a unique example. The Pine Nut mine on the North Rim of the Grand Canyon was thought closed and capped for two decades, but in 2009 the mine was discovered to have unexpectedly filled with over two million gallons of radioactively contaminated water.

Uranium mines across the southwest pollute our water, endanger our communities and our health, and despite assurances, hundreds of these sites are still waiting to be cleaned up, particularly those mines that impact Tribal communities.

Madam Chair, for Arizonans, for the Havasupai, and for countless others across the southwest, the mineral withdrawal made permanent by H.R. 1373 is not theoretical and it is not trivial. I rise today to ask for this House's support for protecting clean water, protecting the health of our communities, and protecting the public lands and environment on which we all rely.

The bill before us today permanently extends an existing temporary moratorium on new mining claims on public lands surrounding the Grand Canyon National Park, to prevent another canyon or Pine Nut mine from threatening our communities and our livelihoods.

This House needs to act on this proposal because these critical protections are under threat from the Trump administration.

Under the guise of energy dominance and fabricated arguments about national security, they have continually pushed for these lands to be open to exploitation on behalf of a few wealthy mining interests. The idea that we need to mine around the Grand Canyon—mind you, the Grand Canyon—to meet our energy needs is patently false. There is ample data to show it, and national security and nuclear non-proliferation experts have routinely raised the alarm that this fear-mongering about supplies is based on fantasy. It is time to stop rehashing the same worn out arguments. We shouldn't be mining for uranium around the Grand Canyon, period.

This is an effort I have been involved in for over a decade, and I hope we can move forward today. I urge my colleagues to help me protect access to clean water and a healthy environment for the people of Arizona by supporting H.R. 1373, the Grand Canyon Centennial Protection Act.

Madam Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GOSAR. Madam Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume. I rise in opposition to H.R. 1373, the so-called Grand Canyon Centennial Protection Act. It is an antimining attack on northern Arizona and my district.

This legislation imposes a massive land grab of more than one million acres, permanently banning mining and other multiple-use activities in an area nearly the size of Delaware. The withdrawal is also, I would like to point out, very far outside the Grand Canyon. The actual Grand Canyon, of course, is already subject to a multitude of Federal protections.

Around one-third of the proposed withdrawal area in this bill is in my district. The rest is in Representative O'HALLERAN's district. And none of the lands in this bill are in the sponsor of this bill, Representative GRIJALVA's, district.

This bill would have direct negative impacts on six counties in Arizona and Utah, with an estimated two to 4,000 jobs lost and \$29 billion in foregone overall economic activity. The withdrawal area also contains 4,204 acres belonging to the Arizona State Land Department for the benefit of Arizona's school children. This withdrawal will mean hundreds of millions of dollars in lost revenue for local communities and for our schools. I think every single school district is hurting for money in Arizona.

Further, the majority of the active and historic mining claims are in my district, and the main point of this bill is to lock up those lands for mineral development.

I said that this is an attack on northern Arizona, and that is true, but that is not all. This bill is a specific, targeted attempt to prevent access to the

highest grade and largest quantity of uranium reserves in the country. In doing so, this legislation has serious defense and energy security implications for the entire Nation.

Uranium is a uniquely valuable element. It is a source of renewable energy and also an irreplaceable application in defense and medicine. And yet, domestic uranium production in 2018 was 33 percent lower than in 2017. This year those numbers are likely to be even worse. Our domestic industry is disappearing. If nothing is done, it will be completely gone in just a few years. Look at what has happened with our timber industry in Arizona. We have completely wiped out the mechanism, and now we are victims of catastrophic wildfires.

During consideration of this bill in committee, my colleagues across the aisle claimed that we source most of our uranium from allies like Canada and Australia. But they neglected to mention that a Canadian mine, which provided 15 percent of the global uranium supply, closed just last year. An Australian mine is scheduled to stop operations in 2021 after 40 years of mining.

But why is this? Why is our domestic industry struggling to stay in business and the uranium supply from our friends in Canada and Australia shrinking?

Well, the largest uranium producer in the world is Kazakhstan, and together with Russia and Uzbekistan, these countries have been deliberately trying to “corner” the global market. Yes, I said it. Corner the global market. They are pushing the price of uranium down to artificially low levels and driving competitors in the United States and elsewhere out of business. In fact, China is joining in it too, buying up mines in Namibia.

We currently import about 97 percent of our uranium from foreign sources. As of 2018, the majority of our uranium imports now come from hostile nations like Russia. This is not always the case, but the problem has gotten worse and worse over time, especially in recent years. I think all of us here today should consider that very alarming.

Now, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle have cited concerns about water quality as a reason to prevent mining in the withdrawal area. But, in fact, successful uranium mining occurred in the 1980s. These mines were reclaimed so well that you can't tell where they have even existed. There was no damage done to the Grand Canyon watershed. In fact, they may have improved the watershed. And due to the small footprint of a typical breccia pipe operation, usually less than 40 acres, even if every mining claim in the area became a mine, only a small fraction of the withdrawal area would be affected.

Keep in mind that this is an area where mining and other multiple-use activities can coexist. In fact, a thoroughly-negotiated compromise to do

just that was created by the Arizona Wilderness Act of 1984, supported by the entire Arizona and Utah delegations. 387,000 acres of land was added to the National Wilderness Preservation System in exchange for 540 acres to be available for multiple use, including mining.

Unfortunately, some of the environmental groups involved in that compromise have forgotten why it was made. Attempts to withdraw this area have returned with very strong opposition from my constituents and residents of northern Arizona.

There is no question that H.R. 1373 will hurt local revenues, kill jobs, and undermine American energy security. It is opposed by the people of my district, and I urge my colleagues to join me in opposition.

Madam Chairwoman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Madam Chair, I recognize my colleague from Arizona—that was accurately stated, that he represents 70 percent of the designated area in this legislation.

I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. O'HALLERAN).

Mr. O'HALLERAN. Madam Chair, I rise today to speak in support of the Grand Canyon Centennial Protection Act, legislation that would ban uranium mining in and near the Grand Canyon.

I am proud to represent Arizona's First Congressional District, which is home to the Grand Canyon. Our canyon is a national treasure with cultural significance to Native American Tribes and Nations throughout the region, as well as home to the Havasupai Tribe.

The Grand Canyon brings in over 6 million visitors each year. In 2018, these visitors spent \$1.2 billion in the local economy and supported over 12,000 jobs. The Grand Canyon is also home to the Colorado River, the water supply for an enormous portion of the southwest region.

Potential contamination of the water by uranium mining would have a ripple effect that would devastate the 40 million people that rely on the Colorado River and local aquifers. Unfortunately, areas in and near the canyon are plagued by the toxic legacy of uranium mining to this day.

Currently, there are over 500 abandoned uranium mines in the Navajo Nation alone. They have been there for 80 years. The Federal Government has an obligation to clean them up, as did the mining companies that abandoned them.

Cancer diagnoses in the region are extremely high and are directly linked to uranium mining activity dating back to the Cold War.

Today, I urge my colleagues to join me in voting to pass the Grand Canyon Centennial Protection Act. This commonsense bill protects our canyon, the health of northern Arizonans, the water supply of the southwest, and the growth of our State's economy by banning uranium mining in and near the Grand Canyon.

Additionally, I want to note that this withdrawal of uranium mining does not jeopardize our energy market or our national security by forcing us to seek foreign sources. We are actually seeking foreign sources now because our cost is not competitive with world prices.

According to Federal data, both New Mexico and Wyoming have three times the amount of uranium reserves as Arizona, Colorado, and Utah have combined. Our uranium imports are lower than they have been in 15 years, and Canada, our ally, is our largest supplier along with Australia, another ally.

I am proud to stand today in support of the Grand Canyon Centennial Protection Act, because the Grand Canyon is too precious to lose. I implore my colleagues to vote in support of this legislation.

The Arizona land trust is for the schools. This land may not be used for uranium mining, but it could be used for anything else to be able to address the issues of funding schools in Arizona. And, again, the mine that the chairman mentioned has a reason to be closed.

Mr. GOSAR. Madam Chairwoman, I want to explain. This is a cross-section of geological formations. These yellow areas are called the breccia pipes. What ends up happening is these alluvial fans actually direct water. Uranium is water soluble. This is the Grand Canyon down here. This is where the springs come through. So what ends up happening is it dissolves into water, and it comes into the water.

So it seems like to me, what we would want to do is get rid of that so there was not a perpetual leaching into the subsurface water. Geology tells us a lot.

Madam Chairwoman, I yield 4½ minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK).

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Madam Chair, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Madam Chairwoman, when I chaired the Federal Lands Subcommittee a few years ago, the ranking Democratic member was from Massachusetts. She shared the Democrats' goal of having the Federal Government acquire as much land in the west as it possibly could. Try as I might, I could never impress upon her the difference between a State like Massachusetts, where the Federal Government owns only 1.2 percent of the land, and a State like mine, California, where it controls 46 percent. I have got one county in my district where the Federal Government owns 93 percent of the land.

And I tried in vain to get her to understand the dire economic implications for her district if the Federal Government one day seized 46 percent of her State, took it off the tax rolls, restricted public access, and forbade any productive use on it. What would that do to her State's economy? Yet, that is precisely what the Federal Government has done to the west.

Now, the Federal Government owns 39 percent of the State of Arizona. Our

holdings include the largest deposit of high-grade uranium ore in the United States, one of the largest in the world. Its development is critically important to our future defense and energy needs at a time when 93 percent of the uranium we use comes from foreign governments.

Now, the Federal Government not only owns these critical deposits, it is responsible to the American people for their wise management and productive use.

Now, a rational person might say, well, thank God we can be independent of foreign governments and develop these reserves for the benefit of taxpayers and the economy. A rational person might say that.

But, of course, this bill is anything but rational. It would close these Federal lands, a million acres of them, far from the Grand Canyon, I might add, just to be clear, and forbid the American people from benefiting from these rich uranium deposits on the land that the American people own.

□ 1245

This bill imposes a completely irrational total prohibition on the development of these resources and devastates the economic potential for the communities nearby.

Indeed, this bill is most strongly opposed by the local representative from these communities, Congressman GOSAR. The elected county supervisor from Mohave County came to Washington to plead with the Democrats not to hobble the economy of their rural district in this way. Once again, the Democrats dismissed the pleas of local residents in order to scratch their own ideological itch to seize as much land as they can and put it off-limits to the American people.

Madam Chair, I would remind the Democrats that this was the practice of the early Kings of England. They set aside one-third of the English countryside, declared them to be the King's Forests, off-limits to the common people. This practice so enraged the English people that no fewer than five clauses in the Magna Carta were written to redress their grievance.

Not content to limit such devastating restrictions to the Federal lands, this measure would also hamstring mining on tens of thousands of acres of State trust fund lands, which help fund Arizona's public schools and hospitals.

The Democrats have waged a war against agriculture and mining for many years now. This bill is just their latest ham-handed example.

I think the American people need to wake up to what a devastating future these policies will produce. Think about this: Everything that we touch, everything that provides for our survival, our comfort, our quality of life, absolutely everything, is either mined or is grown. I don't know of any exceptions.

I think it is time we carefully consider the nihilism of the modern left

and where it would take our communities and where it would take our country before it is too late.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Madam Chair, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Arizona (Mrs. KIRKPATRICK), my colleague.

Mrs. KIRKPATRICK. Madam Chair, I rise in support of H.R. 1373, the Grand Canyon Centennial Protection Act.

I have lived in Arizona my entire life, born and raised there. I remember frequently visiting the canyon as a child, marveling at its magnificence and its beauty. I have hiked down the Grand Canyon with my family, camped on the banks of the Colorado River. It is not a place where we should have uranium mining.

There are many Native American Tribes who live in that area and who consider that a sacred site. For hundreds of years, their ancestors visited the Grand Canyon. They continue to worship there and have ceremonial sites in the Grand Canyon.

We just cannot allow this kind of contamination to continue. The problem with uranium mining is that the retroactive disposal of uranium is very, very difficult to clear from the land.

The CHAIR. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Madam Chair, I yield an additional 30 seconds to the gentlewoman.

Mrs. KIRKPATRICK. Madam Chair, one more point. When it rains in that watershed, rain carries that uranium contamination to our stock tanks and ponds, and then that contamination goes into our cattle.

Madam Chair, this is a very serious issue. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 1373.

Mr. GOSAR. Madam Chair, I yield myself such time as I might consume.

Madam Chair, I thank the gentlewoman from Arizona (Mrs. KIRKPATRICK) for acknowledging that.

We are going to go back to learning about geology. Once again, we have these breccia pipes, and you can see them on this location on the platform here.

Now, let's look at something that naturally occurs in the next picture. What do you think this is? This is an exposed breccia pipe next to an alluvial fan.

This is exactly what she was talking about. When water and air get to this, it immerses it into the water and carries it down.

This is a concentrated supply of uranium. Wouldn't it be better to mine that area? That is what we have to get after. It is safe; it is effective; and it will show some mitigation.

Madam Chair, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN).

Mr. WESTERMAN. Madam Chair, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Madam Chair, I rise today in opposition to H.R. 1373, the Grand Canyon Centennial Protection Act.

This bill is very cleverly named to imply that it is safeguarding the Grand

Canyon, something I believe that we all support. After all, who wouldn't want to protect one of our Nation's most iconic natural sites?

But when we look at what this bill actually does, we quickly see that it has very little to do with the Grand Canyon. Instead, it is a Federal land grab that would lock up approximately 1 million acres of public land in northern Arizona and permanently ban mineral development.

Let me make this clear: H.R. 1373, the so-called Grand Canyon Centennial Protection Act, focuses on land outside Grand Canyon National Park, miles away from the canyon.

To hear this policy described, it sounds like we would be backing backhoes and trucks right up to the canyon and chipping off the rim of the canyon, but that is just not so. This is land very far outside of the park.

This policy is progressive. It progressively increases outside bureaucratic control over more Federal land.

The policy and the world view that supports it reminds me of the story of the greedy farmer. He said he didn't want all the land; he just wanted the land that bordered his land. Policy like this doesn't claim to want all the land; it just wants to put the land in protection that borders the land that is in protection. Someday, there won't be any land left if we continue implementing policies like this.

As Mr. GOSAR has already pointed out, the land up for debate is in his and Mr. O'HALLERAN's districts, not Mr. GRIJALVA's, and closing its development would result in hundreds of millions of dollars of lost revenue for local schools and communities.

One of the common arguments against mineral development is that it disrupts wildlife habitats and water supplies, but we have seen this disproved time and time again. A strong economy and environmental stewardship can coexist.

The Arizona Geological Survey published a report outlining uranium mining in this part of Arizona, showing how mining here would not contaminate the Colorado River, the Grand Canyon, or any of the surrounding watersheds.

We have also seen how areas that were mined in the past have been successfully reclaimed. As modern mining techniques and technology continue improving, this process will only become more efficient and advanced.

Finally, we cannot have a discussion about barring natural resource development on public lands without addressing the far and wide-ranging geopolitical repercussions. Our domestic uranium industry is currently supplying less than 1 percent of the uranium necessary to fuel U.S. nuclear reactors. Despite a vast domestic supply of uranium, much of it is inaccessible due to laws like H.R. 1373.

This means the U.S. is forced to outsource its uranium supply from countries like Russia, Uzbekistan, and

Chinese-owned mines in Namibia. With geopolitical tensions constantly increasing, it is foolish for us to continue relying so heavily on countries that have proven themselves to be unfriendly to the U.S.

If we permanently ban mineral development on another vast expanse of land, we are overtly threatening American energy and economic security, and I believe we are promoting less environmental stewardship around the globe.

I have seen this story play out over and over again. My Democratic colleagues claim to be concerned about environmental safety and security, but their only solution is to lock up millions of acres and throw away the key.

I ask: Wouldn't our time be better spent finding smart energy solutions that are sustainable and environmentally friendly and that provide American jobs?

If we want the U.S. to continue leading the world in long-term energy solutions, this must be our approach.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Madam Chair, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. STANTON), my colleague.

Mr. STANTON. Madam Chair, I thank the gentleman, Chairman GRIJALVA, for yielding, and for his leadership as the chairman of the Natural Resources Committee, and as the senior member of our Arizona delegation.

Today, I rise in support of H.R. 1373, the Grand Canyon Centennial Protection Act.

When people think of Arizona, they most often conjure up images of the Grand Canyon. It is our State's greatest treasure and one of the most iconic natural wonders on Earth.

It took nearly 2 billion years for the Colorado River and its tributaries to cut through layer after layer of rock to form the canyon. The spectacular scene is something best experienced in person, which is why it is one of the most visited national parks in our country.

The park is a key economic driver for northern Arizona's economy. Last year, the Grand Canyon welcomed 6.3 million visitors, bringing almost \$1 billion of value to our local economies.

President Teddy Roosevelt, who designated the Grand Canyon a national monument in 1908, said: "Leave it as it is. You cannot improve upon it. The ages have been at work on it, and man can only mar it."

We could not agree more.

As we celebrate the park's centennial this year, we must take the necessary action to preserve this natural landscape for future generations to experience.

The bill before us today, which makes permanent a ban on new uranium mining permits on nearly 1 million acres around the canyon, is that necessary action. It is a vital step to protect this delicate ecosystem, the significant number of species that call it home, as well as the Colorado River watershed on which millions of people rely for water.

This legislation has strong support from leaders and industries across our State, from our Tribal nations to cities and counties, to recreation and environmental organizations.

Madam Chair, I urge my colleagues to join us in preserving the Grand Canyon and supporting this important bill.

Mr. GOSAR. Madam Chair, I yield myself such time as I might consume.

Madam Chair, it is great that the gentleman brought this up. So once again, let's go back to our geological timeframe.

This water cuts through. This is the Grand Canyon. This is the shelf that you go over and look over at the beautiful, majestic aspect of the river.

Look at what we have cut across, these breccia pipes. Once again, this is exposure. It is water-soluble, air-soluble. It goes back into the watershed.

Once again, we are talking about up here, where mitigation should be very, very important.

Madam Chair, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. STAUBER). He has been a stalwart person in regard to the mining industry; that it is a way of life in northern Minnesota.

Mr. STAUBER. Madam Chair, I rise today with my colleagues in opposition to this harmful legislation.

Today, the other side of the aisle is kowtowing to the wealthy and elite environmental lobby by ignoring science and facts and legislating over the needs of rural communities. This heavy-handed Federal approach ignores potential revenues generated from State trust lands that would flow to schools and our local communities.

I feel like we are living in the movie "Groundhog Day" sometimes. Time and time again, locals who live on these lands, who work in the area, who raise their families there, who represent these districts are supportive of these projects. Those who often know nothing about the local projects, the economy, or the environment are the ones who are inserting themselves in opposition.

This illustrates the vast divide between the realities for local communities and the visions of environmentalists. What these visions tend to ignore is that the choice is a binary one. We either get these minerals needed for our everyday life, renewable energy, and national security from right here in the United States, or we import them from places like Russia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Chinese-owned mines in Africa.

Do these countries have the same standards in place as we do to protect the environment? Madam Chair, the answer is no.

Do these foreign mines hire workers with high-wage salaries? Madam Chair, the answer is no.

Are these mines required to comply with a regulatory agency like the Mine Safety and Health Administration? Madam Chair, the answer is no.

Do Russia and China have our best national security interests in mind? Madam Chair, the answer is no.

Therefore, this legislation is baffling. Our enemies abroad could not have written a better bill to benefit their economies and national security goals while simultaneously damaging ours.

Instead of arbitrarily deciding that mining is wrong, Madam Chair, let's look at the facts. One, it is unsustainable and irresponsible to continue our reliance on foreign adversaries for our minerals. Two, mining and a pristine environment are not mutually exclusive.

Madam Chair, I encourage anybody in this body to come to northern Minnesota and view our reclaimed mines, which are home to the cleanest drinking water in the State of Minnesota.

□ 1300

Or, how about visiting the Hermit Mine in Arizona. This was a functional uranium mine in the 1980s. It is now fully reclaimed with a pristine landscape.

We need these minerals. Let's stand up against antiscience scare tactics and vote against this bill and in support of good jobs, renewable energy, and national security for our country.

Mr. GOSAR. Madam Chair, may I inquire as to how much time I have.

The CHAIR. The gentleman from Arizona has 12 minutes remaining.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Madam Chair, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. HORSFORD), a member of the Natural Resources Committee.

Mr. HORSFORD. Madam Chair, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 1373, the Grand Canyon Centennial Protection Act.

This bill ensures that uranium mining will not irreversibly contaminate the sensitive habitats and clean water of the Colorado River watershed, which provides drinking water to nearly 30 million Americans, including some of my constituents in Nevada.

While uranium and other hard rock mining can help foster economic activity, as it has done in my home State of Nevada, it can also threaten community health. In my district, I have seen the impacts that uranium contamination can have on local communities in the town of Yerington and the Yerington Paiute Tribe.

For decades, uranium contamination has persisted in this area, endangering the health of my constituents and forcing families to stop drinking from their taps, literally having to rely on bottled water. Sadly, cleanup of this site and others like it often takes much longer than it should, leaving families to choose between leaving their homes or living amongst health hazards.

Madam Chair, I urge my colleagues to work on this bill to support this legislation in a bipartisan tradition and to vote to protect the Grand Canyon region and Colorado River watershed from the damaging impacts of uranium mining.

Mr. GOSAR. Madam Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Chair, once again, let's look at mitigation. The previous speaker on our side, Mr. STAUBER from Minnesota, actually talked about it.

Well, here is an active mine site called the Pigeon Mine. This is what it looked like: a footprint of less than 40 acres; right around 30 acres. And this is it, newly minted right as it was done for reclamation. In 2 years, you are not going to be able to find anything here.

Once again, look at what we are dealing with here. This is an exposed breccia pipe. Any water, any rain, any snow, any air will actually dissolve this and put it in the air—not just uranium, but arsenic as well. These are eroded away.

Once again, geology teaches you everything you need to know. Once again, all these breccia pipes are built here.

Here is the Grand Canyon. We are not doing anything here. But look at the exposure here for the uranium leaching into the subsurface and into the Colorado River—not just that, but arsenic as well.

Look at what we are mining up on here, protecting and clearing that out. And you can see that their mitigation is exemplary.

Eighty years ago, we abandoned a bunch of mines, but a lot of Federal Government was to blame about that.

We also heard the dissertation in regards to the park could generate all sorts of other revenue. Well, the last time I looked, the park wasn't generating; they were going in the negative. In fact, the backlog on maintenance is over \$12 billion.

The government doesn't run these very, very well, and this is a great opportunity for multiple use. It actually cleans the water, improves the drainage into the subsurface water, and gets to a problem with a solution that works and has been trusted.

Madam Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Madam Chair, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Minnesota (Ms. MCCOLLUM).

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Madam Chair, the Grand Canyon Centennial Protection Act is an important bill to protect one of America's most iconic national parks and elevate the voices of Tribal communities.

Tribal leaders from across the Southwest have called on Congress to permanently protect this region from uranium mining. These communities have seen firsthand the devastating impact uranium extraction could have on their lives, on their health, and the health of their children.

For example, the Havasupai Tribe live in the bottom of the Grand Canyon. Uranium contamination of the aquifers that sustain their land would destroy their drinking water, their farms, and kill their livestock. Even their ability to remain on their Tribal homeland is at risk.

It is time for Congress to listen to these Tribal leaders. It is time for Con-

gress to stand up for future generations who are relying upon us for clean water, public lands, cultural heritage, and other priceless resources.

As a chair of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee, I hear from Americans about the value of conserving our public lands and protecting our air and our water. The Trump administration's agenda puts that all at risk by prioritizing profits for mining companies over our public health and the health of our environment.

In my home State of Minnesota, the Trump administration's push to mine at any cost jeopardizes the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness, our Nation's most visited wilderness area.

Congress needs to state clearly and emphatically that some places are just simply too important and too precious to exploit. Today, we take a stand to protect the lands and waters surrounding the Grand Canyon, one of the earliest and most iconic national parks.

Madam Chair, I support H.R. 1373, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. GOSAR. Madam Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Chair, once again, geology tells us everything we need to know. Once again, the gentlewoman actually talked about the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness. Once again, I feel sorry for the public being misused and used like pawns by the other side about the misnomer.

Once again, the Grand Canyon—this is the Grand Canyon. There is nothing going on right here. Oh, I forgot. Water runs down, dissolves uranium and arsenic, and puts it into the water.

What we are talking about is mitigation on this plateau. This is outside the Grand Canyon experience. This is what is so important is that this is helping out the health and the strength of the purity of water. That is the key here.

Not only that, but the last time I knew, Arizona fights over water because we have to drink whiskey. We want clean water here, so we are enabling, actually, clean water here.

Once again, there are dozens of fights for the conversation we are having today. The American people are being used like pawns. They don't know what is right. Go back to geology. The geology sets you free.

You have seen the mitigation. Yes, 80 years ago, there wasn't great mitigation. That was a big part of the U.S. Government and its oversight. But now, there is great opportunity for this to happen. We are not talking about the Grand Canyon. It is outside on the plateau.

Once again, as these are exposed through erosion, you have contamination of subsurface water. It seems to me like we should actually clean it up.

The other thing I keep hearing about is we have got plenty of supplies. Well, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle are so narrow-sided that they for-

got about: How did China actually grow to own the world market of rare earths? I mean, think about that. In order to have a cell phone, you have got to have these critical minerals and rare earths.

In the trade debate, what did China threaten us with? Withholding rare earths.

Why do we have some of our leading battery technology over in China? Because we didn't have supply chains here.

The other side talks about globalization. Well, let's talk about globalization. Nobody—let me repeat—nobody—in the world does mining like the U.S. No one does it under the same protections, and the same protections for the workers—nobody.

And if we are talking about globalization, which always keeps coming out of the other side's mouth, well, then we ought to be bringing all this home so that we are the entrepreneur, we are the one forcing this issue, and we are the one who controls our own destiny.

Madam Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Madam Chair, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY).

Mr. KENNEDY. Madam Chair, I thank the chairman for his leadership on this bill and his unwavering commitment to both his home State and our environment.

Madam Chair, this legislation isn't just about protecting our land and natural resources for generations to come.

It isn't just about ensuring the water rights for the Havasupai Tribe and indigenous people our country has long abused and ignored.

It is not just about the tourism industry that could crumble and threaten the local economies that depend on it.

It isn't even just about the health of our environment, our air, our water, and our children.

It is about the choices that we make and the priorities that we share.

It is about finally choosing people over profits.

It is about finally choosing the long-term health of our planet and our children over the short-term reward of stripping our resources and leaving devastation and destruction behind.

By passing the Grand Canyon Centennial Protection Act, we will show the people of Arizona, and countless other Americans who have been sidelined by powerful special interests, that they are still heard, that they are still seen, and that they will not be dismissed by their government.

Mr. GOSAR. Madam Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Chair, once again, the gentleman made my point perfectly for me: This is about people.

There is mitigation. We are holding people accountable. They are empowered because now we are controlling the energy cycle. We are not indentured to another country like China or Russia.

We are looking at the long series, making sure that we control our own destiny. That was the American experience. And we are accountable. That is key.

So when you look at mitigation like this, you can't dispute it. You are not entitled to your own facts. The facts are what they are.

So there is a way forward and a way forward to do this right, and it is being presented right here. The answer is not "no"; it is about what it takes to get to "yes." This bill is totally wrong for that very format.

Madam Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Madam Chair, I reserve the balance of my time to close.

Mr. GOSAR. Madam Chair, may I inquire as to how much time I have.

The CHAIR. The gentleman from Arizona has 6½ minutes remaining.

Mr. GOSAR. Madam Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Chair, I include in the RECORD a list of organizations that are opposed to this bill; a Statement of Administration Policy threatening to veto this bill if it were even to get through; a letter from the Uranium Producers of America in strong opposition to the bill; an article from *The Epoch Times*, dated September of 2019, basically talking about the U.S. needs alternatives to China's rare earth monopoly, once again, a stranglehold.

WESTERN CAUCUS, CHAIRMAN PAUL GOSAR

OPPOSITION TO H.R. 1373

So far H.R. 1373 is opposed by: American Exploration & Mining Association (Group Letter), Arizona Liberty (Group Letter), Arizona Mining Association (Group Letter), Arizona Pork Producers (Group Letter), Arizona Rock Products Association (Group Letter), Citizens For America (Group Letter), Conservative Coalition of Northern Arizona (Group Letter), Conservatives for Property Rights (Letter), Denver Lumber Company (Letter), enCore Energy Corp (Letter), Lake Havasu Chamber of Commerce (Letter); the Mohave County Supervisors (Resolution), National Mining Association (Letter), National Stone, Sand & Gravel Association (Letter), New Mexico Cattle Growers' Association (Letter), New Mexico Federal Lands Council (Letter), New Mexico Wool Growers Association (Letter), Western Energy Alliance (Group Letter).

STATEMENT OF ADMINISTRATION POLICY

H.R. 1373—GRAND CANYON CENTENNIAL PROTECTION ACT—REP. GRIJALVA, D-AZ, AND 122 COSPONSORS

The Administration strongly opposes H.R. 1373, the Grand Canyon Centennial Protection Act. This bill would permanently make more than 1 million acres of Federal lands in Arizona off limits to development and uses that would otherwise be permissible under Federal laws governing public lands, mining, mineral, and geothermal leasing. The Administration opposes such a large, permanent withdrawal, which would prohibit environmentally responsible development, as determined through site-specific analysis, of uranium and other mineral resources.

The United States has an extraordinary abundance of mineral resources, both onshore and offshore, but this legislation would restrict our ability to access critical minerals like uranium in an area known to have

them in large supply. Moreover, the size of the withdrawal included in H.R. 1373 is inconsistent with the Administration's goal of striking the appropriate balance for use of public lands described in two executive orders. This withdrawal would conflict with the objectives set forth in Executive Order 13783, Promoting Energy Independence and Economic Growth, and Executive Order 13817, A Federal Strategy to Ensure Secure and Reliable Supplies of Critical Minerals. Development of our Nation's mineral resources is essential to ensuring the Nation's geopolitical security, and this bill would not help us achieve that goal.

If H.R. 1373 were presented to the President, his advisors would recommend that he veto it.

URANIUM PRODUCERS OF AMERICA,
Santa Fe, New Mexico, October 28, 2019.

HON. RAUL GRIJALVA,
Chairman, House Natural Resources Committee,
Washington, DC.

HON. ROB BISHOP,
Ranking Member, House Natural Resources
Committee, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN GRIJALVA AND RANKING MEMBER BISHOP: On behalf of the Uranium Producers of America (UPA), I write to express our strong opposition to H.R. 1373, the Grand Canyon Centennial Protection Act. The permanent mineral withdrawal imposed by H.R. 1373 unnecessarily eliminates access to significant known deposits of uranium, rare earth elements, and other critical minerals.

UPA is a national trade association representing the domestic uranium mining and conversion industries. UPA members conduct uranium exploration, development, and mining operations in Arizona, Colorado, Nebraska, New Mexico, South Dakota, Texas, Utah, and Wyoming. UPA members operate valuable, high-grade uranium deposits that provide quality, high-paying jobs, tax revenues, and produce clean energy for the citizens of the United States. UPA's mission is to promote the viability of the nation's uranium industry, while being good stewards of the environments in which we work and live.

H.R. 1373's permanent withdrawal of over one million acres of federal land from mineral development ignores the comprehensive suite of federal, state, and local environmental regulations that apply to the mining process, from exploration and production to reclamation and closure. H.R. 1373 disregards the well-documented success of mine reclamation in the withdrawal area and the fact that all federal lands within Grand Canyon National Park were already withdrawn from the Mining Law when the park was created. Moreover, the U.S. Geological Survey estimates that there are significant undiscovered uranium resources in the withdrawal area, but the mineral assessment required as part of the current moratorium has not yet begun. This means H.R. 1373 would permanently strand resources without an informed understanding of the economic value of the deposits and the national security impact of their permanent withdrawal.

Ensuring responsible access to uranium deposits on federal land is a crucial component of ensuring the long-term viability of the domestic uranium industry, the survival of which is vital to energy and national security. Despite the existence of vast deposits, domestic producers forecast 2019 production to plummet below one percent of what is required to power our commercial nuclear reactors, which is not enough uranium to power even one of our nation's 98 reactors. These reactors produce approximately 20 percent of the electricity for the U.S. power grid, representing the world's largest commercial nuclear fleet and supplying more

than half of the carbon-free power in the United States. In addition, international agreements require domestically-sourced uranium to meet our defense requirements, including our nuclear weapons and the nuclear-powered Navy.

H.R. 1373 is particularly objectionable at a time the United States is at risk of losing its domestic uranium industry and becoming completely reliant on imported uranium. Uranium imports from state-backed entities have created an uneven global playing field on which market-driven uranium companies in the United States are unable to compete. An increasing share of uranium imports into the United States are coming from government or state-controlled entities located in nations that are not aligned with U.S. interests. While free market companies are forced to adapt to market conditions, state-backed entities within the Russian sphere of influence (RSOI) have ignored the market, increased their total supply, and added further downward pressure to prices. U.S. uranium companies are not competing with free market companies in the RSOI; they are competing with governments more concerned about increasing market share, and geopolitical advantage, than profitability.

We urge you to vote against H.R. 1373 and instead prioritize policies to revive and expand domestic uranium mining, nuclear fuel production and the provision of clean energy in the United States.

Sincerely,

JON J. INDALL,
Counsel for UPA.

[From the *Epoch Times*, September 8, 2019]

US NEEDS ALTERNATIVES TO CHINA'S RARE
EARTH MONOPOLY
(By James Gorrie)

As the trade war goes on, China threatens to deprive the US of critical elements its economy and its military can't do without.

Many consider China's vast portfolio of U.S. Treasuries as their not-so-secret weapon in the ongoing trade war. And it some ways, that is certainly true. China could decide to liquidate much or all of its U.S. bond holdings in response to rising tariff, and use other tactics, like currency devaluation.

But such a move would damage their economy along with America's. The Chinese are smarter than that.

CHINA STATE MEDIA HINTS AT EMBARGO

Besides, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has another, more tangible ace up its sleeve. As unbelievable as it sounds, China holds a near global monopoly on the supply—or more accurately, the processing capacity—of rare earth elements (REE).

Should China decide to impose an embargo against the sale of REEs to the United States, the American economy and the U.S. military would be scrambling to replace them, at least in the short run. That's not overstating this situation, by the way. As *Foreign Policy* magazine recently observed, "Beijing could slam every corner of the American economy, from oil refineries to wind turbines to jet engines, by banning exports of crucial minerals." The list of REE-critical products includes smartphones, special alloys, navigation systems, and much more. China, of course, is well aware of this. In fact, China's state-run media have been promoting an embargo, or leveraging the threat of one, in response to the U.S. tariffs on Chinese products, and specifically, against the U.S. blacklisting of Huawei. China's biggest telecom equipment manufacturer and a leader in 5G networks. Since all media in China is controlled by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), it's a certainty that this message is being sent to U.S. trade negotiators directly from the CCP.

CHINA MADE THIS PLAY BEFORE

If China does stop selling REEs to the United States, it wouldn't be the first time they've played that card. In 2006, China began limiting its exports of REEs, reducing them by 40 percent until 2010. The reduction caused the prices of non-China-sourced REEs to skyrocket. China also took advantage of its market dominance and stopped selling to Japan in retribution for a maritime incident.

After the United States, along with Japan and Europe, prevailed against China in a WTO fight in 2015, China dramatically dropped its REE prices and drove the only active REE processing plant in the United States, Molycorp, into bankruptcy. At that time China produced 95 percent of the world's rare earth metals.

HOW DID WE GET HERE?

But how has the U.S. allowed itself to be put in such bind? Wouldn't it make sense to have secured an American or at least a friendly source of these REEs on which so much of our military preparedness and our economy are reliant? Shouldn't that have been a priority, say, decades ago?

Actually, it was. But that changed in 1980, when rare earth mineral mining and processing came under the purview of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the International Atomic Energy Agency. Regulatory guidelines became increasingly restrictive, driving up costs, steadily decreasing U.S. producers' competitiveness. By the mid-1990s, the U.S. was no longer producing REEs.

RARE EARTH ELEMENTS AREN'T SO RARE AFTER ALL

Fortunately, REEs aren't rare at all. In fact, they're actually quite plentiful around the world, even in the United States. The 17 elements that are categorized as REEs have magnetic and conductive aspects and are typically unearthed as a result of mining operations, but most are present in only small amounts. There are few, if any, specific "rare earth mines." The costs and health risks of producing REEs are in the processing. For instance, since toxins and radiation are a by-product of processing REEs, many Western nations' environmental and labor laws make processing them both costly and a health risk to miners. It has been easier much cheaper for other nations to let China produce them, since neither health codes nor environmental standards are significant factors there.

AN REE SHORTAGE CRISIS?

But the costs of allowing China to gain the upper hand in the world's supply of REEs are now becoming clear. If China does in fact restrict REE sales to the United States in the near future, it would certainly impact both the consumer product markets and the military.

The key question is, how long it would take to bridge the supply gap and find alternatives? One mitigating factor is Australian-based Lynas, the world's only major rare-earth producer outside of China. It has partnered with Texas-based Blue Line to establish U.S. operations by 2021. However, the United States still lacks any REE processing capacity, representing a critical and ongoing vulnerability in its military capabilities. But the news isn't all bad. The Mountain Pass mine in California is currently being prepared to ramp up REE processing operations by 2020. Coincidentally, Mountain Pass was previously owned by Molycorp, which had invested over \$1.5 billion in the processing project, before being forced out of business by China in 2015. The critical role that REEs play in both military and consumer products is impossible to overstate. The U.S. economy is dependent upon a

steady and dependable supply. If America is to be successful in its bid to roll back China's power and influence over the rest of the world, ensuring its own supply of strategic REE is not just an option, it's a necessity.

Mr. GOSAR. Once again, let's go back. Let's look at the geology. The geology tells us everything that we need to know.

We need to understand the minerals. The minerals are water soluble. These are condensed pipes, vertically. What is happening is that, as water runs—and this is a lot of sedimentary rock. That is why the Grand Canyon is so deep.

When it runs over these breccia pipes, like we have talked about, they are exposed naturally. Prior to that, they are covered with what they call a sulfite cap. But once they are exposed—and you can see this under the Grand Canyon experience—you walk over these breccia pipes. You walk over them. They are exposed naturally.

Don't you think it is wise to remove these? It is a good concentration. It keeps the supply chain in.

And if you get rid of our only mining uranium concentrator, it doesn't come back. It won't come back. And then you sold your soul to China and you sold your soul to Russia, because they own the monopoly.

□ 1315

That is what is wrong here.

Last, but not least, we also have to make sure that multiple-use is put down forward. We are stewards of that—we, as Congress.

Public lands were taken aside by the Federal Government from the States in a joint tenancy, that they would be vested properly for the best use, the best investment, and the best return. The last time I have been watching, we have been actually denigrating that.

When is enough enough? Arizona has more national monuments than any other State in the country.

Congress then told the people that we will give payment in lieu of taxes. We have had to beg for every penny that we get. That is wrong. This contract is about, yes, you can do all this. You can clean up mine sites that were left before.

And don't get me started on the Bennett Freeze, by the way. The Federal Government put an arbitrary line, that you can't do anything under that Bennett Freeze line. Wow, that is wonderful. Thank the Federal Government for that. That is amazing, and particularly a lot of the mine shafts that have been exposed from that very era.

Once again, this is about common sense, facts. We have disputed everything that they have talked about. This is a natural formation. It is millions upon millions upon millions of years old. As that water runs down, as that air runs down, we contaminate it with low levels of uranium. Wouldn't it be better if we actually got rid of that and actually got better and more clean water, clean of uranium and arsenic?

That is an important process here. That is where we are actually helping people out. People benefit from it.

Once again, here is a breccia pipe exposed, not by man but by nature. You are walking all over it.

Once again, you see this alluvial fan where water runs. What do you think it is running over? What do you think it is dripping down through? What do you think is dissolving in there?

Madam Chair, this isn't rocket science, but it is not an emotional one either. It is an articulated, scientific argument.

Once again, the mitigation, I could take somebody up here and nobody could find this mine site now. This is after immediate resolution on it. But what is different about this than 80 years ago is that we are holding people accountable. The government failed at that before. We have seen this type of mitigation over and over again.

In the Resolution Copper mine down in southern Arizona, we have seen an investment of almost \$1 billion by the mining company to mitigate a previously mined area. It is beautiful. It is absolutely beautiful. I want people to go see it. I want them to try the water. It is pristine. It is cleaner than they found it.

That is good stewardship. That is utilizing the things that were given to us to make this country and technology grow. That is the opportunity that we have.

Arbitrarily just taking things off back and forth, that is not the right way to go.

Talking about the indigenous people there, well, it is sad when we use them as pawns, when we have a press conference and they don't even know what they are coming to the press conference for. That is sad.

America needs to wake up. This has nothing to do with the Grand Canyon. This has everything to do with monopolization and removing part of the segment that we promised future generations for that investment. That is what we have done. That is what the other side wants to do.

There is a way forward, responsibly, clean, and proper.

Madam Chair, I would like to have all of my colleagues vote against this measure. Once again, the President issued a SAP that he will not sign the bill, and it will die in the Senate.

Once again, this is a messaging bill. It is sad that we are bombarding everyone with bad facts. Spend time looking at the facts. Geology, the rocks, set you free. I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Madam Chair, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Since we are engaging in a little bit of a geology course, I would like to point out, at the Kanab North Uranium Mine that has already been closed, within 400 feet of the mine site where the fence is, after 20 years, levels are as high as 10 times above the naturally occurring level for uranium concentration. This has been open and exposed for 20 years. The mine ceased operations in the 1990s.

I use that to say that, as far as I understand, the House of Representatives is a national legislature, and as a national legislature, we have responsibilities to deal with issues, regardless of whether it is in my particular district or in my colleague, Mr. GOSAR's particular district.

Over the course of the last couple of days, we have heard our Republican colleagues call this bill a number of things: a tired, old retread; a national security threat; a Federal land grab; an attack on science; and even an idle waste of time. I want to assure this Chamber and the American people that protecting the Grand Canyon is none of these characterizations.

The truth is, this bill is a critical safeguard for the Grand Canyon, one of the most iconic landscapes in the world, and the vital Colorado River watershed that supplies drinking water for communities throughout the Southwest.

Forty million people depend on that source. We just passed, overwhelmingly, the drought contingency plan for five States, including Arizona, because of the imminent threat of drought and the need to protect that river and that water source.

Most importantly, this bill is in response to Tribal communities that have experienced firsthand the toxic legacy of uranium mining. When I first got involved in this effort over a decade ago, it was not because of narrow special interests. It was because the Navajo Nation, the Havasupai Tribe, the Hualapai Tribe, the Hopi Tribe, and other impacted communities were calling for an end to the contamination associated with uranium mining.

These communities have lived on the land since time immemorial. Their interests go beyond the handful of jobs associated with the boom and bust cycle of the mining industry.

Historically, Tribal communities in the Southwest have borne the brunt of uranium mining's impact, with some estimates placing over 1,000 abandoned uranium mines and four mills on the Navajo Nation alone.

In 2008, health officials discovered that nearly 30 water sources in the Navajo Nation contained unsafe levels of uranium, and 27 percent of the residents tested positive for high levels of uranium.

The Navajos are not alone. In fact, the Havasupai, who live in the Grand Canyon and depend on the aquifer beneath the Colorado Plateau, are dealing with contaminated groundwater associated with the active discharge by the Canyon Mine. This is why several Havasupai Tribal leaders and members traveled to Washington, D.C., to be present for this vote.

This bill is about protecting these communities. It is about providing lasting protection for a sacred landscape.

The consequences of uranium mining are not some imagined or unproven threat. We are forcing communities to

contemplate the viability of their ancestral homes.

The United States has an obligation to protect Tribal communities and ensure that they prosper. We have a moral obligation to protect our most sacred and treasured public lands. We shouldn't need a treaty to remind us to do the right thing.

Madam Chair, I urge my colleagues to stand with the Havasupai and other affiliated Tribes to protect the Grand Canyon for future generations.

A "yes" vote today on the Grand Canyon Centennial Protection Act is, overall, a declaration that there are places and communities in which extraction and destruction of a landscape, and jeopardizing people's health and their welfare and generational advancement, that those places should be left alone.

The Grand Canyon should be left alone. It is, after all, the Grand Canyon. I urge swift adoption of H.R. 1373, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GOSAR. Madam Chair, I include in the RECORD this document.

It is titled "Why I Changed My Mind About Nuclear Power."

It details very clearly and wisely why nuclear power and its supply chains are very important.

[From Environmental Progress, September 12, 2019]

WHY I CHANGED MY MIND ABOUT NUCLEAR POWER: TRANSCRIPT OF MICHAEL SHELLENBERGER'S TEDx BERLIN 2017—NOVEMBER 21, 2017

(By Michael Shellenberger)

Like a lot of kids born in the early 1970s, I had the good fortune to be raised by hippies. One of my childhood heroes was Stewart Brand. Stewart is not only one of the original hippies, he's also one of the first modern environmentalists of the 1960s and 70s. As a young boy, one of my favorite memories is playing cooperative games that Stewart Brand invented as an antidote to the Vietnam War.

I'm from a long line of Christian Pacifists known as Mennonites. Every August, as kids, we would remember the US government's atomic bombing of Japan by lighting candles and sending them on paper boats at Bittersweet Park.

After high school, throughout college, and afterwards, I brought delegations of people to Central America to promote diplomacy and peace and to support local farmer cooperatives in Guatemala and Nicaragua.

Over time, as I've travelled around the world and visited small farming communities on every continent, I've come to appreciate that most young people don't want to be stuck in the village. They don't want to spend their whole lives chopping and hauling wood. They want to go to the city for opportunity—at least most of them do—for education and for work.

What I've realized is that process of urbanization of moving to the city is actually very positive for nature. It allows the natural environment to come back. It allows for the central African Mountain Gorilla, an important endangered species, to have the habitat they need to survive and thrive.

In that process you have to go vertical, and so even in places like Hong Kong you can see that with tall buildings they can spare the natural environment around the city.

Of course, it takes a huge amount of energy to go up, and so the big question of our time is how do you get plentiful, reliable electricity without destroying the climate?

I started out as an anti-nuclear activist and I quickly got involved in advocating for renewable energy. In the early part of this century I helped to start a labor union and environmentalist alliance called the Apollo Alliance and we pushed for a big investment in clean energy: solar, wind, electric cars.

The investment idea was eventually picked up by President Obama, and during his time in office we invested about \$150 billion to make solar, wind and electric cars much cheaper than they were.

We seemed to be having a lot of success but we were starting to have some challenges. Some of them you're familiar with. Solar and wind generate electricity in Germany just 10 to 30 percent of the time, and so we're dependent on the weather for electricity.

There were other problems we were noticing, though. Sometimes these energy sources generate too much power and while you hear a lot of hype about batteries we don't have sufficient storage even in California, where we have a lot of investment and a lot of Silicon Valley types putting a lot of investment in battery and other storage technologies.

While we were struggling with these problems, Stewart Brand came out in 2005 and said we should rethink nuclear power. This was a shock to the system for me and my friends. Stewart was one of the first big advocates of solar energy anywhere during the early 1970s. He advised Governor Jerry Brown of California.

But he said, look, we've been trying to do solar for a long time and yet we get less than a half of a percent of our electricity globally from solar, about two percent from wind, and the majority of our clean energy comes from nuclear and hydro.

And according to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, nuclear produces four times less carbon emissions than solar does. That's why they recommended in their recent report the more intensive use of renewables, nuclear and carbon capture and storage.

Let's take a closer look at Germany. Germany gets the majority of its electricity and all of its transportation fuels from fossil fuels. Last year Germany got 40 percent of its electricity from coal, 13 percent from nuclear, 12 percent from natural gas, 12 percent from wind, and six percent from solar.

Keep in mind that you don't just have to go from 18 percent solar and wind to 100 percent solar and wind. To replace the entire transportation sector with electric cars you'd need to go from 18 percent renewables to something like 150 percent. Germany's done a lot to invest in renewables and innovate with solar and wind, but that's a pretty steep climb—even before you get to the question of storage.

Let's look at last year, Germany installed four percent more solar panels but generated three percent less electricity from solar.

Even when I'm in meetings with energy experts and I ask people if they can make a guess as to why they think that is, and you'd be shocked by how many energy experts have no idea.

The reason is just that it wasn't very sunny last year in Germany.

Well, that probably meant that it was windier, right? Because if it's not as sunny then maybe there's more wind and those things can balance each other out?

In truth, Germany installed 11 percent more wind turbines in 2016 but got two percent less of its electricity from wind. Same story. Just not very windy.

So then you might think, "Well, we just need to do a lot of solar and wind so that

when there's not a lot of sunlight or wind we can get more electricity from those energy sources."

That's what Germany is trying to do. Its plan is to increase the amount of electricity it gets from solar by 50 percent by 2030, which would take you from 40 to 60 gigawatts.

But if you have a year like 2016, you'll still only be getting nine percent of your total electricity from solar. And this is the biggest solar country in the world. Germany is the powerhouse of renewables.

The obvious response is we'll just put it all in batteries. We hear so much talk about batteries. You would think that we just have a huge amount of storage.

Environmental Progress took a look at our home state of California and we discovered that we have just 23 minutes of storage for the grid—and to get that 23 minutes you'd have to use every battery in every car and truck in the state. (Which, as you can imagine, is not super practical if you're trying to get somewhere. And Germany might be a little different but not very different from California.)

Most people are aware that to make this transition to renewables, Germany has been spending a lot more on electricity. And German electricity prices rose about 50 percent over the last 10 years. Today, German electricity is about two times more expensive than electricity is in France.

You might think, look, that's a small price to pay to deal with climate change. And I would agree with that. Paying a bit more for energy—at least for those of us in the rich world—is a decent thing to do to avert the risk of catastrophic global warming.

But when you compare French and German electricity, France gets 93 percent of its electricity from clean energy sources, mostly hydro and nuclear while Germany gets just 46 percent, or about half as much clean energy.

Here's the shocking thing: German carbon emissions have gone up since 2009, and up over the last two years, and may go up again this year. And while German emissions have gone down since the 1990s, most of that is because, after reunification, Germany closed the inefficient coal plants from East Germany. Most of its emissions reductions are just due to that.

Let's look at last year. One of the ways you can reduce emissions quickly is by switching from coal to natural gas, which produces about half as much emissions. Coal to gas switching would have resulted in lower emissions except for the fact that Germany took nuclear reactors off-line. And when it did that, emissions went up again.

There's still question about the future: if we do a lot of solar and wind, won't it all work itself out?

One of the biggest challenges to solar and wind has come from somebody in Germany who is not a pro-nuclear person at all. He's an energy analyst and economist named Leon Hirth. What he finds is that the problem I described earlier—where you have too much solar or wind and you don't know what to do with it—reduces their economic value.

The value of wind drops 40 percent once it becomes 30 percent of your electricity, Hirth finds, and the value of solar drops by half when it gets to just 15 percent.

One of the things you hear is that we can do a solar roof fast—just one day to put up the thing—whereas it takes five or ten years to build a nuclear plant. And so people think that if we do solar and wind we can go a lot faster.

But the speed of deployment was the subject of an important article in the journal *Science* last year, which was coauthored by the climate scientist James Hansen. They

found that even when you combine solar and wind you just get a lot less energy than when you do nuclear. That goes for Germany as well as the United States. They just compared ten years of deployment for the two technologies and it's a stark comparison.

Well, I can tell what you're thinking, because it's what I was thinking: it sounds like I might need to rethink my views of nuclear power. But what about Chernobyl? What about Fukushima? What about all the nuclear waste? Those are really reasonable questions to ask.

When I was starting to ask them, there were other people who were starting to change their minds. One of the ones I was most impressed by, and who was very influential, was George Monbiot.

Monbiot wrote a column shortly after Fukushima where he went through the scientific research on radiation and concluded, "The anti-nuclear movement to which I once belonged has misled the world about the impacts of radiation on human health."

I write some pretty harsh things sometimes, but this was a pretty strong column. He was talking to a lot of scientists who study radiation.

One top British scientist who studies radiation is Gerry Thomas. She started something called the Chernobyl Tissue Bank out of her concern for the accident. She's a totally independent professor of pathology at Imperial College in London.

I called her and said, "I'd like to present on the science of radiation but I'm not a radiation scientist, so can I just steal your slides? If you let me, I'll put your picture on them."

The first thing she points out is that most ionizing radiation—that's the kind of radiation that is potentially harmful that comes from a nuclear accident—is natural.

I was like, "That sounds alright. I like natural foods. Natural radiation from hot springs."

Gerry said, "No, actually, natural radiation is just as potentially harmful as artificial radiation."

What's striking is that the total amount of ionizing radiation we're exposed not just from Chernobyl and Fukushima but all of the atomic bomb testing in the sixties and 70s totals just 0.3 percent. Most of the radiation we're exposed to comes from the earth, the atmosphere, and the buildings around us.

Let's look at the big one: Chernobyl. This was the event that led me to be anti-nuclear and become an anti-nuclear activist.

The United Nations has overseen these very large research efforts involving hundreds of scientists around the world who do this research. So the possibility of somebody fudging the data or covering something up is pretty low in that environment, because there are so many credible scientists at different universities doing the research.

This was a pivotal moment for me. Chernobyl is the worst nuclear accident we've ever had. Some people say it's the worst accident we'll ever have. I don't need to make a statement that strong. But they literally had a nuclear reactor without a containment dome and it was on fire. It was just raining radiation down on everybody. It was a terrible accident.

But when they start counting bodies, what they come up with is 28 deaths from acute radiation syndrome, 15 deaths from thyroid cancer over the last 25 years. As horrible as it sounds, thyroid cancer is the best cancer to get because hardly anybody dies from it. It's highly treatable. You can have a surgery to remove the thyroid gland and take thyroxine, which is a synthetic substitute. In fact, most of the people who died were in remote rural areas where they couldn't get the treatment they needed.

If you take the 16,000 people who got thyroid cancer from Chernobyl, they estimate 160 of them will die from it. And it's not like they're dying of it right away. They'll die from it in old age. That's not to say it's okay, but it's to put it in some context.

And there's no evidence of any increase in thyroid cancer outside of the three nations most affected, Russia, Ukraine and Belarus. There's no evidence of an effect by Chernobyl on fertility, birth malformations, or infant mortality; nor for causing an increase in adverse pregnancy outcomes or still births; nor for any genetic effects.

I think this last one is the most striking thing: there's no evidence of any increase in nonthyroid cancer including among the cohort who put out the Chernobyl fire and cleaned it up afterwards.

I'm still surprised by this finding, and so I put the link to the web site on that slide, because I don't think you should take my word for it. Reading about Chernobyl was, for me, a big part of changing my mind.

What about Fukushima? It was the second worst nuclear disaster in history and a lot smaller than Chernobyl. There have been no deaths from radiation exposure, which is pretty amazing. Meanwhile, 1,500 people died being pulled out of nursing homes, hospitals—it was insane. It was a panic. The Japanese government shouldn't have done that. It violated every standard of what you're supposed to do an accident. You're supposed to shelter-in-place. In fact, by pulling people out of their homes and moving them around outside they actually exposed more people to more radiation.

And you have to put that in comparison of the other things that were going on, like the 15,000 to 20,000 dying instantly from drowning—pinned down by many different technologies, by the way—from that tsunami.

So while there was no increase in thyroid cancer, there was the stress and fear from believing you were contaminated despite the evidence showing that that wasn't the case at all.

Some scientists did an interesting study. They took a bunch of school children from France to Fukushima and had them wear dosimeters, which is what we call geiger counters now.

You can see here that when those kids go through the airport security system their radiation exposures spiked. When they flew from Paris to Tokyo on the airplane their radiation exposures spiked. They went through the French embassy's security system their radiation exposures spiked.

When they went to the city of Tomioka, which received a lot of radiation from the accident, it was just a tiny blip compared to the security systems.

Let's put this in an even larger context. If you live in a big city like London, Berlin, or New York, you increase your mortality risk by 2.8 percent, just from air pollution alone. If you live with someone who smokes cigarettes your mortality risk increases 1.7 percent.

But if you were someone who cleaned up Chernobyl, your mortality risk increased just one percent. That's just because there wasn't as much radiation exposure as people thought.

I'm from the state of Colorado in the United States where we have an annual exposure to radiation about the same as what people who live around Chernobyl get.

This is really basic science and is right there on their web site but nobody knows it. Only eight percent of Russians surveyed accurately predicted the death toll from Chernobyl, and zero percent accurately predicted the death toll from Fukushima.

Meanwhile, there are seven million premature deaths per year from air pollution

and the evidence against particulate matter only gets stronger. That's why every major journal that looks at it concludes that nuclear is the safest way to make reliable electricity.

All of this leads to an uncomfortable conclusion—one that the climate scientist James Hansen came to recently: nuclear power has actually saved 1.8 million lives. That's not something you hear very much about.

What about the waste? This is the waste from a nuclear plant in the United States. The thing about nuclear waste is that it's the only waste from electricity production that is safely contained anywhere. All of the other waste for electricity goes into the environment including from coal, natural gas and—here's another uncomfortable conclusion—solar panels.

There's no plan to recycle solar panels outside of the EU. That means that all of our solar in California will join the waste stream. And that waste contains heavy toxic metals like chromium, cadmium, and lead.

So how much toxic solar waste is there? Well, to get a sense for that, look at how much more materials are required to produce energy from solar and wind compared to nuclear. As a result, solar actually produces 200 to 300 times more toxic waste than nuclear.

What about weapons? If there were any chance that more nuclear energy increased the risk of nuclear war, I would be against it. I believe that diplomacy is almost always the right solution.

People say what about North Korea? Korea proves the point. In order to get nuclear power—and it's been this way for 50 years—you have to agree not to get a weapon. That's the deal.

South Korea wanted nuclear power. They agreed not to get a weapon. They don't have a weapon.

North Korea wanted nuclear power. I think they should have gotten it. We didn't let them have it, for a variety of reasons. They got a bomb. They are testing missiles that can hit Japan and soon will be able to hit California.

So if you're looking for evidence that nuclear energy leads to bombs you can't find it in Korea or anywhere else.

Where does that leave us? With some more uncomfortable facts. Like if Germany hadn't closed its nuclear plants, it's emissions would be 43 percent lower than they are today. And if you care about climate change, that's something you at least have to wrestle with—especially in light of the facts I've presented on the health impacts of different energy sources.

I'd like to close with a quote from somebody else who changed his mind about nuclear power, and somebody else who was a huge childhood hero for me, and that's Sting: "If we're going to tackle global warming, nuclear power is the only way to generate massive amounts of power."

Thank you for listening.

The CHAIR. All time for general debate has expired.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Madam Chair, I move that the Committee do now rise.

The motion was agreed to.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. McCOLLUM) having assumed the chair, Ms. SÁNCHEZ, Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1373) to protect, for current and future generations, the watershed, ecosystem, and cultural heritage of the

Grand Canyon region in the State of Arizona, and for other purposes, had come to no resolution thereon.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 1 o'clock and 25 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1401

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mrs. TORRES of California) at 2 o'clock and 1 minute p.m.

GRAND CANYON CENTENNIAL PROTECTION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 656 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 1373.

Will the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CUELLAR) kindly take the chair.

□ 1403

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill (H.R. 1373) to protect, for current and future generations, the watershed, ecosystem, and cultural heritage of the Grand Canyon region in the State of Arizona, and for other purposes, with Mr. CUELLAR (Acting Chair) in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The Acting CHAIR. When the Committee of the Whole rose earlier today, all time for general debate had expired.

Pursuant to the rule, the bill shall be considered for amendment under the 5-minute rule.

It shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the 5-minute rule the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Natural Resources, printed in the bill. The committee amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read.

The text of the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute is as follows:

H.R. 1373

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 "Grand Canyon Centennial Protection Act".

SEC. 2. WITHDRAWAL OF CERTAIN FEDERAL LAND IN THE STATE OF ARIZONA.

(a) DEFINITION OF MAP.—In this Act, the term "Map" means the map prepared by the Bureau of Land Management entitled "Grand Canyon Centennial Protection Act" and dated July 11, 2019.

(b) WITHDRAWAL.—Subject to valid existing rights, the approximately 1,006,545 acres of Federal land in the State of Arizona, generally depicted on the Map as "Federal Mineral Estate to be Withdrawn", including any land or interest in land that is acquired by the United States after the date of the enactment of this Act, are hereby withdrawn from—

(1) all forms of entry, appropriation, and disposal under the public land laws;

(2) location, entry, and patent under the mining laws; and

(3) operation of the mineral leasing, mineral materials, and geothermal leasing laws.

(c) AVAILABILITY OF MAP.—The Map shall be kept on file and made available for public inspection in the appropriate offices of the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management.

The Acting CHAIR. No amendment to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in part C of House Report 116-264. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report, equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question.

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MR. GOSAR

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 1 printed in part C of House Report 116-264.

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Chairman, I rise as the designee of the gentlewoman from Arizona (Mrs. LESKO), and I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

At the end of the bill, insert the following:

SEC. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE.

This Act shall not be effective until the Secretary of the Interior, in consultation with the Secretary of Labor, finds that the withdrawal under section 2 will not adversely affect jobs available to Native Americans, other minorities, and women.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 656, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GOSAR) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arizona.

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Chairman, my amendment states that this act shall not become effective until the Secretary of the Interior, in consultation with the Secretary of Labor, finds that the withdrawal will not adversely affect jobs available to Native Americans, other minorities, and women.

I believe deeply in protecting the environment for my grandchildren, but I also believe in protecting the potential employment opportunities of Arizonans, especially those in underserved communities. Resource development benefits the economies of local communities.

As noted at markup in the Committee on Natural Resources, the temporary political mineral withdrawal imposed in 2012 by the Obama administration, which focused on banning mining, cost Arizona and Utah thousands