

In the more than three decades since his death, Judith has been a fierce advocate for her fellow Gold Star Mothers and Families. She represents thousands of loved ones and family members who have sacrificed so much for the freedoms we enjoy today.

It is that sacrifice that we seek to honor in the Gold Star Families National Monument Extension Act. By passing this bill, we can give Gold Star Families, like Judith's, the time they need to complete a monument acknowledging that sacrifices aren't just made by those in uniform, but by the loved ones left behind.

This is a monument that has a site selected; that won't cost taxpayers a single dime; and that has truly bipartisan support. If we don't pass this bill, the authorization for this monument will expire.

Our Gold Star Families have already been through so much. They have already endured and sacrificed beyond what so many of us here can understand; the least we can do is support them by giving them the time to remember and honor those lost.

The futility in finding the words and actions to thank loved ones like Judith isn't new. In a letter to Lydia Bixby of Massachusetts in 1864, President Lincoln wrote: "I feel how weak and fruitless must be any words of mine which should attempt to beguile you from the grief of a loss so overwhelming."

Lincoln understood that there is nothing we can ever do to truly repay patriots like Judith. But he continued: "But I cannot refrain from tendering to you the consolation that may be found in the thanks of the Republic they died to save."

Let us show the thanks of the Republic that so many brave men and women have given all to save. Let us show the thanks of the Republic that so many Gold Star Families have given so much to keep free. We can do that by passing this bipartisan bill and allowing the completion of this monument.

I hope you will support me, my co-lead, Congressman RATCLIFFE, and the Gold Star Mothers and Families across the country in this effort.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. RATCLIFFE).

Mr. RATCLIFFE. Madam Speaker, I thank Chairman NEGUSE and Ranking Member MCCLINTOCK for their leadership on this committee.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 2819, the Gold Star Families National Monument Extension Act.

I was very pleased to have the opportunity to introduce this bipartisan bill, along with my Democratic colleague, the gentleman from New Jersey, Congressman KIM, on behalf of our Nation's Gold Star Families.

The term "Gold Star Family" dates back to World War I, when flags were displayed bearing a blue star to represent a family member serving abroad

and gold stars used to designate family members who had been lost in combat.

As the Representative of a congressional district in northeast Texas with more than 50,000 veterans, and thousands and thousands of active duty servicemembers, this bill very much hits home.

My home State of Texas is home to 1 of every 10 U.S. servicemembers, and nearly 25,000 Texas families have joined the National Gold Star Family Registry since World War II.

The families of all the individuals who serve our country know the great sacrifices that are made when a loved one answers the call of duty because, unfortunately, all of our heroes don't always make it back home; and it is their families who will forever bear the burden of that ultimate sacrifice when they don't return home.

As a grateful Nation, it must be our constant priority to honor our fallen heroes and their families. After all, we owe our freedom to their great sacrifice.

I am confident that the Gold Star Families National Monument will help ensure that we honor our fallen heroes and their families on a national scale by extending the authorization for the establishment of a national monument located right in here in Washington, D.C.

The Gold Star Family Monument will be constructed at no cost to taxpayers, as all of the funds that are being raised are being raised by the Gold Star Mothers National Monument Foundation.

I am grateful for the opportunity that the Gold Star Family Monument will provide to all of our citizens to pause and honor the ultimate sacrifices made by our fallen servicemen and servicewomen on our behalf as they visit our Nation's capital.

Despite the often polarized political climate in Washington, this is an issue that people across the political spectrum should all be able to stand behind.

Again, I thank my Democratic colleague, Congressman KIM, for his leadership on this important effort, and I urge the rest of our colleagues for their strong support on the floor today.

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

Mr. NEGUSE. Madam Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation. I thank Representative KIM and Representative RATCLIFFE for bringing the bill forward.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. NEGUSE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2819, as amended.

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. NEGUSE. Madam 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.

INCLUDING CALIFORNIA IN NUTRIA ERADICATION AND CONTROL ACT OF 2003

Mr. NEGUSE. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3399) to amend the Nutria Eradication and Control Act of 2003 to include California in the program, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3399

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

SECTION 1. NUTRIA ERADICATION.

The Nutria Eradication and Control Act of 2003 (Public Law 108-16) is amended—

(1) in section 2—

(A) in subsection (a)—

(i) in paragraph (1), by striking "Wetlands and tidal marshes of the Chesapeake Bay and in Louisiana" and inserting "Wetlands, tidal marshes, and agricultural lands";

(ii) in paragraph (2), by striking "in Maryland and Louisiana"; and

(iii) by amending paragraph (3) to read as follows:

"(3) Traditional harvest methods to control or eradicate nutria have failed. Consequently, marsh loss, loss of public and private wetlands, and loss of agricultural lands are accelerating."; and

(B) in subsection (b), by striking "the State of Maryland and the State of Louisiana" and inserting "any State that has demonstrated the need"; and

(2) in section 3—

(A) by amending subsection (a) to read as follows:

"(a) GRANT AUTHORITY.—The Secretary of the Interior (referred to in this Act as the 'Secretary'), may provide financial assistance to a State, in an amount that is in proportion to the total impacted area of such State affected by nutria, that has demonstrated to the Secretary sufficient need for a program to implement measures to eradicate or control nutria and restore marshland, public and private wetlands, and agricultural lands damaged by nutria.";

(B) by striking subsection (b);

(C) in subsection (d)—

(i) in paragraph (1), by striking "the program may" and inserting "a State program referred to in subsection (a) may"; and

(ii) in paragraph (2), by striking "the program may" and inserting "a State program referred to in subsection (a) may";

(D) in subsection (e), by inserting "to a State" after "provided";

(E) in subsection (f), by striking "\$4,000,000" and all that follows and inserting "\$12,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2021 through 2025."; and

(F) by redesignating subsections (c) through (f) as subsections (b) through (e).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. NEGUSE) and the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Colorado.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. NEGUSE. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members

may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the measure under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

I rise in support of H.R. 3399, the Nutria Eradication and Control Act of 2003.

In case you were not lucky enough to see the stuffed nutria that the distinguished gentleman from California brought to our hearing in the Natural Resources Committee, you are in luck, because I understand that it is making another appearance here today on the floor.

You can see firsthand that nutria are a large, invasive rodent species that have infested and damaged wetlands across the United States.

This species was originally introduced to the United States in 1899 for fur production, but its rapid breeding and destructive burrowing became a huge problem in areas like the Gulf of Mexico and the Chesapeake Bay.

In 2003, by way of background, Congress passed the Nutria Eradication and Control Act to provide assistance to Maryland and Louisiana to eradicate or control nutria and to restore wetlands destroyed by nutria. According to some estimates, if these measures had not been adopted, nutria could have destroyed 17 percent of the Chesapeake Bay's marshes in a 50-year period.

While this program has been successful in Maryland and Louisiana, now the nutria have invaded habitats across the United States.

Representative HARDER's much-needed bill would expand the Nutria Eradication and Control Act of 2003 to include any State with a nutria infestation issue and make them eligible for funding under the act.

It is important to consider this bill in the context of the state of our wildlife and habitat today. Species are going extinct at a faster rate than ever before in human history. Habitat loss is a major driver of the extinction crisis that we are experiencing, and so protecting and restoring wetlands from invasive species like nutria is an important piece of the puzzle for protecting biodiversity in our country.

In the face of the climate crisis, we must do all we can to protect habitat and wildlife, and eradicating this destructive invasive species is a step in the right direction.

I thank my distinguished colleague from California for his leadership in introducing this bill, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

It is easy to joke about the nutria, more commonly called a "swamp rat," but their proliferation in regions like California is a growing threat to water infrastructure throughout the State.

Louisiana has suffered this invasive species since the 1930s; the Chesapeake since the 1940s. They are now proliferating in California, where they destroy irrigation systems, undermine dams and levees, erode riverbanks, displace native wildlife, and lay waste to aquatic vegetation.

This legislation amends the Nutria Eradication and Control Act of 2003 and reauthorizes funding for the program until fiscal year 2025. Currently, Maryland and Louisiana are the only States eligible for funding, yet the problem is national. According to estimates, there could be nearly a quarter million of these destructive creatures in California within 5 years if we don't take action now.

California has enough problems of its own making to deal with. It requires the same assistance as provided to other parts of the country to control this invasive infestation, and this bill broadens the eligibility nationwide to do so.

During committee consideration, this measure was amended to more closely resemble the language included in my legislation, H.R. 5217, the Water Optimization for the West Act, which makes this a national program rather than an earmark.

I urge adoption of the measure, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. NEGUSE. Madam Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from California (Mr. HARDER) and his nutria, whose name is Nellie.

Mr. HARDER of California. Madam Speaker, people see swamp rats all the time roaming the halls of D.C., but I believe this is actually the first time in American history that we have a taxidermied swamp creature on the actual floor of the House of Representatives.

This here is my good friend, Nellie the Nutria. She has nacho-cheese colored teeth, can weigh up to 40 pounds, she can eat 25 percent of her body weight every single day, and she has an exponential rate of growth.

She may look cute to some people, but Nellie and her friends are a real menace, and farmers across California's Central Valley and residents of the Louisiana swamp can tell you, too, how serious of a threat these giant swamp rats pose.

Nutria can destroy crops, irrigation canals, wetlands and native species. And their exponential growth rate makes them a real problem. One female, like Nellie here, can lead to 200 offspring in a single year. The State of California estimates that if we don't do something about this problem, there are going to be 250,000 nutria in our State within the next 5 years.

Nellie's family in Louisiana have already caused an immense amount of

damage over the last 100 years. And my Republican colleagues on this bill, Mr. GRAVES and Mr. MCCLINTOCK, can attest to the real havoc these swamp rats cause.

My bill would simply revive a program that the State of Maryland used to almost entirely eliminate the infestation in the Chesapeake Bay, where Nellie here came from originally. That program uses a variety of strategies to control and eradicate this invasive species. It ended up saving a lot of money in the long run, and my bill is going to bring back that proven program and make more States eligible for help.

This is a tiny investment compared to what will be necessary if we wait any longer.

I want to thank all my colleagues on the other side of the aisle who joined me on this bill and ask for support in stopping this invasion.

There is a lot of bickering that goes on in this Chamber, but I am proud that this is something Mr. GRAVES, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, and myself could find something that unites us, which is draining the swamp, not just in Washington, but also in California and Louisiana, and the rest of the country.

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Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. GRAVES).

Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, I look at the nutria, and I have to disagree with my friend from California. I feel like I see swamp rats on the floor all the time. But I do appreciate him bringing the actual species here to help folks understand what it is that we deal with.

Madam Speaker, I have come on this House floor many times to describe the coastal challenges that we have in Louisiana. We have lost 2,800 square miles of our coast. And I remind my colleagues that if the State of Rhode Island lost 2,800 square miles of their coast, we would have 49 States today.

Nutria is part of the problem. It is an invasive species. The population in my home State is nearly 4.5 million people, yet we have an estimated 20 million nutria. It is an extraordinary figure.

If we could count them in the Census, we would have an additional 27 Members of Congress. We are having infestation without representation, and we need to do something about it.

In Louisiana, we have a thing where if you can't beat it, you eat it. So, we have even tried. We have tried to do nutria fajitas. We have tried to fry it. We have tried everything. It is not my favorite, Madam Speaker, but this really is a huge problem.

Very seriously, we have 20 million nutria, and they cause the destruction and damage of tens of thousands of acres of our coastal wetlands every single year.

As my friends Mr. MCCLINTOCK and Mr. HARDER from California brought up, it is things like levees, productive

estuaries, irrigation canals, and other things that have devastating consequences.

This legislation does take some of the lessons learned from the programs in Maryland and Louisiana and expands upon the flexibility of dollars to actually not just work on eradication efforts but also do some restoration work.

I thank the subcommittee chairman, Mr. NEGUSE, my friend from Colorado; Mr. HARDER; as well as the ranking member, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, for their work on this. This is a bipartisan bill. It is based upon and enacts improvements that we have seen as a result of this program being carried out in Louisiana and Maryland.

I am looking forward to this going over to the Senate, and I strongly urge adoption of this important bill to help get this invasive species under control to help protect our communities.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Madam Speaker, after the gentleman's description, I am going to resist the temptation to comment on the unique culinary traditions of my friends in Louisiana.

In California, we don't want to eat them. We just want to get rid of them. That is what this bill is all about.

I urge its adoption, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. NEGUSE. Madam Speaker, I very much enjoyed this fascinating debate, and I appreciate the leadership of our colleague from Louisiana on this issue for many years and, of course, our colleague from California for initiating the bill before the House.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support it, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. NEGUSE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3399, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

YUCCA HOUSE NATIONAL MONUMENT EXPANSION ACT

Mr. NEGUSE. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1492) to update the map of, and modify the maximum acreage available for inclusion in, the Yucca House National Monument, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1492

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

SEC. 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Yucca House National Monument Expansion Act".

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) *NATIONAL MONUMENT.*—The term "National Monument" means the Yucca House National Monument in Cortez, Colorado, established by Presidential Proclamation 1549.

(2) *MAP.*—The term "map" means the map entitled "Yucca House National Monument Proposed Boundary Addition", numbered 318/105,085A, and dated February 27, 2019.

(3) *SECRETARY.*—The term "Secretary" means the Secretary of the Interior.

SEC. 3. YUCCA HOUSE NATIONAL MONUMENT LAND ACQUISITION.

(a) *ACQUISITION.*—The Secretary may acquire by donation the approximately 160 acres of land and any interests in the land that is identified on the map.

(b) *BOUNDARY.*—On the acquisition of the land authorized under subsection (a), the Secretary shall adjust the boundaries of the National Monument to include the acquired land.

(c) *ADMINISTRATION.*—The land and any interests in land acquired under subsection (a) shall be administered as part of the National Monument.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. NEGUSE) and the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Colorado.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. NEGUSE. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the measure under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1492, sponsored by my friend and fellow Coloradan, Representative TIPTON. This bill would support access to one of the most significant cultural and archaeological sites in southwest Colorado, the Yucca House National Monument.

Yucca House was an important community center for the ancestral Puebloan people and serves as an enduring example of the history of these lands. H.R. 1492 would add 160 acres of donated land to the monument, quintupling the size of the site and guaranteeing permanent public access.

The addition would also allow the National Park Service to build a new public entrance to the monument, including parking, visitor services, and interpretive facilities. This new access will allow more Americans to utilize and learn about the exceptional ancestral Puebloan sites protected at the monument.

I congratulate my colleague on his efforts to support access with respect to this monument and to help enhance our appreciation for the Native American history enshrined in the kivas, towers, and plazas of the Yucca House National Monument.

As a fellow lover of Colorado's public lands and public land heritage, I again thank the gentleman for his leadership

on this bill and certainly urge my colleagues to support it.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Madam Speaker, the Yucca House National Monument is a classic example of how the Antiquities Act is supposed to work.

President Woodrow Wilson designated 9.6 acres as a national monument—I didn't say 9.6 million acres; I said 9.6 acres—in order to protect an ancient American Indian archaeological site, the ruins of a sprawling 600-room pueblo.

That is the real purpose of the Antiquities Act. That is the way it is supposed to be used. It is there to protect small archaeological sites for study and preservation. It is not there to set aside hundreds of square miles of land just because we can.

The site was donated to the United States Government by the landowner and subsequent owners who made available a small amount of additional acreage as artifacts have been discovered.

H.R. 1492, by Congressman TIPTON of Colorado, would make a further boundary adjustment of about 160 acres of donated land adjacent to the monument that encompasses additional sites and provides for better public access.

Unlike many recent national monument designations, this one has the strong support of the local communities affected and is focused on preserving actual archaeological sites from antiquity.

This bill should serve as an example for how monument designations or adjustments should be made, always with local collaboration and support. I applaud my friend for his diligent work on this legislation. I urge its adoption, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TIPTON), the author of this measure.

Mr. TIPTON. Madam Speaker, I thank both my colleagues for their kind words on this legislation.

Madam Chair, the Yucca House National Monument is in Montezuma County, Colorado, very near to my hometown of Cortez. It is one of the largest archaeological sites in southwest Colorado, preserving a Montezuma Valley ancestral Puebloan site that is unexcavated.

If you were to look at it quickly, you might see just several mounds of rocks, but it contains some valuable information that answers questions that we have about large, active farming communities that existed in the area centuries ago.

In 2019, Yucca House National Monument celebrated its 100th birthday. Yucca House National Monument is surrounded by private land, and access is granted through an easement on private property. The owner of that property has experienced trouble with traffic and parking, and the arrangement