

we speak on the floor. I believe on Monday we will have another opportunity to be together, and I would love to deliver some special remarks about my favorite chairman.

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

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume for the purpose of closing.

Mr. Speaker, again, I thank Mr. CONAWAY for his work on this bipartisan measure that calls on the Russian Government to drop the trumped-up charges against Trevor Reed and immediately release him from prison.

Trevor and all those unjustly detained in Russia deserve to be released and safely reunited with their families for this holiday season.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to support this measure and I urge all Members to do the same.

Mr. Speaker, let me comment on my friend's remarks. It has been a pleasure for me to work with Mr. McCAUL as the ranking member of the committee and when he was the chairman. We have done incredible work on our committee, both Democrats and Republicans, working together in a bipartisan way. I am very proud of the work we have all done and very proud of the work I have done personally with Mr. McCAUL. I know we are going to continue to fight the good fight, because we stand for something. We are so blessed to live in this country, and we want to make sure that other people get the same kinds of freedoms that we have.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I support this measure, and I urge all Members to do the same. I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 1115, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA ACT OF 2020

Mr. CASE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1049) to authorize a National Heritage Area 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. 1049

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the “National Heritage Area Act of 2020”.

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

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

Sec. 2. Definitions.

Sec. 3. National Heritage Area System.

Sec. 4. National Heritage Area System management.

Sec. 5. Study areas.

Sec. 6. Local coordinating entities.

Sec. 7. Property owners and regulatory protections.

Sec. 8. Authorization of appropriations.

Sec. 9. Statutory Clarification.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) FEASIBILITY STUDY.—The term “feasibility study” means a study conducted by the Secretary, or conducted by one or more other interested parties and reviewed and approved by the Secretary, in accordance with the criteria and processes required by section 5, to determine whether a study area meets the criteria to be designated by Federal statute as a National Heritage Area.

(2) INDIAN TRIBE.—The term “Indian Tribe” means any Indian or Alaska Native tribe, band, nation, pueblo, village, or other community the name of which is included on the list most recently published by the Secretary of the Interior pursuant to section 104 of the Federally Recognized Indian Tribe List Act of 1994 (25 U.S.C. 5131).

(3) LOCAL COORDINATING ENTITY.—The term “local coordinating entity” means the entity designated by Federal statute to—

(A) carry out, in partnership with other individuals and entities, the management plan for a National Heritage Area; and

(B) operate a National Heritage Area, including through the implementation of projects and programs among diverse partners in a National Heritage Area.

(4) MANAGEMENT PLAN.—The term “management plan” means the management plan for a National Heritage Area required under this Act.

(5) NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA.—The term “National Heritage Area” means—

(A) each National Heritage Area, National Heritage Corridor, Natural Preservation Commission, National Heritage Canalway, National Heritage Route, Heritage Corridor, Cultural Heritage Corridor, Heritage Partnership, and National Heritage Partnership, the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District, or other area designated by Federal statute with the explicit purpose of establishing a national heritage area designated by Congress before or on the date of enactment of this Act; and

(B) each National Heritage Area designated by Federal statute after the date of enactment of this Act, unless the law designating the area exempts that area from the National Heritage Area System by specific reference to this Act.

(6) NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA SYSTEM.—The term “National Heritage Area System” means the system of National Heritage Areas established by this Act.

(7) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of the Interior.

(8) STUDY AREA.—The term “study area” means a specific geographic area that is the subject of a feasibility study under section 5.

(9) TRIBAL GOVERNMENT.—The term “Tribal government” means the governing body of an Indian Tribe.

SEC. 3. NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA SYSTEM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—In order to recognize certain areas of the United States that tell nationally significant stories and to conserve, enhance, and interpret the areas’ natural, historic, scenic, and cultural resources that together illustrate significant aspects of our country’s heritage, there is established a National Heritage Area System through which the Secretary may provide technical and financial assistance to local coordinating entities to support the establishment, develop-

ment, and continuity of National Heritage Areas.

(b) NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA SYSTEM.—The National Heritage Area System shall be composed of all National Heritage Areas.

(c) RELATIONSHIP TO THE NATIONAL PARK SYSTEM.—

(1) RELATIONSHIP TO NATIONAL PARK UNITS.—The Secretary shall encourage participation and assistance by any unit of the National Park System located near or encompassed by any National Heritage Area in local initiatives for that National Heritage Area that conserve and interpret resources consistent with an approved management plan for the National Heritage Area.

(2) APPLICABILITY OF LAWS.—National Heritage Areas shall not be—

(A) considered to be units of the National Park System; or

(B) subject to the authorities applicable to units of the National Park System.

SEC. 4. NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA SYSTEM MANAGEMENT.

(a) MANAGEMENT PLAN.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 3 years after a National Heritage Area is included in the National Heritage Area System outlined by this Act, the local coordinating entity of the National Heritage Area shall submit to the Secretary for approval a management plan for the National Heritage Area.

(2) REQUIREMENTS.—The management plan shall—

(A) incorporate an integrated and cooperative approach for the protection, enhancement, and interpretation of the natural, cultural, historic, scenic, and recreational resources of the National Heritage Area;

(B) be developed using a comprehensive planning approach that includes—

(i) opportunities for stakeholders, including community members, local and regional governments, Tribal governments, businesses, nonprofit organizations, and other interested parties—

(I) to be involved in the planning process; and

(II) to review and comment on draft management plans; and

(ii) documentation of the planning and public participation processes, including a description of—

(I) the means by which the management plan was prepared;

(II) the stakeholders involved in the process; and

(III) the timing and method of stakeholder involvement;

(C) include—

(i) an inventory of—

(I) the resources located in the National Heritage Area; and

(II) any other property in the National Heritage Area that—

(aa) is related to the themes of the National Heritage Area; and

(bb) should be preserved, restored, managed, or maintained because of the significance of the property;

(ii) comprehensive policies, strategies and recommendations for the conservation, funding, management, and development of the National Heritage Area;

(iii) a description of actions that the Federal, Tribal, State, and local governments, private organizations, and individuals have agreed to take to protect the natural, historical, cultural, scenic, and recreational resources of the National Heritage Area;

(iv) a program of implementation for the management plan by the local coordinating entity that includes a description of—

(I) actions to facilitate ongoing collaboration among partners to promote plans for resource protection, restoration, and construction; and

(II) specific commitments for implementation that have been made by the local coordinating entity or any government, organization, or individual for the first 5 years of operation;

(v) the identification of sources of funding for carrying out the management plan;

(vi) analysis and recommendations for means by which Federal, Tribal, State, and local programs, including the role of the National Park Service in the National Heritage Area, may best be coordinated to carry out this subsection; and

(vii) an interpretive plan for the National Heritage Area; and

(D) recommend policies and strategies for resource management that consider and detail the application of appropriate land and water management techniques, including the development of intergovernmental and interagency cooperative agreements to protect the natural, historical, cultural, educational, scenic, and recreational resources of the National Heritage Area.

(3) EXCEPTIONS.—The requirements in paragraph (2) shall not apply to management plans in effect on the date of the enactment of this Act.

(b) EVALUATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year before the authorization for Federal funding expires for a National Heritage Area, the Secretary shall—

(A) conduct an evaluation of the accomplishments of that National Heritage Area; and

(B) prepare and submit a report detailing the evaluation required by subparagraph (A) to—

(i) the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives; and

(ii) the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate.

(2) EVALUATION COMPONENTS.—An evaluation prepared under paragraph (1) shall—

(A) assess the progress of the local coordinating entity with respect to—

(i) accomplishing the purposes of the authorizing legislation for the National Heritage Area; and

(ii) achieving the goals and objectives of the approved management plan for the National Heritage Area;

(B) analyze the Federal, Tribal, State, local, and private investments in the National Heritage Area to assess the impact of the investments; and

(C) review the management structure, partnership relationships, and funding of the National Heritage Area.

(3) RESULTS OF EVALUATION.—Based upon the evaluation under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall prepare a report with recommendations for the National Park Service's continued role, if any, with respect to the National Heritage Area. If the report recommends that Federal funding for the National Heritage Area be—

(A) continued, the report shall include an analysis of—

(i) ways in which Federal funding for the National Heritage Area may be reduced or eliminated over time;

(ii) the appropriate time period necessary to achieve the recommended reduction or elimination; and

(iii) justification for the continued funding in light of other National Park Service core responsibilities and priorities; or

(B) eliminated, the report shall include a description of potential impacts on conservation, interpretation, and sustainability of the National Heritage Area.

(4) UPDATES; ADDITIONAL EVALUATIONS.—

(A) UPDATES.—The Secretary may satisfy the requirement under paragraph (1) for a National Heritage Area by updating an evaluation that was completed for that National

Heritage Area not more than 5 years before another evaluation would otherwise be required under paragraph (1).

(B) ADDITIONAL EVALUATIONS.—The Secretary may conduct additional evaluations as the Secretary deems appropriate.

(C) COORDINATION.—The head of any Federal agency planning to conduct activities that may have an impact on a designated National Heritage Area is encouraged to consult and coordinate these activities with the Secretary and the local coordinating entity to the maximum extent practicable.

SEC. 5. STUDY AREAS.

(a) FEASIBILITY STUDIES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may carry out or certify a study to assess the suitability and feasibility of designating a specific geographic area as a National Heritage Area to be included in the National Heritage Area System.

(2) PREPARATION.—The feasibility study shall be carried out—

(A) by the Secretary in consultation with Tribal, State, and local historic preservation officers, State and local historical societies, State and local tourism offices, and other appropriate organizations and governmental agencies; or

(B) by interested individuals or entities, if the Secretary certifies that the completed study meets the requirements of paragraph (4).

(3) CERTIFICATION.—Not later than 1 year after receiving a study carried out by interested individuals or entities under paragraph (2)(B) the Secretary shall review and certify whether the study meets the requirements of paragraph (4).

(4) REQUIREMENTS.—A study under paragraph (1) shall include analysis, documentation, and determination on whether the study area—

(A) has an assemblage of natural, historic, and cultural resources that—

(i) represent distinct aspects of the heritage of the United States;

(ii) are worthy of recognition, conservation, interpretation, and continuing use; and

(iii) would be best managed—

(I) through partnerships among public and private entities; and

(II) by linking diverse and sometimes noncontiguous resources;

(B) reflects traditions, customs, beliefs, and folklore that are a valuable part of the story of the United States;

(C) provides outstanding opportunities—

(i) to conserve natural, historic, cultural, or scenic features; and

(ii) for recreation and education;

(D) contains resources that—

(i) are important to any identified themes of the study area; and

(ii) retain a degree of integrity capable of supporting interpretation;

(E) includes Tribal governments, residents, business interests, nonprofit organizations, and State and local governments that—

(i) are involved in the planning of the study area;

(ii) have developed a conceptual financial plan that outlines the roles of all participants in the study area, including the Federal Government; and

(iii) have demonstrated support for the designation of the study area;

(F) has a potential local coordinating entity to work in partnership with the individuals and entities described in paragraph (1) to develop the study area while encouraging State and local economic activity; and

(G) has a conceptual boundary map that is supported by the public.

(b) REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—For each study carried out under subsection (a), the Secretary shall

submit to the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate a report that describes—

(A) the findings of the study described in subsection (a) for that study area; and

(B) any conclusions and recommendations of the Secretary.

(2) TIMING.—

(A) With respect to a study carried out by the Secretary in accordance with paragraph (2)(A)(i), the Secretary shall submit a report under subparagraph (A) not later than 3 years after the date on which funds are first made available to carry out the study.

(B) With respect to a study carried out by interested individuals or entities in accordance with paragraph (2)(A)(ii), the Secretary shall submit a report under subparagraph (A) not later than 180 days after the date on which the Secretary certifies under paragraph (2)(B) that the study meets the requirements of paragraph (3).

SEC. 6. LOCAL COORDINATING ENTITIES.

(a) DUTIES.—For any year that Federal funds have been made available under this Act for a National Heritage Area, the local coordinating entity for that National Heritage Area shall—

(1) submit to the Secretary an annual report that describes the activities, expenses, and income of the local coordinating entity (including grants to any other entities during the year that the report is made);

(2) make available to the Secretary for audit all records relating to the expenditure of Federal funds and any matching funds; and

(3) require, with respect to all agreements authorizing expenditure of Federal funds by other organizations, that the organizations receiving the funds make available to the Secretary for audit all records concerning the expenditure of the funds.

(b) AUTHORITIES.—The local coordinating entity may, subject to the prior approval of the Secretary, for the purposes of preparing and implementing the approved management plan for the National Heritage Area, use Federal funds made available through this Act to—

(1) make grants to Indian Tribes, a State, a local government, nonprofit organizations, and other parties within the National Heritage Area;

(2) enter into cooperative agreements with or provide technical assistance to the Indian Tribes, State, a local government, nonprofit organizations, Federal agencies, and other interested parties;

(3) hire and compensate staff, which may include individuals with expertise in natural, cultural, and historic resources conservation; economic and community development; and heritage planning;

(4) obtain money or services, including those provided under other Federal laws or programs;

(5) contract for goods or services; and

(6) support activities of partners and any other activities that further the purposes of the National Heritage Area and are consistent with the approved management plan.

(c) PROHIBITIONS ON THE ACQUISITION OF REAL PROPERTY.—The local coordinating entity may not use Federal funds received under this Act to acquire real property or any interest in real property.

(d) HERITAGE AREA COMMISSIONS.—

(1) Section 804(j) of division B of H.R. 5666 (Appendix D) as enacted into law by section 1(a)(4) of Public Law 106-554 (54 U.S.C. 320101 note; 114 Stat. 2763, 2763A-295; 123 Stat. 1294; 128 Stat. 3802) is amended by striking “shall terminate” and all that follows through the period and inserting “shall terminate on September 30, 2034.”.

(2) Section 295D(d) of Public Law 109-338 (120 Stat. 1833; 130 Stat. 962) is amended by striking “shall terminate” and all that follows through the period and inserting “shall terminate on September 30, 2034.”.

SEC. 7. PROPERTY OWNERS AND REGULATORY PROTECTIONS.

Nothing in this Act shall be construed to—

- (1) abridge the rights of any property owner, whether public or private, including the right to refrain from participating in any plan, project, program, or activity conducted within the National Heritage Area;

- (2) require any property owner to permit public access (including Federal, Tribal, State, or local government access) to such property or to modify any provisions of Federal, Tribal, State, or local law with regard to public access or use of private lands;

- (3) alter any duly adopted land use regulation or any approved land use plan or any other regulatory authority of any Federal, Tribal, or State, or local government, or to convey any land use or other regulatory authority to any local coordinating entity;

- (4) authorize or imply the reservation or appropriation of water or water rights;

- (5) diminish the authority of the State to manage fish and wildlife including the regulation of fishing and hunting within the National Heritage Area;

- (6) create any liability, or have any effect on any liability under any other law, of any private property owner with respect to any persons injured on such private property;

- (7) affect the authority of any Federal official to provide technical or financial assistance under any other law;

- (8) modify any law or regulation authorizing Federal officials to manage Federal land under their control or limit the discretion of Federal land managers to implement approved land use plans within the boundaries of a National Heritage Area, nor shall this Act be construed to modify, alter, or amend any authorized uses of these Federal lands; or

- (9) enlarge or diminish the treaty rights of any Indian Tribe within the National Heritage Area.

SEC. 8. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

- (a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, for each of fiscal years 2020 through 2034, there is authorized to be appropriated not more than \$750,000 for each National Heritage Area.

- (b) AVAILABILITY.—Amounts made available under subsection (a) shall remain available until expended.

- (c) COST-SHARING REQUIREMENT.—

- (1) FEDERAL SHARE.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, including any law designating a National Heritage Area, the Federal share of the total cost of any activity funded with appropriations authorized by subsection (a) shall not be more than 50 percent.

- (2) FORM OF NON-FEDERAL SHARE.—The non-Federal share of the total cost of any activity funded with appropriations authorized by subsection (a) may be in the form of in-kind contributions of goods or services fairly valued.

- (3) EXCEPTION.—Notwithstanding section 9(b), for each National Heritage Area established before the date of the enactment of this Act without a non-Federal cost share requirement or with a non-Federal cost share requirement of less than 50 percent—

- (A) the non-Federal cost share requirement, or lack thereof, shall remain at the previously enacted level for 2 full fiscal years after the date of the enactment of this Act; and

- (B) after the period referred to in subparagraph (A), the non-Federal cost share requirement shall increase by 10 percent annu-

ally until the non-Federal share is consistent with paragraph (1).

- (c) AUTHORITY TO PROVIDE ASSISTANCE.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary may provide assistance to a National Heritage Area during any fiscal year for which appropriations are authorized under subsection (a).

SEC. 9. STATUTORY CLARIFICATION.

- (a) AUTHORIZATION LIMITATIONS.—Any provision of law enacted before the date of the enactment of this Act that provides for a termination, expiration, or other time limitation on the authorization for a National Heritage Area is hereby superceded and shall have no effect.

- (b) FUNDING LIMITATIONS.—Any provision of law enacted before the date of the enactment of this Act that provides for a termination, expiration, or other limitation on the time or amount of an authorization of appropriations for a National Heritage Area is hereby superceded and shall have no effect.

- (c) EVALUATIONS.—Any provision of law enacted before the date of the enactment of this Act that requires the Secretary to conduct an evaluation of or submit a report on the accomplishments of a National Heritage Area is hereby superceded and shall have no effect.

- (d) OTHER AUTHORITIES.—Any provision of law enacted before the date of the enactment of this Act that provides for the establishment, management, administration, operation, or otherwise affects a National Heritage Area and is not explicitly otherwise provided for in this Act shall not be affected by this Act.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Hawaii.

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1049, sponsored by my friend, Representative TONKO of New York, a fellow member of the Natural Resources Committee.

Mr. Speaker, since 1984, Congress has established 55 National Heritage Areas. These incredible sites protect our diverse historical, cultural, and environmental treasures, from the Erie Canalway to the Great Basin of Utah and beyond, preserving and interpreting unique aspects of our American story.

Heritage Areas are also a major boon for local economies, supporting cultural tourism and driving investment. They are also a great deal for the taxpayer, ensuring that every Federal dollar spent on the program is matched with at least \$1 of non-Federal funding.

However, Congress has so far failed to pass a law standardizing the man-

agement of this important program, meaning that each site operates under its own authorization.

Both the Obama and Trump administrations have asked Congress to enact a programmatic bill to improve site management and ensure a continued consistent commitment to our National Heritage Areas.

The bill offered today by our colleague would address that need by providing a standard under which these sites would be designated, reviewed, funded, and overseen.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative TONKO for his continued work in support of our National Heritage Area program, and I thank Ranking Member BISHOP for working with us to improve this bill in committee.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to vote in support of H.R. 1049, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

With that mask, it is a lot easier to do that, too.

I appreciate the offer to be involved in this lameduck session here today. It is one of those things that you have to take in some kind of stride.

One assumes that if you are coming back here for a lameduck session, there are major issues that need to be done before we actually go back and the next session of Congress can actually take up. Although, I do remember the first time I was elected here, we were voting in January on the budget from the last session of Congress that they had failed to do.

But in all of that, we look at the things that are still before us today, and they are huge issues: what we are going to do with the coronavirus, funding to help with that problem, national defense authorization still yet having to be done, appropriations bills still yet to be passed.

Instead of dealing with those this week, we find ourselves here with these suspensions, most of which will not have a chance of actually going all the way through the system. Many of them should start over again and be done separately. But, at any rate, this is what we have been called back to do.

The Germans had a good word for it: *kleinigkeiten*.

It is those little things. It is not the major issues of the day. It is the small stuff. Now, admittedly, *kleinigkeiten*, those little things, sometimes can enable one to get a victory and they can also cause a problem that stops one from success. But what we are dealing with today here on the floor is a whole bunch of *kleinigkeiten*. So I am happy to be invited to be part of this effort that is here.

I also want to say one another thing, too, as well, because the bills that are on the floor, when they are printed, when they are talked about, will have the sponsors' names, Members of the House, sometimes Senators who are involved in this, and what is never listed

on here is actually the people who make this possible.

□ 1715

I want to make one mention of the staff that we have. It is the staff that does the research. It is they who actually write the bills. It is they who actually conduct the talking points. It is they who organize the session so it can run smoothly.

So the staff that is sitting to your left over there does a huge amount of work that will never be credited in any way, shape, or form, but it should be; working into the night to make sure that what we do here on the floor is possible, and we should recognize them and be grateful.

The staff on my right over here has done the same thing. Lisa Pittman, to my right, has been here for 33 years working in this body, making sure that we do things the right way. She will have forgotten more than—no offense to the Parliamentarians—the Parliamentarians will ever know about how to do things properly, effectively, and with civility. She works tirelessly without asking for the limelight or the effort.

Lisa, at one time, I got you on C-SPAN when you had to come down in the well and hand me a piece of paper. I hope to get you in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD right now.

To realize that in a month from now I am going to be gone and no one cares; but a month from now, you will also be gone, and there will never be—it will be decades before somebody can actually replace you.

So to the staff that is here, the staff that is on the floor, the staff that has worked on the committee, they should be recognized as best we can for the work that they do to make everything possible. Even though we get the headlines and we get the names in bold type in the articles, there should be given some recognition to staff.

We have a bill that is before us that deals with heritage areas. I congratulate the sponsor of this for taking on something that needs to be done and, even if this does not happen, or if it does happen, still has work that needs to be done on this topic area.

The idea of heritage areas was actually pushed on us by the National Park Service, who wanted to find a way of stopping all the Members from trying to create more national parks in their areas; giving them an alternative.

The idea was to get local governments coming together and forming a cooperative so that they could actually use and increase the tourism and the opportunities for getting people to come and visit these particular areas.

Now, everything that is done in a national heritage area does not need the Federal Government to be involved. Every heritage area could simply, by an interlocal cooperation agreement, simply come to do everything that happens in a heritage area.

The two problems that heritage areas have had in the past are dealing with:

number one, ignoring property rights of individuals. The local government can solve that problem by themselves. They don't need us to do it.

Or the idea of assuming responsibilities and powers from local governments. Local governments in an interlocal cooperation agreement can do that by themselves. They don't need a heritage area to accomplish that.

But one thing that heritage areas do that local governments can't do by themselves is give themselves money and that, unfortunately, is why most heritage areas exist, because they will get \$700,000 to \$800,000 a year just to run these.

See, this was the nice part about it. When this was established in 1994, the chairman of the Parks Subcommittee was from Minnesota, and he claimed that the amount of support is going to be limited. There is a limit of time or the amount of money that the Federal Government can be in a heritage area; 10 years, we are out of there. And then they are on their own, and they will get all the benefits of that conservation.

The idea was heritage areas would be for a limited time with a limited amount of money. And as the gentleman from Hawaii suggested, there are still 55 heritage areas. Not one of them has ever disappeared. Years after the time has gone by, they are still there and still they are getting that \$700,000 to \$800,000 to run their programs.

The heritage areas are no longer there to try and get the people so they can make things for themselves and handle it. Heritage areas are simply a drain on the budget that no one wants to control. Appropriators don't try and control the spending; authorizers don't try and control the spending. Even the administration, though they talk and complain about it, don't try and do it.

The Clinton administration had a problem with this. The Bush administration asked us to quit doing heritage areas. The Obama administration cut the funding for heritage areas in their proposed budget by 50 percent. And the Trump administration also tried to limit what we were doing with heritage areas.

That is the problem. What we do with heritage areas makes no sense. It doesn't have value to it. It doesn't have responsibility and we are not even rational.

Tennessee has a heritage area for Civil War—what is it really called? Civil War something. The heritage area is the entire State of Tennessee. That is illogical. That is not what it was intended to do.

We have corrupted the idea of heritage areas. And I compliment Mr. TONKO for what he is trying to do. He is saying, look, if we are going to have these stupid heritage areas—and it looks like no one has the responsibility to actually go back and do what we originally intended to do; appropriators won't, and we don't seem to do it by ourselves—

then at least have some rational reason for why heritage areas are established. Have some kind of standard.

Now, what Mr. TONKO is doing is the first step in coming up with some way of doing this appropriately. It is not near enough. The bill does nothing about the root problem of heritage areas just sucking up \$700,000 to \$800,000 a year and never, never going away, never getting off the Federal dole. That still needs to be addressed. It doesn't happen in here.

But that is why I appreciate Mr. TONKO going forward with this particular bill because, for once, we need to sit back and say, why are we doing these heritage areas? What is their purpose? What is their value?

If we are not doing it in an intelligent way, then all this becomes is simply pork barrel for certain people to take the money back home to their district, pound themselves on the chest and say, look what I have done, even though it sets the country on a dangerous precedent.

The Federal Government and our Federal spending are in trouble, not because we spend too much, but we spend money on too many things. And that is why we, as a Federal Government, have to prioritize, and so should heritage areas be part of that priority process, and we don't do that.

So, Mr. Speaker, I say to the gentleman, I appreciate this. Whether this gets all the way through, I doubt it. But I hope the gentleman will pick it up again in the next Congress and continue to work forward so we try and look at these heritage areas and say, why are we doing this? What is the purpose? And how can we avoid the objections, the obsessive, the abuse that has happened in many of these areas in the future; so that Tennessee cannot be one heritage area.

So the gentleman is really trying to get local people to work for their own local advantage to appreciate it, and make sure that we do it right way.

So, with that, having tried to emphasize the fact that this is a huge problem, I do want to be very clear that I support this particular bill and I support the gentleman's effort.

We haven't gone far enough, to be honest. There is an amendment we tried to make in the committee which would force heritage areas to lower the amount of money they keep getting from the Federal Government until they are finally weaned off the system. I still think that is the right thing to do. We can talk about that in the future because that is an issue still before us.

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

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

I certainly appreciate the overview of the ranking member in his initial remarks today. I would note that the bills before us today, these 12 bills, are all coming to the floor from the Natural Resources Committee. They are

critical bills in many areas, from natural resources to indigenous peoples and beyond.

Many of these bills actually come to us from the Senate and, if passed here, will go on directly to the President, so this is a productive agenda that we have here with every expectation that these bills will advance.

I also want to say, on behalf of the majority, that I fully endorse the ranking member's commendations to the staff that are with us today and in our Natural Resources Committee. He makes an important and vital point. We all appreciate our staff. We are blessed by their service. We are blessed by their expertise, and I would be remiss if I did not say, on behalf of our chair, Chair GRIJALVA, that we all endorse those comments, and I thank him for those very kind comments.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. TONKO).

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Hawaii for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1049, the National Heritage Area Act. I thank Chairman GRIJALVA and the staff of the committee for their longtime support and effort here. And I thank Ranking Member BISHOP for recognizing the value of this legislation and working with us on this.

The national heritage areas connect us, and perhaps more importantly, future generations with the voices and places that have shaped who we are as Americans. These sites deliver more than just a significant economic return; they help us reveal the diverse and sometimes hidden gems of our cultural heritage and fill us with a sense of place that brings our complex history to life.

For the first time, this bill establishes a standardized set of criteria for the designation of new national heritage areas and a rigorous process for existing national heritage areas to ensure accountability.

H.R. 1049 has 221 cosponsors, and strong bipartisan, and wide geographic support that speaks to the value of this program locally and nationally. Members recognize what heritage area investment means to their given communities and regions, and similar proposals have been introduced and championed by both the Bush and Obama administrations.

The National Heritage Area, or NHA, program is one of the Department of the Interior's most cost-effective initiatives, relying on public-private partnerships in which every Federal dollar is matched with an average of \$5.50 in other funding.

For my part, I greatly appreciate the good that the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor and the Maurice D. Hinchey Hudson River Valley National Heritage Corridor have done for my district and for upstate New York.

I commend the Alliance of National Heritage Areas and the National Parks Conservation Association for their hard work on this critical legislation.

I also want to thank my friends, our former colleague, Charlie Dent, and Congressmembers MCKINLEY and G.T. THOMPSON, for their hard work on this legislation and continued support for heritage areas.

While the ranking member cited staff on both sides, I would endorse that. I also add to the compliments my legislative person, Emily Silverberg, for the outstanding work she has done and her longtime dedication and devotion to the effort.

H.R. 1049 is a bipartisan, common-sense bill, and I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentlewoman from Puerto Rico (Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN) will control the balance of the time.

There was no objection.

Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN of Puerto Rico. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CASE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. CICILLINE).

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 1049, the National Heritage Area Act.

Since 1984, the National Heritage Area program has played a vital role in preserving the history, culture and natural beauty of our Nation's most historically and naturally significant communities. It has worked closely with those communities to help make them vibrant and ensure their place as part of the national landscape.

In my home State of Rhode Island, the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor plays a vital role in preserving the history of communities in Blackstone Valley, the birthplace of the American Industrial Revolution.

In addition to preserving this history, the coordinating entity for the Blackstone Valley Heritage Corridor works hand in hand with the National Park Service to support the continued development of the Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park, which runs from Providence and Pawtucket through Worcester, Massachusetts.

I was proud to lead the House effort to establish this national park in 2014 and look forward to seeing its continued growth and development in close coordination with the Blackstone Heritage Corridor.

The relationship between the Blackstone Heritage Corridor and the Blackstone Valley National Historical Park plays a vital role in telling the story of how America became a prosperous nation through its mills and factories, and the immigrant communities in Rhode Island and Massachusetts that worked in those industries and that helped build the foundation of our country.

The National Heritage Area Act will ensure that this relationship can continue by authorizing funds for heritage areas through 2034 and fostering new opportunities for relationships between heritage areas and the National Park Service to grow.

While the Trump administration has proposed eliminating this critical program year after year, I am grateful for the work of my colleague from New York, Congressman PAUL TONKO, for his leadership on this issue. And I thank Chairman GRIJALVA and the Natural Resources Committee for their efforts to bring this legislation to the floor.

I urge passage of H.R. 1049, to support the National Heritage Area program and to continue preserving our Nation's history and natural beauty.

□ 1730

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Hawaii (Mr. CASE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1049, 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.

LEECH LAKE BAND OF OJIBWE RESERVATION RESTORATION ACT

Mr. CASE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 199) to provide for the transfer of certain Federal land in the State of Minnesota for the benefit of the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 199

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 "Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe Reservation Restoration Act".

SEC. 2. LEECH LAKE BAND OF OJIBWE RESERVATION RESTORATION.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds that—

(1) the Federal land described in subsection (b)(1) was taken from members of the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe during a period—

(A) beginning in 1948;

(B) during which the Bureau of Indian Affairs incorrectly interpreted an order of the Secretary of the Interior to mean that the Department of the Interior had the authority to sell tribal allotments without the consent of a majority of the rightful landowners; and

(C) ending in 1959, when the Secretary of the Interior was—

(i) advised that sales described in subparagraph (B) were illegal; and

(ii) ordered to cease conducting those sales;

(2) as a result of the Federal land described in subsection (b)(1) being taken from members of the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe, the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe hold the smallest percentage of its original reservation lands of any Ojibwe bands in Minnesota;

(3)(A) the applicable statute of limitations prohibits individuals from pursuing through litigation the return of the land taken as described in paragraph (1); but