

AMENDMENT TO KAWEAH PROJECT PROVISION

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1044) to amend Public Law 99-338 with respect to Kaweah Project permits.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.
The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1044

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

SECTION 1. AMENDMENT TO KAWEAH PROJECT PROVISION.

The first section of Public Law 99-338, as amended by Public Law 108-447, is amended—

(1) by striking “3 renewals” and inserting “7 renewals”; and

(2) by striking “of Southern California Edison Company”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) and the gentlewoman from Oregon (Ms. HOYLE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arkansas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to add extraneous material in the RECORD on H.R. 1044, the bill now under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of Representative VALADAO's bill, H.R. 1044.

This bill is a commonsense measure to ensure the continued operation of existing hydroelectric facilities, which have provided reliable and affordable power to Californians over a century.

The bill authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to issue four 10-year renewals for a special use permit for the Kaweah Hydroelectric Project, thereby extending the project's life for up to 40 additional years.

These hydroelectric dams, located on the Kaweah and East Fork Kaweah Rivers, fall within the boundaries of Sequoia National Park, but they predate the park's expansion and have long been recognized by Congress as a valuable energy asset.

With the current statutory authorization for the permits set to expire in 2026, this bill provides much-needed certainty for the continued operation of a critical source of reliable energy. Without an extension, Southern California Edison will be forced to remove this infrastructure at enormous expense to their ratepayers.

I thank Representative VALADAO for his leadership on this issue. By championing this bill, he is ensuring that more than 15 million people in California have access to affordable, reliable, and clean energy for generations to come.

Mr. Speaker, I support this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. HOYLE of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1044 introduced by my colleague Representative VALADAO of California.

This bill would allow the Secretary of the Interior to issue additional permit renewals for the Kaweah Project, a hydroelectric facility that operates within the boundaries of Sequoia National Park. The Kaweah Project has been generating clean, renewable energy since 1907. Although it was originally granted a 50-year permit, the boundaries of the Sequoia National Park were later expanded in 1943, bringing portions of the project, such as flow lines and diversions, within park lands. Since the project predated the park, it was allowed to continue operating.

In 2004, Congress authorized the Secretary of the Interior to issue up to three permit renewals with reasonable safeguards to ensure the project's continued operation wouldn't harm the park.

These include prohibiting any expansion of the project within the park, requiring safety assessment, and appropriate compensation for the use of public resources.

H.R. 1044 would build on that responsible approach. By allowing the Secretary to continue renewing permits for the Kaweah Project under the same protective conditions, this bill allows continued hydropower generation while upholding our responsibility to protect the park for future generations.

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

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. VALADAO), the lead sponsor of the bill.

Mr. VALADAO. Mr. Speaker, I rise to urge support for my bill, H.R. 1044, which authorizes seven permit renewals for the Kaweah Hydroelectric Project in Tulare County, California.

Southern California Edison has operated the Kaweah Hydroelectric Project since 1899, marking well over a century of reliable, clean power.

For decades, Congress has allowed for the continued use of the Federal lands for this purpose, but unless we act now, the authorization will expire in 2026.

Without authorization, Southern California Edison would be forced to dismantle critical infrastructure, costing ratepayers in the region tens of millions of dollars and eliminating a clean, reliable, and affordable source of energy.

This bill ensures that Kaweah can keep operating without disruption or unnecessary costs for families across California.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman WESTERMAN and his staff at the Committee on Natural Resources for their work on this issue. I urge my col-

leagues to support this bill and protect the Central Valley's clean energy future.

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

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

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, this is a straightforward, commonsense bill. In the world we live in today, where we have more and more electrical energy demand, it makes no sense to be closing down any kind of electrical generation, especially one where the infrastructure is already built, working, and producing reliable and affordable base-load power.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support Representative VALADAO's legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. McDOWELL). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1044.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

JOCELYN NUNGARAY NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE ACT

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 1596) to rename the Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge located in the State of Texas as the “Jocelyn Nungaray National Wildlife Refuge”.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 1596

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 “Jocelyn Nungaray National Wildlife Refuge Act”.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) On June 17, 2024, 12-year-old Jocelyn Nungaray was brutally murdered in Houston, Texas.

(2) Two illegal aliens who were allegedly members of the Tren de Aragua gang have been charged with her murder.

(3) On March 4, 2025, President Donald J. Trump signed Executive Order 14229 (90 Fed. Reg. 11585; relating to honoring Jocelyn Nungaray) renaming the area known as the Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge to “Jocelyn Nungaray National Wildlife Refuge”.

(4) Ms. Nungaray loved animals and, given the close proximity of her hometown of Houston, it is fitting that the Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge be renamed in her honor.

SEC. 3. RENAMING OF ANAHUAC NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE.

(a) RENAMING.—The Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge located in the State of Texas shall be known as the “Jocelyn Nungaray National Wildlife Refuge”.

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the national wildlife refuge referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the “Jocelyn Nungaray National Wildlife Refuge”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) and the gentlewoman from Oregon (Ms. HOYLE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arkansas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to add extraneous material in the RECORD on S. 1596, the bill now under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, Jocelyn Nungaray was a vibrant 12-year-old girl from Houston, Texas, whose life was tragically cut short on June 16, 2024, when she was murdered by two Venezuelan nationals who illegally entered the United States and are allegedly members of the Tren de Aragua gang. This senseless act has done irreparable damage to Jocelyn's family, friends, and community.

In May, Jocelyn's mother, Alexis, testified on this legislation, but more importantly, she highlighted Jocelyn's caring personality, deep love for animals, and passion for finding animals homes, sharing stories of Jocelyn's life, such as Jocelyn's efforts to nurse injured animals back to health. Alexis recounted one instance when Jocelyn brought a pigeon that had injured its legs into her home. Jocelyn, without hesitation, tried to nurse the pigeon back to health in her bedroom until it was well enough to be released back into the wild.

In March 2025, President Trump signed an executive order directing the Secretary of the Interior to rename the Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge after Jocelyn Nungaray, permanently commemorating Jocelyn for her compassion for animals and people who care about nature.

To ensure the name change is permanent, Congressman BABIN and Senator CORNYN introduced identical legislation that would codify the President's executive order.

The National Wildlife Refuge System plays an important role in coastal conservation, public recreation, and environmental education, all of which honor Jocelyn by allowing current and future generations of Americans to enjoy the natural landscape and animals that Jocelyn also enjoyed.

I, again, thank my colleague, Congressman BABIN, for introducing the

House companion of the legislation and for his commitment to honoring Jocelyn's memory.

Mr. Speaker, I support this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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Ms. HOYLE of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, S. 1596 will codify the renaming of the Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge in Texas to honor the memory of 12-year-old Jocelyn Nungaray.

Wildlife refuges are more than places to protect our environment. They are places where so many young people are inspired to build a lifelong connection to nature and develop a sense of stewardship for the world around them.

Jocelyn Nungaray was one of those young people. She loved animals and the outdoors. Her life was tragically taken far too soon. This legislation ensures that her love for wildlife and the natural world will be remembered and honored forever at one of our Nation's most important coastal conservation areas.

Spanning 39,000 acres along Texas' Gulf Coast, this refuge is a vital sanctuary for migratory waterfowl, endangered species, and countless other wildlife. Now, it will also stand as a lasting tribute to Jocelyn's spirit and the values she held dear.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting S. 1596 and help preserve Jocelyn's legacy in a place that reflects the beauty and wonder she saw in the world. I hope that this will bring her family some semblance of peace.

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

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BABIN), who is the lead sponsor of the House companion bill.

Mr. BABIN. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman WESTERMAN, my good friend and classmate, for his services here.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of S. 1596 to rename the Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge located in the State of Texas and in my district as the Jocelyn Nungaray National Wildlife Refuge to forever commemorate the life of 12-year-old Jocelyn Nungaray, who was tragically killed on June 17, 2024.

Jocelyn was brutally murdered in Houston, Texas, last summer. Two illegal Venezuelan aliens, both reported members of Tren de Aragua, the gang notoriously known around the country, have been charged in her killing.

Naming the refuge after Jocelyn is a very fitting way to honor her love for animals and to preserve her spirit within the very landscape that she called home.

I thank Chairman WESTERMAN and Senator CORNYN for their leadership and support on these efforts. I also thank my Democratic colleague across the way for her support.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote “yes” on this very commonsense

legislation. We can never bring back Jocelyn, but we can commemorate and memorialize her for the love of animals that she had, and her wonderful family, and have that as a fitting testimony to her short life.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BABIN), my friend who is the chair of the House Science, Space, and Technology Committee, for his unwavering work and dedication to bring this good piece of legislation to the floor.

Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for speakers. I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, refuges are places dedicated to conservation, public enjoyment, and environmental education.

Jocelyn was a kind, compassionate young girl who loved animals and cared deeply for the natural world. Renaming this refuge is a fitting honor to Jocelyn's life that ensures that her memory lives on.

Again, I thank Congressman BABIN and the Texas delegation for their work on this issue.

Mr. Speaker, I support this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 1596.

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. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

ALASKA NATIVE VIETNAM ERA VETERANS LAND ALLOTMENT EXTENSION ACT OF 2025

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 410) to extend the Alaska Native Vietnam era veterans land allotment program, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 410

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 “Alaska Native Vietnam Era Veterans Land Allotment Extension Act of 2025”.

SEC. 2. EXTENSION OF THE ALASKA NATIVE VIETNAM ERA VETERANS LAND ALLOTMENT PROGRAM.

Section 1119(b)(3)(B) of the John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act (43 U.S.C. 1629g–1(b)(3)(B)) is amended by striking “5-year period” and inserting “10-year period”.