

This is a program of national importance. Volcano monitoring strengthens safety and emergency preparedness across the country, from the Cascades to Hawaii to the Rockies, but there is no question that Alaska has the most at stake.

Our State is home to over 130 active volcanos, by far the largest concentration in the United States. These aren't isolated or dormant. Mount Spurr, just 80 miles from Anchorage, reached a yellow alert level due to elevated seismic activity earlier this year, and it is still listed as a very high threat by the most recent edition of the USGS National Volcanic Threat Assessment. If it erupts, as it did in 1992 and 1953, ashfall could shut down air traffic, damage critical infrastructure, and put lives at risk.

H.R. 3176 is a straightforward, 5-year reauthorization that keeps the program funded and operational. It maintains existing funding levels but provides the U.S. Geological Survey and its partners with the continuity that they need to monitor high-threat volcanos and coordinate real-time alerts with emergency responders.

Early warning is essential. It gives pilots time to reroute, gives communities time to prepare, and saves lives, especially in rural, high-risk States like Alaska where response logistics are already challenging.

This is a bipartisan, science-based system that works. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 3176 and ensure that every community living in the shadow of volcanic risk has the tools to stay safe.

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

Mr. STAUBER. Mr. Speaker, in closing, I would again commend my colleague from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH) for working to pass meaningful legislation that can save lives.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 3176, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. STAUBER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3176, 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.

CONVEYANCE OF SPECIFIED FOREST SERVICE PROPERTY TO PERRY COUNTY, ARKANSAS

Mr. STAUBER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3187) to require the Secretary of Agriculture to convey a parcel of property of the Forest Service to Perry County, Arkansas, and for other purposes, as amended.

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

H.R. 3187

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

SECTION 1. CONVEYANCE OF SPECIFIED FOREST SERVICE PROPERTY TO PERRY COUNTY, ARKANSAS.

(a) *REQUIRED CONVEYANCE.*—Subject to this section, if the County submits to the Secretary a written request for conveyance of the property described in subsection (b) not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall convey to the County all right, title, and interest of the United States in and to the property described in subsection (b).

(b) *DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY.*—

(1) *IN GENERAL.*—The property referred to in subsection (a) is the parcel of real property, including all land and improvements, generally referred to as parcel 850-10555-001 in the urban property records of the County, consisting of approximately 0.81 acres of Forest Service land located at 1069 Fourche Avenue, Perryville, Arkansas 72126.

(2) *SURVEY.*—The exact acreage and legal description of land to be conveyed under subsection (a) shall be determined by a survey satisfactory to the Secretary.

(c) *TERMS AND CONDITIONS.*—The conveyance under subsection (a) shall be—

(1) subject to valid existing rights;

(2) subject to reversion under subsection (g);

(3) made without consideration;

(4) made by quitclaim deed; and

(5) subject to such other terms and conditions as the Secretary considers to be appropriate to protect the interests of the United States.

(d) *COSTS OF CONVEYANCE.*—As a condition of the conveyance under subsection (a), the County shall pay all costs associated with the conveyance, including the cost of—

(1) a survey, if necessary, under subsection (b)(2);

(2) any environmental analysis or resources survey required under Federal law; and

(3) any analysis required to comply with division A of subtitle III of title 54, United States Code (commonly referred to as the "National Historic Preservation Act").

(e) *ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS.*—Notwithstanding section 120(h)(3)(A) of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 (42 U.S.C. 9620(h)(3)(A)), the Secretary shall not be required to provide any covenant or warranty for the property and improvements conveyed to the County under subsection (a).

(f) *PUBLIC PURPOSES USE.*—The property conveyed under subsection (a) shall be used only for public purposes, such as supporting education and youth development.

(g) *REVERSION.*—If the property conveyed under subsection (a) ceases to be used in a manner consistent with subsection (f), the property shall, at the discretion of the Secretary, revert to the United States.

(h) *DEFINITIONS.*—In this section:

(1) *COUNTY.*—The term "County" means Perry County, Arkansas.

(2) *SECRETARY.*—The term "Secretary" means the Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the Chief of the Forest Service.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. STAUBER) and the gentleman from Puerto Rico (Mr. HERNÁNDEZ) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Minnesota.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. STAUBER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members

may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 3187, the bill now under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 3187, led by my friend and colleague from Arkansas, Representative HILL.

This legislation directs the Secretary of Agriculture to convey a vacant Forest Service building and less than 1 acre of surrounding land in Perryville, Arkansas, to Perry County.

This property has sat vacant for years, and the Forest Service has no plans for its use. In the meantime, the building has been damaged by weather and continues to decline structurally. Every year, it stays vacant, resulting in higher repair costs and increased liability for the Federal Government and taxpayers. Instead of watching this asset deteriorate, we have the chance to put it to productive use for the local community.

For more than a decade, Perry County sought to acquire this site to meet pressing needs in education, conservation, and youth development. The county intends to renovate and repurpose the building to provide a permanent home for the University of Arkansas Extension Program, the Perry County Conservation District, and 4-H youth programs. Having a dedicated facility will allow these organizations to expand their services and better support the people of Perry County.

This bill is also fiscally responsible. It will eliminate the Federal cost of maintaining an idle, deteriorating building. By transferring the site, we stop wasting resources and empower local leaders to transform a declining Federal property into a hub for education, conservation, and youth programs.

H.R. 3187 is a commonsense solution. It cuts costs, eliminates waste, and supports youth engagement in conservation. I commend Representative HILL for his championing this thoughtful legislation which will support community development in a rural county with limited resources.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 3187, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 3187, a bill to convey a small but meaningful parcel of Forest Service property to Perry County, Arkansas.

This legislation will direct the Secretary of Agriculture to convey a little less than 1 acre of land located in Perryville, Arkansas, including any structures on the property, to Perry County, should the county request a transfer within 180 days of enactment.

While modest in size, this land holds important local value. It currently houses a building previously used by the U.S. Forest Service which Perry County hopes to repurpose for local administrative use, public services, or other community-focused purposes.

The conveyance would be subject to existing rights and environmental safeguards and would be made without cost to the county, other than administrative and survey-related expenses, which Perry County would cover.

This is a commonsense, community-driven bill that reflects how Federal land policy can and should be responsive to local needs. It will ensure that unused Federal property can be repurposed for the public good while preserving transparency, accountability, and proper oversight.

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

Mr. STAUBER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. HILL), the lead sponsor of this bill.

Mr. HILL of Arkansas. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. STAUBER for the time.

I rise in support of my bill, H.R. 3187. First, I thank my good friend and fellow Arkansan Chairman WESTERMAN for advancing my bill from the committee to the House floor.

□ 1700

I thank all the members of the Natural Resources Committee for their bipartisan and unanimous support.

As noted, my bill seeks to transfer ownership of a vacant Federal building owned by the U.S. Forest Service at 1069 Fourche Avenue in Perryville, Arkansas, to Perry County.

This property is no longer in use by the Forest Service, and there are no plans for its utilization by them. That has been the case, Mr. Speaker, for well over a decade.

Perry County is a very small, rural community with a population of around 10,000. About 16 percent of the residents there live below the poverty line. About 77 percent of the county is forested, and 72 percent of that land is privately owned.

The U.S. Forest Service is the largest public landowner in the county, managing 119,000 acres as a part of the Ouachita National Forest.

For several years, Perry County has mightily sought to acquire this property. However, due to limited resources and that high poverty rate, this small county has been unable to easily navigate the complex Federal rules and to find a way to purchase the property outright.

My legislation would enable the Federal Government to convey the property at no cost to the county with all the benefits that Mr. STAUBER outlined.

The building will require many significant repairs, but the county does have that repair budget appropriated. Once restored, the facility will support

many local programs. Specifically, the University of Arkansas extension program, the Perry County Conservation District, and, importantly, it will serve as a meeting place for our 4-H youth development program. These organizations are currently struggling with limited options for meeting space in Perryville. This cures that problem.

My bill provides Perry County with a much-needed facility to expand youth development, agricultural education, and community health initiatives.

I thank Perry County Judge Larry Blackmon, Perryville Mayor John Roland, the Perry County Extension Office, the Perry County Chamber of Commerce, and the Perry County Farm Bureau, all for working with us collectively both on the Natural Resources Committee staff and my staff to bring this forward and make it a reality.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join the committee and me in supporting a unanimous vote for H.R. 3187.

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

Mr. STAUBER. Mr. Speaker, in closing, H.R. 3187 is about turning a Federal liability into a community asset. Right now, taxpayers are stuck with the cost of a vacant building that continues to deteriorate. With this bill, we can remove that burden, transfer the property to Perry County, Arkansas, and allow local leaders to put it to work serving their community.

This legislation will provide a permanent home for programs that strengthen conservation, support farmers and landowners, and create new opportunities for young people through 4-H extension services.

It is a practical, cost-effective solution that delivers real value. I, once again, thank Representative HILL for his hard work on this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of the bill today, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. STAUBER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3187, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the yeas have it.

Mr. STAUBER. 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.

APPLICATION OF MINERAL LEASING ACT FOR ACQUIRED LANDS TO HARDROCK MINERALS

Mr. STAUBER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3872) to amend the Mineral Leasing Act for Acquired Lands to make

that Act applicable to hardrock minerals, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3872

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

SECTION 1. APPLICATION OF MINERAL LEASING ACT FOR ACQUIRED LANDS TO HARDROCK MINERALS.

The Mineral Leasing Act for Acquired Lands (30 U.S.C. 351 et seq.) is amended—

(1) in section 2 (30 U.S.C. 351)—

(A) by striking “Act ‘United States’” and inserting the following: “Act:

“(1) UNITED STATES.—The term ‘United States’”;

(B) by striking “Alaska. ‘Acquired lands’” and inserting the following: “Alaska.

“(2) ACQUIRED LANDS; LANDS ACQUIRED BY THE UNITED STATES.—The term ‘acquired lands’”;

(C) by striking “552). ‘Secretary’” and inserting the following: “552).

“(3) SECRETARY.—The term ‘Secretary’”;

(D) by striking “Interior. ‘Mineral leasing laws’ shall mean” and inserting the following: “Interior.

“(4) MINERAL LEASING LAWS.—The term ‘mineral leasing laws’ means”;

(E) by striking “Acts. ‘Lease’” and inserting the following: “Acts.

“(5) LEASE.—The term ‘lease’”;

(F) by striking “requires. The term” and inserting the following: “requires.

“(6) OIL.—The term”; and

(G) by adding at the end the following:

“(7) HARDROCK MINERAL.—The term ‘hardrock mineral’—

“(A) includes deposits of—

“(i) minerals found in sedimentary or other rocks;

“(ii) base metals;

“(iii) precious metals;

“(iv) industrial minerals; and

“(v) precious and semi-precious gemstones; and

“(B) does not include deposits of—

“(i) coal;

“(ii) oil;

“(iii) oil shale;

“(iv) gas;

“(v) sodium;

“(vi) potassium;

“(vii) sulfur; or

“(viii) mineral materials subject to disposition under the Act of July 31, 1947, commonly known as the Materials Act of 1947 (30 U.S.C. 601 et seq.).”; and

(2) in section 3 (30 U.S.C. 352), by striking “and sulfur” and inserting “sulfur, and hardrock minerals”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. STAUBER) and the gentleman from Puerto Rico (Mr. HERNÁNDEZ) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Minnesota.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. STAUBER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 3872, the bill now under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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