

Mr. Speaker, I commend Representative EZELL for his leadership, and I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 2294. I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to support H.R. 2294, bipartisan legislation to reauthorize the Integrated Coastal and Ocean Observation System Act, or IOOS, a commonsense, science-based solution that brings together my colleagues on both sides of the aisle around our shared commitment to protecting our coastal communities.

I am proud to work with my colleague, Representative EZELL, as one of the bipartisan group of 25 cosponsors on this critical issue.

Timely ocean and coastal data is essential to keeping our coastal economies, like the one I represent, running and to protecting our communities.

H.R. 2294 reauthorizes the IOOS program that delivers that invaluable data and that helps us with everything from our emergency preparedness to our fisheries management programs in the States that we represent. IOOS helps to track changing ocean temperatures, measure wave activity, predict harmful algal blooms, monitor sea level rise, and improve storm surge forecasts that help emergency managers make life-saving evacuation decisions.

IOOS provides data to States, ports, the Coast Guard, FEMA, and any other business or agency that needs real-time access to ocean conditions.

With natural disasters causing an estimated \$12 billion in average annual damages, sustained investment in IOOS remains essential to ensure accurate weather and climate forecasts that protect our infrastructure, public safety, and economic resilience.

This bipartisan bill extends IOOS through 2030, strengthening partnerships with regional ocean observation systems and ensuring that critical ocean data continues to flow to Federal, State, and local decisionmakers who depend on it.

From the Gulf Coast to the golden coast of the Chesapeake Bay, when Republicans and Democrats work together on science-based solutions, we can protect both our natural resources and the communities that depend on them.

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

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Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. EZELL), the lead sponsor of this bill.

Mr. EZELL. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of my bill H.R. 2294, the Reauthorization of Integrated Coastal and Ocean Observation System Act of 2009.

This bill ensures the continued operation of the Integrated Ocean Observing System, which is a nationwide network of buoys, radars, underwater glid-

ers, and forecasting models that collect critical ocean and coastal data. These tools help provide real-time information on ocean conditions, weather patterns, coastal hazards, and marine ecosystems.

This information is essential for a wide range of Americans who rely on our oceans and coastlines every single day. It supports commercial fishermen, shipping and maritime operations, offshore energy development, hurricane forecasting, and coastal disaster preparedness. It also helps Federal, State, and local officials make informed decisions to protect both lives and livelihoods along our coasts.

For coastal States like mine, Mississippi, and many others across the country, accurate and timely ocean data is not a luxury. It is a necessity. When hurricanes threaten our shores, when fishermen head out to work, or when communities are preparing for coastal flooding, the data collected through the Integrated Ocean Observing System helps ensure they have the best information available to stay safe and make informed decisions.

My bill simply reauthorizes this important program and strengthens coordination between Federal agencies and regional observing systems so that the data being collected is more accessible and more reliable and more useful for the communities that depend on it.

This is a bipartisan commonsense measure that supports science, strengthens coastal resilience, and ensures we continue to have the tools necessary to understand and respond to changing ocean conditions.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues and Chairman WESTERMAN for helping get this bill on the floor. I urge my colleagues to vote "yes."

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

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. FONG).

Mr. FONG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of my bill, the Save Our Sequoias Act. I thank Chairman WESTERMAN for his leadership and collaboration.

I introduced this legislation with my California colleague Representative SCOTT PETERS to safeguard our remaining giant Sequoia groves, the most in my district, by cutting red tape and restoring resilience to our forests.

Giant sequoias, the world's largest trees, are only naturally found in 70 groves across 37,000 acres in California.

Unfortunately, over the last century, fire suppression practices and forest mismanagement have led to a dangerous buildup of fuels, which, in combination with increasingly intense wildfires, has caused the unparalleled destruction of these iconic trees.

In the last 5 years alone, there has been a nearly 20 percent loss of our giant sequoias. That is not to mention that at its current pace it would take

the U.S. Forest Service 52 years to treat just the 19 most at-risk giant sequoia groves.

Our giant sequoias are a true national treasure. We cannot afford to let burdensome regulations prevent us from safeguarding them.

My bipartisan bill would enhance interagency coordination between State, Federal, and Tribal partners, accelerate forest restoration efforts, and provide important science-based resources to land managers to protect these ancient trees from further destruction.

The world's only giant sequoia groves provide critical economic, scientific, and cultural benefits for our local Tribes, researchers, and our communities. Speeding up fuels reductions and wildfire mitigation practices in these remaining groves will boost the resilience of our forests and protect these giants for years to come.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the 29 Members from both sides of the aisle who cosponsored this bill, as well as the staff on the House Committee on Natural Resources for helping to pass this important bipartisan bill, which would ensure California's remaining sequoias endure for generations to come.

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

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

This bill provides communities with real-time data and information about the ocean and coastal areas and the Great Lakes. This helps them remain strong and resilient even in the face of natural disasters.

Once again, I thank Mr. EZELL for his diligent work and attention to this issue. It is incredibly important to coastal communities and incredibly important to those who rely on the data and scientific information that comes from our great waterways.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the passage of H.R. 2294, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WITTMAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2294, 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.

SHIVWITS BAND OF PAIUTES JURISDICTIONAL CLARITY ACT

Mr. WITTMAN. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3073) to confer jurisdiction on the State of Utah with respect to civil causes of action arising on or within the Indian lands of the Shivwits Band of Paiutes, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3073

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 “Shivwits Band of Paiutes Jurisdictional Clarity Act”.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) **INDIAN LANDS.**—The term “Indian lands” means lands of the Shivwits Band of Paiutes that are—

(A) held in trust by the United States for the benefit of the Shivwits Band of Paiutes; or

(B) subject to a restriction against alienation imposed by the United States.

(2) **SHIVWITS BAND OF PAIUTES.**—The term “Shivwits Band of Paiutes” means—

(A) the Shivwits Band of Paiutes, a federally recognized Indian Tribe restored by Congress pursuant to the Paiute Indian Tribe of Utah Restoration Act (Public Law 96-227; 94 Stat. 317);

(B) the recognized governing body of the Shivwits Band of Paiutes;

(C) any Shivwits Tribal enterprise, including any commercial activity, business, or entity managed, controlled, or operated by the Shivwits Band of Paiutes, and any subsidiaries thereto; and

(D) any corporation chartered by the Shivwits Band of Paiutes under section 17 of the Act of June 18, 1934 (commonly known as the “Indian Reorganization Act”) (48 Stat. 988, chapter 576; 25 U.S.C. 5124), and any subsidiaries thereto.

SEC. 3. STATE CIVIL JURISDICTION.

The State of Utah shall have jurisdiction over any civil cause of action—

(1) to which the Shivwits Band of Paiutes is a party; and

(2) that arises on or within the Indian lands.

SEC. 4. FEDERAL COURT JURISDICTION.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Any contract or agreement, including a lease, affecting or arising on the Indian lands, or to which the Shivwits Band of Paiutes is a party, shall be considered within the meaning of “commerce” as defined in section 1 of title 9, United States Code.

(b) **CAUSES OF ACTION.**—Any cause of action arising from any contract or agreement, including a lease, affecting or arising on the Indian lands, or to which the Shivwits Band of Paiutes is a party, shall be deemed to be a civil cause of action arising under the Constitution, laws, or treaties of the United States within the meaning of section 1331 of title 28, United States Code.

SEC. 5. SOVEREIGN IMMUNITY NOT ABROGATED.

Nothing in this Act abrogates—

(1) the sovereign immunity of the Shivwits Band of Paiutes from unconsented suit; or

(2) the authority of the Shivwits Band of Paiutes to waive that sovereign immunity.

SEC. 6. SHIVWITS BAND OF PAIUTES LEASING AUTHORITY.

Subsection (a) of the first section of the Act of August 9, 1955 (69 Stat. 539, chapter 615; 25 U.S.C. 415(a)), is amended, in the second sentence, by inserting “, land held in trust for the Shivwits Band of Paiutes” after “land held in trust for the Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. KIM). Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WITTMAN) and the gentlewoman from Maryland (Ms. ELFRETH) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WITTMAN. Madam 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. 3073, the bill now under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Madam Speaker, in 2022, a 10th Circuit Court of Appeals case studied the Shivwits Band of Paiutes accordingly due to the opportunity for economic development when the court ruled that Utah State courts lacked the jurisdiction to hear cases involving on-reservation conduct. If an issue were to arise between the Tribe and an outside investor, there would be no guarantee that a State court could intervene. As a result, outside groups have grown hesitant to work with the Shivwits Band.

H.R. 3073, the Shivwits Band of Paiutes Jurisdictional Clarity Act introduced by Ms. MALOY of Utah would clarify in statute that the Utah State courts hold jurisdiction over civil cases involving members of the Shivwits Band on their Tribal land. In addition, this legislation would follow congressional precedent by amending the Long-Term Leasing Act to allow the Shivwits Band to lease land held in trust for up to 99 years.

I commend Ms. MALOY for her work on behalf of her constituency. I support this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. ELFRETH. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of H.R. 3073, offered by my friend from Utah Representative MALOY.

H.R. 3073 would confer civil jurisdiction to the State of Utah over actions arising on or within the lands of the Shivwits Band of Paiutes. Under this legislation, these civil causes of action could be heard in Utah State courts, providing both the Tribe and outside partners with a clear forum to resolve disputes.

The bill also amends the Long-Term Leasing Act to allow the Shivwits Band to lease their lands for up to 99 years. Similar amendments have been enacted for a number of other Tribes, and this bill provides the Shivwits Band with that same authority.

Madam Speaker, I urge support for the bill to help address challenges the Shivwits Band has faced in pursuing economic development opportunities, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WITTMAN. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Utah (Ms. MALOY), the lead sponsor of this bill.

Ms. MALOY. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of my bill, H.R. 3073, the Shivwits Band of Paiutes Jurisdictional Clarity Act.

This narrow bill gives a Tribal neighbor a fair opportunity to pursue economic development and build a stronger future for their people.

My office has worked closely with leaders from the Shivwits Band of Paiutes to understand the challenges they are facing. This legislation is the result of those conversations and reflects the solutions the Tribe believes will help them move forward while serving their members.

The Shivwits Band wants to pursue economic opportunities on their lands, but the recent decision from the 10th Circuit Court of Appeals that has already been mentioned placed new barriers in the way, complicating, maybe even threatening, their economic plans.

The court held that even when a Tribe clearly waives sovereign immunity in a contract and consents to State court jurisdiction, State courts may still lack authority to hear disputes unless a series of additional requirements are met.

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These requirements are not easy to meet.

Those hurdles created uncertainty for the Shivwits Band in attracting potential business partners. Without clarity for business partners, opportunities for the Band would be lost. Leaders from the Shivwits Band have spoken clearly on the need for a better path forward.

This is what they said in their own words:

“The Shivwits Tribe and local community leaders have found a new way forward: collaboration instead of conflict, and cooperation instead of contention. This bill allows the Tribe to align interests with potential business partners that can help drive economic development on Reservations.”

H.R. 3073 provides that path forward. It clarifies that Utah State courts can resolve certain civil disputes involving the Shivwits Band when those disputes arise from agreements where the Band has clearly and voluntarily waived sovereign immunity.

At the same time, the bill fully preserves Tribal sovereignty. Nothing in this legislation forces the Tribe to waive immunity. The choice remains entirely theirs.

Madam Speaker, for those reasons, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 3073.

Mr. WITTMAN. Madam Speaker, I have no further requests for time. I am prepared to close, and I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. ELFRETH. Madam Speaker, in closing, I, again, commend my colleague from Utah. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WITTMAN. Madam Speaker, H.R. 3073 ensures that the Shivwits Band of Paiutes' sovereignty remains intact, while offering legal certainty in economic development with outside investors. Additionally, the Tribe would

be able to lease its land for up to 99 years, as Congress has previously done for many other Tribes, creating new economic opportunities for the Tribe, which are well-deserved.

Madam Speaker, I thank Ms. MALOY for her work. I urge the passage of H.R. 3073, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WITTMAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3073.

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.

MITIGATION ACTION AND WATERMEN SUPPORT ACT OF 2026

Mr. WITTMAN. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4294) to direct the Secretary of Commerce to establish a pilot program with respect to the sale of blue catfish caught within the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4294

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 "Mitigation Action and Watermen Support Act of 2026" or the "MAWS Act of 2026".

SEC. 2. BLUE CATFISH PILOT PROGRAM.

Section 307 of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Authorization Act of 1992 (15 U.S.C. 1511d) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsection (e) as subsection (f); and

(2) by inserting after subsection (d) the following:

“(e) BLUE CATFISH PILOT PROGRAM.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, utilizing and coordinating with applicable programs and activities described in subsection (b)(3), shall carry out a pilot program to enter into cooperative agreements with covered entities for such covered entities to purchase, in accordance with paragraph (3)—

“(A) from watermen, blue catfish caught within the Chesapeake Bay Watershed by such watermen; and

“(B) from seafood processors, such blue catfish purchased by seafood processors from such watermen.

“(2) APPLICATIONS.—To be eligible to enter into a cooperative agreement under the pilot program, a covered entity shall submit to the Secretary an application in such form, at such time, and containing such information as the Secretary determines appropriate.

“(3) USE OF AMOUNTS.—A covered entity that enters into a cooperative agreement under the pilot program—

“(A) shall use any amounts awarded under such cooperative agreement to purchase blue catfish from watermen or seafood processors for at least the amount determined by the Secretary under paragraph (5); and

“(B) may use not more than 15 percent of such amounts to offset the cost to transport such blue catfish to manufacturing or processing facilities.

“(4) WATERMAN AND SEAFOOD PROCESSOR ELIGIBILITY.—To be eligible to sell a blue catfish

under the pilot program to a covered entity that enters into a cooperative agreement under the pilot program—

“(A) a waterman shall certify to such covered entity that the waterman caught the blue catfish within the Chesapeake Bay Watershed; and

“(B) a seafood processor shall certify to such covered entity that the seafood processor purchased the blue catfish from a waterman who caught the blue catfish within the Chesapeake Bay Watershed.

“(5) DETERMINATION OF MINIMUM PURCHASE AMOUNT.—With respect to blue catfish sold by watermen or seafood processors under the pilot program, the Secretary shall determine the minimum price per pound, taking into consideration—

“(A) market factors;

“(B) feedback from watermen, seafood processors, and covered entities that participate in the pilot program, if available; and

“(C) differentiation of price points for fillet and byproduct.

“(6) ABUNDANCE BASELINE.—

“(A) MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this subsection, the Secretary shall seek to enter into a memorandum of understanding with eligible non-Federal partners—

“(i) to compile existing non-Federal data necessary for the Secretary—

“(I) to develop under subparagraph (B) an estimate of the abundance of blue catfish in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed; and

“(II) to provide the information described in subparagraphs (A) through (D) of paragraph (7) in the report required under that paragraph; and

“(ii) to adjust the collection by such eligible non-Federal partners of relevant data such that such data can be used as described in subclauses (I) and (II) of clause (i).

“(B) ABUNDANCE ESTIMATES.—Not later than September 30, 2027, and annually thereafter through fiscal year 2032, the Secretary shall develop, pursuant to the memorandum of understanding described in subparagraph (A), and make publicly available on the website of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration an estimate of the abundance of blue catfish in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed.

“(7) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date on which the pilot program terminates in accordance with paragraph (9), the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report regarding the pilot program, including the following information:

“(A) A summary of available information regarding the size and spawning stock biomass of the blue catfish population in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed prior to and at the conclusion of the pilot program, using the most recent data available.

“(B) A summary of available data regarding the size distribution and diet of the blue catfish population in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed during and at the conclusion of the pilot program.

“(C) The number of blue catfish and the amount of blue catfish (measured in pounds) caught by watermen who participate in the pilot program during the pilot program.

“(D) The effects of the pilot program on species other than the blue catfish in and the environment of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, to the extent known.

“(E) The economic effect of the pilot program on watermen who participate in the pilot program, including—

“(i) the revenue generated by each such waterman by selling blue catfish under the pilot program; and

“(ii) catch data with respect to and revenue generated from other species fished by such watermen during the pilot program.

“(F) The market response to the pilot program, including—

“(i) the total amount awarded under the pilot program to covered entities that enter into cooperative agreements under the pilot program; and

“(ii) trends in the types of such covered entities.

“(G) With respect to the manufacturing or processing practices of each covered entity that enters into a cooperative agreement under the pilot program, information regarding whether each such covered entity—

“(i) uses internal or third-party manufacturers or processors;

“(ii) uses, for each type of food product produced by the covered entity, whole fish, fillet, or byproduct; and

“(iii) if the covered entity uses only part of the fish, sells the remainder to third parties.

“(H) How each covered entity that enters into a cooperative agreement under the pilot program transports blue catfish purchased by the covered entity, including—

“(i) whether the covered entity freezes such blue catfish;

“(ii) how often the covered entity picks up such blue catfish; and

“(iii) whether the covered entity uses a seafood transport company that is local to the Chesapeake Bay Watershed.

“(I) Policy recommendations regarding—

“(i) the continuation of the pilot program in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed; and

“(ii) the expansion of the pilot program to other watersheds, including—

“(I) best practices;

“(II) specific recommendations regarding invasive species of carp in the Mississippi rivershed;

“(III) with respect to other aquatic species and watersheds that may benefit from the pilot program; and

“(IV) other strategies with respect to the mitigation of aquatic invasive species for Congress to consider piloting.

“(J) Additional data necessary for Congress to shape related policy, including—

“(i) data—

“(I) the Secretary was unable to collect; or

“(II) is not collected by eligible non-Federal partners; and

“(ii) recommendations for congressional action to support the collection of relevant data sets.

“(8) BRIEFINGS.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this subsection and quarterly thereafter until the date on which the pilot program terminates in accordance with paragraph (9), the Secretary shall provide to the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate briefings on the status of the implementation of this subsection.

“(9) DURATION.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall carry out the pilot program during the 2-year period that begins on the first day of the fiscal year immediately following the later of the fiscal year in which the Secretary—

“(i) first makes publicly available the first abundance estimate under paragraph (6); and

“(ii) issues guidance under subparagraph (B).

“(B) CRITERIA.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this subsection, the Secretary, in consultation with the Chesapeake Bay Program Invasive Catfish Workgroup and the heads of relevant Federal agencies with experience administering similar programs, shall issue guidance for the pilot program.

“(10) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

“(A) ANIMAL FEED.—The term ‘animal feed’—

“(i) means an article that is intended for use—

“(I) for food for an animal other than man; and

“(II) as a substantial source of nutrients in the diet of such an animal; and

“(ii) is not limited to a mixture intended to be the sole ration of such an animal.

“(B) AQUACULTURE FEED.—The term ‘aquaculture feed’—

“(i) means an article that is intended for use—