

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. CRANE for his thoughtful and aggressive efforts to make sure we can restore the Grand Canyon National Park to its former glory and for his work in highlighting the incredible stress that this places on the communities there.

I thank him, too, for offering this legislation at a key point to make sure that the right things happen so that people in his district can indeed get back to what they know is highlighting a great, great national treasure.

Madam Speaker, H.R. 5729 gives the National Park Service limited accountable authorities to expedite the restoration and rebuilding process following last year's Dragon Bravo fire so that the treasured North Rim of the Grand Canyon can fully reopen and do so safely.

I thank Representative CRANE once again for his leadership on this effort and for his insightfulness. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this legislation.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WITTMAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5729, 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.

□ 1730

NATIONAL EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES MEMORIAL EXTENSION ACT

Mr. WITTMAN. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2196) to provide for an extension of the legislative authority of the National Emergency Medical Services Memorial Foundation to establish a commemorative work in the District of Columbia and its environs, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2196

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 "National Emergency Medical Services Memorial Extension Act".

SEC. 2. EXTENSION OF LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY FOR MEMORIAL ESTABLISHMENT.

Section 1(b) of Public Law 115-275 is amended by striking the period at the end and inserting ", except that any reference in section 8903(e) of that chapter to the expiration at the end of or extension beyond a seven-year period shall be considered to be a reference to an expiration on or extension beyond the date that is 7 years after the date of enactment of the National

Emergency Medical Services Memorial Extension Act."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. 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 include extraneous material on H.R. 2196, 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, I rise today in support of H.R. 2196, the National Emergency Medical Services Memorial Extension Act, which is sponsored by Representative HUDSON.

Emergency medical service providers are often the first people on the scene in a moment of crisis. They respond to accidents, natural disasters, public health emergencies, and everyday calls for help. More than 1 million Americans serve as EMS providers across the country under one shared mission: to save lives and protect the public.

Despite that service, there is still no permanent memorial in our Nation's Capital dedicated to EMS professionals who have lost their lives in the line of duty.

In 2018, Congress authorized the National Emergency Medical Services Memorial Foundation to establish such a memorial. Since then, the foundation has moved through the Federal approval process and is now working on site selection and environmental review. Like many memorial projects, progress has been steady but slow due to design approvals and the need to raise private funds.

Unfortunately, the authorization for this important memorial expired last year, and the foundation needs this authorization extended to finally complete its mission.

Representative HUDSON's bill provides a straightforward solution. His legislation extends the foundation's legislative authority for an additional 7 years, allowing their work to continue so that this memorial can finally be completed.

Importantly, this memorial will remain funded entirely through private contributions, with no cost to the taxpayers. This legislation also does not expand the project or change its purpose. It simply ensures that the effort to honor fallen EMS providers can be finished.

Madam Speaker, I thank Representative HUDSON for his leadership on this bill. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 2196, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. ELFRETH. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 2196, offered by my colleague, Representative HUDSON of North Carolina, which provides the National Emergency Medical Services Memorial Foundation with a straightforward extension to establish the National Emergency Medical Services Memorial right here in Washington, D.C.

This is a deeply meaningful and important project that deserves our full support. Congress first authorized the establishment of this memorial in 2018, and the foundation's work to finalize its design and construction is almost complete.

Unfortunately, the initial 7-year authorization recently expired. Today, this bill allows us to take the simple step and let the foundation continue its work to honor the service and sacrifice of the medical emergency service community for generations to come.

Every year, EMS providers around the Nation respond to millions of calls, ranging from health emergencies to mass shootings. Whether they serve at the Federal, State, local, private, volunteer, military, or Tribal level, these brave men and women are dedicated to commitment and service.

The memorial will be a small token of our appreciation for those who help others when they need it most. It is the least we can do to give to these heroes, who serve our communities around the Nation and across the globe, a place of honor in our Nation's Capital.

I look forward to the completion of this meaningful memorial, and I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this legislation.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

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

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

Madam Speaker, the National Emergency Medical Services Memorial Extension Act provides the time needed to complete a project that honors the service and sacrifice of EMS providers without imposing a cost on taxpayers.

Representative HUDSON's legislation keeps the memorial on track and ensures that EMS professionals are recognized alongside other public safety heroes in our Nation's Capital.

Once again, I thank Representative HUDSON for his leadership on this effort and for his dedication to those who serve this Nation humbly and selflessly.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting 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 Virginia (Mr. WITTMAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2196, 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.

POST-DISASTER REFORESTATION AND RESTORATION ACT OF 2025

Mr. WITTMAN. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 528) to require the Secretary of the Interior to carry out a program for Post-Disaster Reforestation and Restoration 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. 528

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 "Post-Disaster Reforestation and Restoration Act".

SEC. 2. POST-DISASTER REFORESTATION AND RESTORATION PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act and annually thereafter, the Secretary, in coordination with the heads of the covered agencies, shall identify covered lands requiring reforestation and restoration following unplanned disturbances that are unlikely to experience natural regeneration without assistance.

(b) PRIORITY PROJECTS.—In consultation with the heads of covered agencies, the Secretary—

(1) shall propose a list of priority projects for reforestation and restoration for each fiscal year;

(2) may carry out priority projects through—

(A) competitively awarded grants;

(B) contracts;

(C) contracts established under the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5301 et seq.); and

(D) cooperative agreements, to be awarded in accordance with applicable requirements established by the Secretary; and

(3) may support any grant contract or cooperative agreement that may be necessary to ensure adequate and appropriate seed and seedling availability to further the objectives of priority projects.

(c) OUTREACH.—To fulfill requirements of this section the heads of covered agencies shall conduct outreach to—

(1) Indian Tribes;

(2) States;

(3) territories;

(4) units of local government;

(5) Alaska Native organizations;

(6) Native Hawaiian organizations;

(7) institutions of higher education;

(8) Federal agencies with jurisdiction over Federal land adjoining or proximal to priority projects; and

(9) other stakeholders as determined by the Secretary.

(d) REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.—Not later than 2 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter, the Secretary shall submit to the relevant Congressional Committees a report that includes the following:

(1) An accounting of all covered lands requiring reforestation and restoration.

(2) A list of priority projects and implementation progress to address reforestation and restoration objectives identified.

(3) An accounting of grants, contracts, and cooperative agreements established in furtherance of priority projects.

(4) Outreach efforts by covered agencies to advance priority projects.

(5) Assessments of, and recommendations relating to seed, seedling, and implementation gaps to advance priority projects and opportunities to establish dedicated funding necessary to address any backlog of reforestation and restoration needs.

(e) SUNSET.—The authority provided under this section shall terminate on the date that is 7 years after the date of enactment of this Act.

(f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) COVERED AGENCY.—The term "covered agency" means the National Park Service, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, the Bureau of Land Management, the Bureau of Reclamation, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

(2) COVERED LANDS.—The term "covered lands" means—

(A) any Federal land or interest in land administered by a covered agency; or

(B) Indian Forest Land or Rangeland.

(3) INDIAN FOREST LAND OR RANGELAND.—The term "Indian Forest Land or Rangeland" means land that—

(A) is held in trust by, or with a restriction against alienation by, the United States for an Indian Tribe or a member of an Indian Tribe; and

(B)(i)(I) is Indian forest land (as defined in section 304 of the National Indian Forest Resources Management Act (25 U.S.C. 3103)); or

(ii) has a cover of grasses, brush, or any similar vegetation; or

(ii) formerly had a forest cover or vegetative cover that is capable of restoration.

(4) INDIAN TRIBE.—The term "Indian Tribe" means any Indian or Alaska Native tribe, band, nation, pueblo, village, or community individually identified (including parenthetically) in the list published most recently as of the date of enactment of this Act pursuant to section 104 of the Federally Recognized Indian Tribe List Act of 1994 (25 U.S.C. 5131).

(5) NATURAL REGENERATION.—The term "natural regeneration" has the meaning given the term in section (e)(4) of the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 (U.S.C. 36 1601).

(6) REFORESTATION.—The term "reforestation" has the meaning given the term in section (e)(4) of the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 (U.S.C. 36 1601).

(7) RESTORATION.—The term "restoration" means assisting the recovery of an ecosystem that has been degraded, damaged, or destroyed, including the reestablishment of appropriate plant species composition and community structure.

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

(9) UNPLANNED DISTURBANCE.—The term "unplanned disturbance" means any unplanned disturbance that disrupts ecosystem structure or composition and may include a wildfire, an infestation of insects or disease, or a weather event.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WITTMAN) and the gentleman 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 Mem-

bers may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 528, 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, I rise today in support of H.R. 528, the Post-Disaster Reforestation and Restoration Act, sponsored by Representative PETERSEN.

Madam Speaker, this bipartisan legislation, which is also part of the Fix Our Forests Act, would create a post-disaster reforestation and restoration program at the Department of the Interior.

Across the country, catastrophic wildfires are burning hotter and more severely, turning once-pristine landscapes into charred moonscapes. Hurricanes, windstorms, mudslides, and other natural disasters can also leave behind millions of acres of land in need of reforestation.

In many cases, if Federal land managers don't move quickly to replant and restore scorched or uprooted lands, once-lush forests can permanently decay into low-lying scrublands that are unproductive and vulnerable to future fire and erosion.

When these forests disappear, they take with them clean water, wildlife habitat, and the livelihoods of communities that depend on them for recreation and employment. With millions of acres of forests lost to catastrophic wildfires and other disasters, our Federal agencies are bearing the strain of an enormous backlog of replanting and restoration work.

In 2021, Congress passed legislation to partially address the Forest Service's priority reforestation needs, although no similar authority was included for the Department of the Interior. H.R. 528 offers a straightforward solution to tackle the crisis and provides consistency across all Federal land management agencies.

This bill directs agencies within the Department of the Interior to identify priority landscapes most in need of reforestation and to proactively partner with States, Tribes, local communities, and institutions of higher learning to advance high-priority restoration projects.

This bill is a practical, bipartisan way to prioritize vital restoration work that requires immediate action. By allowing Federal agencies to work with trusted partners, we can clear the way for reforestation, get to faster restoration, and serve the communities that rely on healthy, resilient forests.

I thank Representative PETERSEN for her work on this bill, as well as for her work on Fix Our Forests Act.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.