Congress authorized the establishment of a 23,000 acre national wildlife refuge in south San Francisco Bay in 1972. On October 28, 1988, President Reagan signed Public Law 100–556 authorizing the acquisition of an additional 20,000 acres, for a total of 43,000 acres. The Fish and Wildlife Service has completed the environmental assessment process for the refuge additions, and work is underway to acquire property for this regional resource.

The objectives of the refuge are to protect the wildlife resources of the south San Francisco Bay area, provide wildlife-oriented recreation, and preserve a natural area in close proximity to a large urban center. The marshes, mudflats, open water, and salt ponds form an ecosystem which supports a rich diversity of fish and wildlife. It is a major nesting and feeding area for waterfowl and shorebirds, hauling out ground for the harbor seal and habitat for three endangered species. The refuge has more than 300,000 visitors annually participating in the many opportunities for fishing, animal and bird observation, research and environmental education.

This great bay area resources exists, in no small part, thanks to the tireless work of Don Edwards, and it is altogether right and fitting that he be memorialized by having it named in his honor. Both those who were fortunate enough to have served with Don, and those who never got to know this consummate legislator and statesman, pay tribute to a life of public service by voting to pass this legislation and, in doing so, we help to honor this House and our profession as legislators.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Mississippi [Mr. MONTGOMERY].

Mr. MONTGOMERY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me the time. I certainly want to congratulate the committee and certainly know this bill will pass with a unanimous vote in naming the San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge after Dan Edwards, a great friend of ours.

Mr. Speaker, I had the pleasure of serving with Don Edwards for a number of years. He was a wonderful Member, a fine friend of ours. He is enjoying life in traveling and visiting friends.

Mr. Speaker, he was the vice chairman of the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs when I was chairman of this great committee. He was a person easy to work with. In fact he could have been the chairman of the Veterans Affairs Committee but he had to take another committee assignment.

I wish that sometime that we could name something else for Don Edwards in the veterans' field, because he was very supportive of all veterans' programs. I am proud to have had the privilege of working with him, so I congratulate the committee, and I rise in strong support for naming this refuge the Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge.

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from New Mexico [Mr. RICHARDSON].

(Mr. RICHARDSON asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, I want to add to those who thought that Don Edwards was one of the finest individual Members ever to set foot in this House of Representatives; his decency, compassion in many fields. I just think this is an important tribute. I want to congratulate the chairman and the ranking member for taking this action.

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I would just like to say that those of us from the bay area certainly believe that we honor our area by naming this grand refuge after Don Edwards, for all of his work.

We also believe, and I think those who had the pleasure of serving with Don and his wife Edie believe that we honor our institution when we think of the grace and the courage that they both brought to public life, in their combined service in and on behalf of so many people who strongly needed the attention of the Government to help make their lives better. People knew that you could always call on Don Edwards and on Edie to provide a voice, to provide support, to provide commitment.

So this is a very proud day for those of us who served with Don and Edie, and certainly those of us from the San Francisco Bay area and from California, as we think we honor ourselves as an institution and Members of the institution and our region with this naming.

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

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I can only echo what has been said about Donny Edwards. He called me DONNY YOUNG, he was Donny Edwards. In fact, I had an amendment to the bill. I was going to strike out Edwards and put ''Young'' after ''Don'' in each one of them. I am confident that would kill the bill for sure.

But in reality, I would like to suggest that he was an asset to this House when he served, the time that he served with distinction. I know this area, being from California, and being much wiser in going to Alaska. I recognize the importance of this area.

This is a tribute to Mr. Edwards and his support. Maybe someday after I have left this great House, they will be able to take and name the refuge after me.

Just keep that in mind, my fellow colleagues.

I again want to express my support for this legislation in recognition of a good friend that left here. Although he and I were not many times on the same sides of issues, he was a gentleman and indeed he brought a great deal of respect to this House.

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

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, again, I want to thank the gentleman from Alaska [Mr. YOUNG] for all his help and cooperation.

Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SAXTON. Mr. Speaker, in 1972, Congressman Don Edwards sponsored legislation to establish the San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge. In subsequent years, the Congressman was successful in securing funds to acquire land for the refuge and to expand the boundaries of that unit.

The San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge is more than 21,000 acres, it is a key wintering area for diving ducks along the Pacific flyway, and it supports hundreds of thousands of shorebirds. Furthermore, the refuge is comprised of valuable wetlands located around the bay and it is heavily visited by more than 250,000 people who enjoy its facilities each year. The San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge is the largest urban refuge in the United States.

H.R. 1253 was introduced by then Representative Norm Mineta on March 15, 1995. It was the subject of a subcommittee hearing on May 25, and the sole purpose of this legislation is to rename the refuge as the Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge is recognition of the former Congressman's commitment and dedication to its success.

Mr. Speaker, I support this bill. It is a fitting tribute to a man who tirelessly worked for the good of this refuge for over 20 years. I urge an ''aye'' vote on H.R. 1253.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Alaska [Mr. YOUNG] that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1253.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

## GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill just passed.

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

There was no objection.

## NATIONAL PARK AND NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE SYSTEMS FREEDOM ACT OF 1995

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2677) to require the Secretary of the Interior to accept from a State donations of services of State employees to perform, in a period of Government budgetary shutdown, otherwise

authorized functions in any unit of the National Wildlife Refuge System or the National Park System, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 2677

*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 Park and National Wildlife Refuge Systems Freedom Act of 1995''.

**SEC. 2. REQUIREMENT FOR SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR TO ACCEPT STATE DONATIONS OF STATE EMPLOYEE SERVICES.**

(a) REQUIREMENT.—Notwithstanding section 1342 of title 31, United States Code, the Secretary shall accept from any State donations of services of qualified State employees to perform in a Unit, in a period of Government budgetary shutdown, functions otherwise authorized to be performed by Department of Interior personnel.

(b) LIMITATIONS.—An employee of a State may perform functions under this section only within areas of a Unit that are located in the State.

(c) EXCLUSION FROM TREATMENT AS FEDERAL EMPLOYEES.—A State employee who performs functions under this section shall not be treated as a Federal employee for purposes of any Federal law relating to pay or benefits for Federal employees.

(d) ANTI-DEFICIENCY ACT NOT APPLICABLE.—Section 1341(a) of title 31, United States Code, shall not apply with respect to the acceptance of services of, and the performance of functions by, qualified State employees under this section.

(e) DEFINITIONS.—In the section—

(1) the term ''Government budgetary shutdown'' means a period during which there are no amounts available for the operation of the National Wildlife Refuge System and the National Park System, because of—

(A) a failure to enact an annual appropriations bill for the period for the Department of the Interior; and

(B) a failure to enact a bill (or joint resolution) continuing the availability of appropriations for the Department of the Interior for a temporary period pending the enactment of such an annual appropriations bill;

(2) the term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of the Interior; and

(3) the term ''Unit'' means a unit of—

(A) the National Wildlife Refuge System, or

(B) the National Park System.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Alaska [Mr. YOUNG] and the gentleman from California [Mr. MILLER] each will be recognized for 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Alaska [Mr. YOUNG].

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Mr. YOUNG of Alaska asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, it is unfortunate this legislation has to be on the floor, and I say has to be on the floor today.

Mr. Speaker, last month's partial Government shutdown effectively closed the entire National Park System and the National Wildlife Refuge System. For the first time in the history that I can remember, in 24 years, this has occurred. In the process it locked out thousands of visitors who had paid for the parks and paid for the refuges, hundreds that had paid for the refuges, supported by the hunters, fishermen, and bird watchers seeking to enjoy our parks and refuges, by an action of the Secretary of the Interior, by in fact saying the nonessential workers had to go home so we had to shut it down. If they were nonessential then, what are they today?

To prevent the closure of the Grand Canyon National Park, Arizona Governor Fife Symington made a commonsense proposal which would have allowed the park to operate during a shutdown with State employees. Unfortunately, the proposal was rejected by the Interior Department. So visitors from around the world and across the country who came to see the Grand Canyon were locked out.

□ 1615

Arizona was not alone in its effort to keep Federal lands open to the public. As the gentlewoman from Arkansas will soon tell you, her State and Mississippi had an agreement with the regional director of Fish and Wildlife to operate certain refuges during the shutdown.

I want to stress this, refuges are managed by the States today, under the agreement with the Department of the Interior. But this agreement was rejected by the department's lawyers in the District of Columbia under the direction of Secretary Babbitt.

In a bipartisan effort to help States in an effort to keep the national parks and refuges open during the Government shutdown, I introduced H.R. 2677, the National Parks and National Wildlife System Freedom Act; this bill merely requires the Interior Department to accept, not require, but for them to accept the services of qualified State employees to operate parks and refuges during a Government shutdown. My bill is very similar to H.R. 2706, introduced by the gentlewoman from Arkansas [Mrs. LINCOLN], which limited itself to continuing hunting programs on refuges. This bill has no budget impact, since the States would be supplying funds to operate the parks and refuges.

Moreover, this bill is voluntary for the States. States do not have to do this. This is not a requirement. But when a State steps forward and says, ''Yes, we can, in the case of a shutdown,'' when the Secretary for the first time in history shut down refuges, when a State comes forward and says, ''We will because we already set the bag limit, we already set the take, we already set the season, we already set the species. We will operate these refuges.''

The bill does not address the issues of liability, which you will hear later. The State employees are stepping into the shoes of Federal employees of allowing our States who normally operate the parks and refuges, and, as a result, the standard liability rules will apply. By the way, when was the last time there was any lawsuit against the Federal Government in a refuge or a park? I hope someone will answer that. I cannot remember it, nor have I seen it; in fact, if it occurs, it does come to my mind maybe we ought to put something else on the endangered species, and that would possibly be the legal profession.

We will hear from some in the minority who are concerned about the expedited process or procedures used to bring this bill to the floor today. I do have some sympathy with that. The full Committee on Resources held a 2½ hour hearing on this bill about last week with the minority members participating very actively. Because of the sense of urgency involved to get this bill to the House and Senate before a possible, and I say possible, Government shutdown in 4 days, it is imperative this bill be on the floor no later than today. As a result, no markup was held.

Under the rules, we can bring the bills to the floor and allow our States to keep the parks and refuges open and require the expedited process to be used.

The bill has bipartisan support. It has been endorsed by the Western Governors' Association, which passed a resolution of support. It is also supported by the Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus.

This is a commonsense proposal to help prevent our constituents from being locked out of parks and refuges during future Government shutdowns.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, if I may say, this bill would not be necessary if this Secretary of the Interior had acted accordingly. Yes, sometimes we have shut down our monuments. Yes, we have shut down some of our parks. When a Governor steps forward and says because of the State activity because of the deadlock between the President and the Congress, let us have the opportunity, but more offensive to me is when a State now has the authority to manage fish and wildlife on a refuge to have one person, one person to say all nonessential employees go home, we are going to shut down these refuges regardless of what the State has done in the past. This legislation is voluntary. It just requires the Secretary to accept a proposal from the State official as is offered to the Secretary of the Interior.

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

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from New Mexico [Mr. RICHARDSON].

(Mr. RICHARDSON asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, I oppose this bill, and as the chairman knows, I have given him some support

lately, but not this time. This is a bad bill.

Mr. Speaker, why do thousands of Americans visit our national parks every year? The answer is because they appreciate and treasure our parks. Last year 270,000 Americans came to our parks. And why do those thousands of Americans appreciate our parks? The reason is because they are successfully managed.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. RICHARDSON. I yield to the gentleman from Alaska.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. I want to correct a statement. You said, 270,000?

Mr. RICHARDSON. That is correct, 270 million.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. There you go, 270 million.

Mr. RICHARDSON. I thank the gentleman.

This just reinforces my point. Why is the park so successfully managed? And the reason is because we have trained and experienced employees of the National Park Service who dedicate their lives to maintaining our parks.

So why are we here considering a bill which would entrust our parks to individuals who do not have the training or the skills necessary to manage a national park? Because some, and I will not say everyone on the other side, are rushing legislation to draw attention away from the fact that they are planning to force another Government shutdown.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is well intentioned. But it is going to leave our parks in the hands of individuals who lack training, who lack experience, lack the day-to-day knowledge of how to run our parks.

I have just as many hunters and fishermen as my colleague does, and I have not heard from them about the necessity of this dramatic legislation that we are considering today. Temporary State employees who may work hard in other areas of expertise are simply not going to possess the knowledge of national park regulations and management policies necessary to safely maintain our parks.

The bill also raises many questions, such as who is going to accept liability for any accidents or damage to the parks? The fact is this bill is being brought under suspension without the apparent approval of the ranking member, the gentleman from California [Mr. MILLER], and without properly going through the legislative process. Unless the other side has proof of mismanagement within the National Park Service, then there really is not any reason to fix what is not broken.

It is also interesting to see some of my colleagues who have been pushing for a park closure commission now all of a sudden wanting to try to keep them open.

Mr. Speaker, the bottom line is that this is a bad exercise and a bad excuse to shut down the Government. The only way to keep our parks open is for the Congress to strip the Interior appropriations bill from the unnecessary riders so the President can sign the bill. Only then will the employees of the National Park Service be able to use their expertise to properly manage our parks and keep them open.

Mr. Speaker, let us look at some of the attributes in this bill, one of the provisions. While one Governor is eager to assume management of certain national parks, most State park systems are facing severe budget shortfalls. Even on a temporary basis, assuming management of national parks could cripple State park systems as the administration testified.

This bill leaves many management and liability questions unaddressed. Loose ends could jeopardize visitor safety, impair resource protection, which in the long run would likely create more problems than the bill seeks to solve. This proposed transfer which I understand is temporary, is consistent with the long-term agenda of some who have advocated giving management authority of public lands to State and local entities. This is a principle embodied in H.R. 260, a bill to create a national parks closure commission.

There are nationally significant resources which should not be managed on an ad hoc basis in times of budgetary pressure.

Last, here are some alternatives. What do we do about H.R. 2677 as alternatives? Why do not we all work with the administration to reclassify as essential those National Park Service employees necessary to ensure normal operations at all of our 369 national park areas? Why do we not pass a short-term continuing resolution to fund the Department of Interior until after New Year's Day, and last, break the current impasse, take those riders out, and enact H.R. 1977 as we usually do, the Interior appropriations bill for fiscal year 1996?

My chairman has been on a roll on some good bills lately, but on this one he is not on a roll, and I would urge defeat of this bill.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I may suggest one thing. The President will have a chance to sign an appropriation bill very soon this week. If he vetoes that bill, that means that the parks will not be open. By the way, I say this, this has not happened before. Yes, in some of the monuments, and the refuges are what really concern me the most when the State manages them. This is an example of this administration, the arrogance of this administration, mismanaging the parks that the taxpayers pay for.

As far as who can do it and who cannot do it, I will put up any State park against the Federal parks right now and how they are run. In fact, in California the one park that is being run right is the Redwoods State Park in California, not the National Redwood Park we made at a cost of $1.4 billion. It is poorly attended, poorly managed, poorly visited.

All we are saying, though, if, in fact, this would happen again, there can be differences of opinion between the Congress of the United States and the President of the United States. But no Secretary of the Interior should deprive any taxpayer the ability to visit that which he paid for because they have decided by the will and whim of any one individual that they are going to shut it down. In fact, they shut down concessionaire stands on the Smokey Ridge over here. They shut them down when the concessionaires themselves had a binding contract. They had people come in and said, ''You will shut down.'' It was Gestapo tactics from the very get go.

This bill will stop the Secretary and this administration when the State says, ''We can do it, we will do it, we will pay for it. We are liable, and we are going to keep it open for the American people.''

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. SAXTON].

Mr. SAXTON. Mr. Speaker, as an original cosponsor of H.R. 2677, I am pleased that the House is having an opportunity to debate the merits of the National Parks and National Wildlife Refuge Systems Freedom Act.

Since coming to Congress in 1984, I have proudly represented New Jersey's Third Congressional District, which includes the 40,000 acres of the Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge.

This refuge, which is predominantly an estuarine marsh habitat, is one of the finest in our Nation, and over the years the size of this refuge has increased because of broad public support. Men and women in my district have provided the financial resources to protect this barrier island ecosystem and to acquire the upland forest and fields that have enhanced the biodiversity of the refuge. In addition, thousands of my constituents have enjoyed hunting and fishing on lands that comprise the Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge for generations.

Tuesday, November 14, was a bad day for America and for every person who wanted to visit a national park or national wildlife refuge unit. While my preference would be to complete action on an appropriations bill for the Department of the Interior, there must be a fail-safe or stop-gap procedure in place to avoid another public lands meltdown.

In my judgment, it was ludicrous that the Department of the Interior was unable or unwilling to accept the offer of Governor Symington to keep the Grand Canyon open by using State National Guard troops.

Mr. Speaker, this was just one example of where various State officials expressed willingness to operate our National Parks and Refuges with State employees. Sadly, these offers were rejected.

H.R. 2677 would provide a fail-safe measure and it would help to ensure

that the gates to the Edwin B. Forsythe are never again padlocked and shut in the faces of those Americans who paid for these lands with their hard-earned tax dollars.

Mr. Speaker, I urge an ''aye'' vote on the National Parks and National Wildlife Refuge Systems Freedom Act.

□ 1630

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Arkansas [Mrs. LINCOLN].

(Mrs. LINCOLN asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. LINCOLN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, today I rise to support the purposes behind H.R. 2677. What we experienced in November is not a new phenomenon and there should be a set contingency arrangement for the management of our natural resources should the doors of the Federal Government again close due to the lack of appropriated funds.

I have been involved in the issue because, when the Government shut its doors in November, many of my constituents were refused entrance into the wildlife refuges for a prescheduled deer hunt.

Hunting is one of Arkansas' favorite family pastimes. People take time off work and families plan vacations around hunting trips. Prior to the recent shutdown, refuge managers had scheduled deer hunts at two Arkansas refuges. Hunters in my district went through an extremely competitive permit process, paid $12.50 for each permit, took days off from work, drove up to 6 hours, only to be turned away at the gates of the refuges. Needless to say, the budget crisis in Washington was not of their choosing and they were not happy about the results.

Weeks before the actual shutdown, the Fish and Wildlife Service worked with the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission on an agreement to allow State employees to volunteer their services on the Federal wildlife refuges. This agreement was signed and ready to implement in the event of a Federal Government shutdown. However, days before the actual shutdown, the Interior Department determined that this agreement violated the Antideficiency Act and would not be allowed to go into effect.

I introduced a more narrow bill to reflect a more concise arrangement between the Fish and Wildlife Service and the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission. My bill would mandate a prior agreement between the Federal and State governments before the State could take over the management of hunting on wildlife refuges. The agreement mandated in my bill would ensure that State employees volunteering their services had proper safety training, knowledge of the terrain, knowledge of and adherence to Federal regulations, and ability to protect individuals and the natural resources.

I believe that shutting down the Government is a poor way of running a government or business. Americans who pay their taxes and play by the rules should expect their Federal Government to function properly and perform services that people rely on. They shouldn't be punished for Congress' inability to conduct its housekeeping chores. This bill only takes care of a small portion of the impacts arising from a Federal Government shutdown. However, this approach makes sense because there are currently such arrangements where the States manage Federal lands and historically, the Federal and State governments work closely together in setting hunting seasons.

I understand that we need to move quickly to resolve these issues if we are facing another potential shutdown on December 15. As I believe that there are still outstanding issues that need to be resolved to ensure safety and the protection of our natural resources, I look forward to working with the chairman, the Senate, the Fish and Wildlife Service and the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission on this issue and urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California [Mr. RADANOVICH].

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, I represent the 19th District in California, and in that district is included Yosemite National Park, Kings and Sequoia National Parks. I understand the magnitude of balancing a budget and coming to shutdowns and agreements, where we have really got to get our act together fiscally and budgetarily.

What I do not agree with is when innocent citizens are caught in the way of a government shutdown, such as the communities of Oakhurst, Aubury, Three Rivers, and Mariposa, those communities whose interests depend heavily on tourism generated by these national parks. It is for that reason that I support this bill.

Those involved in government, those that hang their hat on government, government employees, this body, those people are the ones that should suffer the consequences of a Federal Government unable to function and unable to come to agreements on a 7-year balanced budget scored by CBO; not people in small communities whose economies thrive on open national parks. It is for that reason I support this bill.

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Minnesota [Mr. VENTO].

Mr. VENTO. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to this bill. It is an innocent sounding bill. Why can we not do something like leave the parks and the wildlife refuges open when we do not pass the appropriation measure and have them signed into law.

Well, if we do not pass the measure, it has profound impacts. There is not the funding available under the Constitution to in fact fund these functions of Government. Now, I am a little confused today, because in this instance, the new majority, the Republicans, are attempting to cover up and smooth over the problems that the parks and the wildlife refuges are not open under the funding lapse and we will not be able to hunt in them. As a hunter, I am sure that I would be concerned if I had that tag for that deer in Arkansas. I would want to participate and hunt. I understand that particular problem.

But, on the other hand, they want to smooth over that problem, but later today, under the debt ceiling legislation that is to be passed, they want to shut the Government down completely. They want to force Secretary Rubin into relinquishing borrowing authority that he lawfully exercises.

I am confused. What do you want? Do you want to shut the Government down or do you want to keep it open? The fact of the matter is you could answer this particular problem for this park and hunting issue by stripping out all the extraneous riders from the Interior appropriation, the special interest provisions for the mining industry, for the grazing industry, taking out the rules and regulations and the Tongass timber issues in southeast Alaska, which are holding that bill up, and send it to the President without that controversy, come to a compromise and pass and enact it.

You have not done that yet. The G.O.P. hasn't taken step one. That is the reason we are here, nearly 3 months after the date this bill should have been enacted. It is not enacted, and now, we are going to go through this hokey process of trying to suggest that everything will really run just as it is supposed to without funding, because we can enlist the States to run the parks and the wildlife refuges and you can go hunting if you want to, because the Governor from Arizona, for example, is going to be able to operate the park or the refuge.

What happens when someone gets in the Colorado River and they are on the wrong side and the Governor from Utah is not involved with his personnel? This bill does not make it possible to respond. This bill does not work. You have not answered the anti-deficiency questions. You have waived that law. You are fundamentally undercutting the authority and the ability of Congress in terms of controlling the purse strings.

Is that really what this Congress wants to do? I understand the good intention and the practical problems that some of my colleagues are having, but that just underlines the importance of funding. We ought to keep the pressure on to pass the Interior appropriation bill. We ought not to use this as just one more opportunity to gratuitously beat up on Federal employees,

on Park Service employees, on the rangers and stewards of these public lands, such as I heard at last week's hearing.

The issue H.R. 2677 had one day of hearing, after little notice with regard to it, and suggesting we have over 400 park personnel in the Grand Canyon to operate it. The entire State of Arizona has 200 Park Service employees. How are they going to run the Grand Canyon? Not very well, I am afraid. The suggestion then is that we do not need those 400 Federal employees to operate the Grand Canyon, that somehow they are not doing their job or any State could do this and we do not need the Federal Government.

That is what this is all about. This is just a political game, a charade we are playing here, with I think a very important issue, the budget, and something very dear to the hearts of the American people, our parks and wildlife refugees. This bill actually creates more problems than it solves. It reminds me of my experience of being pushed off a deep drop off in a lake by a friend who then prevented my drowning and was hailed a hero. Thanks, but no thanks with that swimming experience or this legislation.

The Republican leadership is advancing this bill, H.R. 2677, as a solution to a self-imposed problem due to skewed priorities. The Interior appropriations bill still is not approved 10 weeks after the start of the fiscal year, hence no funding for the park and wildlife refuge operation. If the Republican majority had done its job and drafted a sound appropriation measure without giveaways to the grazing, timber and mining industries, with funds for essential programs we would not be in this crisis situation without funding to keep our national parks and refuges open during a Federal shutdown and we would not be considering H.R. 2677 today. Just symbolically opening the Washington Monument or Grand Canyon won't solve the budget problem.

Not only should this bill be unnecessary, it fails to address many practical issues. I do not question the good intentions of most States or the sincerity of State employees who are willing to do what they can in a difficult situation; however, managing the Washington Monument, Yellowstone, Grand Canyon or any of our parks requires expertise that cannot be acquired on an ad hoc, emergency basis. I was Chairman of the Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests and Public Lands for 10 years and certainly I would like to see the parks open for people to enjoy. However, when our National Parks are open, the public and common sense demand that we ensure adequate public safety and adequate protection of the natural and cultural resources within the unit. H.R. 2677 guarantees neither.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is a shining example of what is wrong with the 104th Congress. The Resources Committee held one hearing on two bills, on short notice last Friday when most Members had plans and had left for their districts. There was no markup session and we have had no opportunity to offer amendments or refine the measure. Such a process makes a mockery of the legislative process. In addition, by pushing this bill through without proper deliberation, the new majority seems to imply that government shutdowns will be the norm. The Congress, rather than placing a band aid on the problem, ought to be busy working to avert the injury by enacting the regular appropriation measure or if we fail in that, a continuing resolution to avert the problem.

Are we going to have to enact a series of separate measures for all Federal programs short of funds, for Social Security claims to be processed, and another for passport services, and many others until we have hundreds of laws for every possible contingency resulting from preventable Federal shutdowns? We could replicate the entire Federal code for funding shortfalls and contract out the services to the States in toto. Mr. Speaker, our Nation faces serious budget constraints, declining incomes and security for working people, and many grave concerns. This measure, H.R. 2677, is make-work legislating, creating additional problems just so we can solve them with bills like the one before us today. I urge the defeat of H.R. 2677. We should reaffirm our support for a host of laws already on the books.

This measure, beyond the misguided and misdirected congressional focus, could have profound impact on the legislative branch of the Federal Government. H.R. 2677 provides a blueprint and an engraved invitation for the executive to sidestep congressional authority to control spending, the purse strings, and the land use policy of the Federal Government. Ironically, Congress has always been very careful to guard land use policy as well, avoiding the frequent requests for administrative flexibility. Congress and its committees have properly asserted an effective role in land use questions and most certainly in the designation and operation of our crown jewels, the park units.

This measure, H.R. 2677, undercuts and weakens congressional control of the funding and budget control. In weeks past, the Republican majority has loudly protested Secretary of Treasury Rubin's authority to borrow and finance from specific accounts to avert default and expand the debt ceiling borrowing capacity of the Federal Government. My question is what way do you want it? Do you want to take away the power of the executive branch on debt ceiling and existing borrowing authority or expand the ability of the executive to avoid the shutdown of the Federal non-exempt entities?

Congress is moving onto a slippery slope when it begins to move land use functions to the States. Frankly, this Congress has just defeated studies, policy measures, even to consider changing the management authority and designation of parks, H.R. 260. Now we are about to back into an ad hoc assumption by States of selected National Park management, especially parks that would not even be considered for a change of management.

This year our Committee on Resources has repeatedly held hearings and heard proposals to strip National Park designation from our parks. Beyond these events, repeated proposals have been introduced to force the Federal Government to transfer public domain lands or prevent the Federal Government from asserting its rights as regards such Federal lands.

Repeatedly as the issues are raised and become instantly controversial, the Republican majority denies any involvement. But just the reading of the hearing record from this measure reflects the radical and extreme views espoused by my colleagues. It is the true and factual source of many of these assertions that engender such serious concern.

Mr. Speaker, this bill solves no problem. In fact, it is a detour on the path to a solution. It needlessly distracts and is harmful to the interests and prerogatives of Congress. It is certain to raise yet more controversy and misunderstandings. H.R. 2677 is a waste of energy and time when we should be resolving our problems of appropriations, not concocting schemes to shroud them within. This lack of funding cannot be wished away or solved without real funding. Let's defeat this bill and get back to work.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Arizona [Mr. SHADEGG].

Mr. SHADEGG. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 2677. It seems to me this is a common sense bill that the American people are crying out for and we hear such silliness here on the floor. The National Parks and National Wildlife Refuge System Freedom Act of 1995 addressed a simple problem, but a problem that can be very severe.

In my State of Arizona, during the last shutdown, we had a tragedy, actually we had many tragedies. People who make their livelihood off the national park were devastated. People would who wanted to visit one of the 7 Wonders of the World, the Grand Canyon, were told they could not do so. And why were they told that? They were told that because the premise is that unless you have a Federal employee employed by the Federal Government standing at your side, you cannot enjoy, indeed, the Federal Government will prohibit you from enjoying the grandeur of the Grand Canyon.

There is nothing more absurd in my lifetime than that notion. The shutdown of the Grand Canyon National Park was itself politics that hurt the American people. At no time in the history of this Nation should politics or

political posturing be allowed to injure the American people as they did in that shutdown.

Yet let me bring you a statistic. In the 32 times that the Government has shut down in the last 2 decades, the National Park Service has not once told a private concessionaire that it had to leech the park. Now, ask yourself why did it do it this time? Why did the Government insist that this time concessionaires in private parks must leave the park? I submit to you it was political posturing.

When we asked in the hearing held last Friday the Federal Department of Interior officials the answer to that, their answer was a fascinating one. It was that well, if the shutdown had lasted only 2 days, one could fudge the Anti-deficiency Act. But if it lasted 3 days, one could not.

Now, I asked them to find and their lawyers to find the language in the Anti-deficiency Act which says you can fudge a shutdown for 2 or 3 days, but you cannot fudge it for 3 or 4 days. They could not do it.

There is a tragedy here, a tragedy of arrogance, arrogance at the Federal level. The notion which we have heard on the floor today that the American people should be denied the right and visitors from across this Nation and visitors from around this world who have traveled thousands of miles to visit the Grand Canyon, indeed, one of the 7 Wonders of the World, should be sent away because a Federal bureaucrat is not there to stand beside them as they stand at Mather Point and try to absorb the beauty of the Grand Canyon.

The Governor of my State, Governor Symington, came forward with a simple, common sense idea. He said while you all posture in Washington, let me in the State of Arizona run that park. I take great umbrage at the words said on this floor moments ago that the State of Arizona could not run the park well because it has only 200 employees. Such arrogance at the Federal level is offensive. This bill should pass. I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland [Mr. HOYER].

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me time.

The previous speaker, of course, talks about arrogance, he talks about posturing, he talks about politics. In 5 seconds we could preclude all of that happening by a simple continuing resolution that says the Republican leadership has not been able to do the job of passing appropriation bills. But we will pass a continuing resolution.

We did it very briefly when you decided it was time to do it. We did it very briefly the time before that when you decided to do it. This whole business of shutting down parks and anything else is political posturing. I called it terrorist tactics, as you may recall, previously. The fact of the matter is I rise in opposition to this legislation which would allow State employees to replace Federal employees during any future Government shutdowns.

While I hope the Republican leadership will not force us into another shutdown, I ask that they stop pretending that shutdowns affect only those programs you do not like. If we like them, well, we ought to fund them. If we do not like them, clearly the State officials in Arizona were concerned about the impact of the closure of the Grand Canyon. I think all of us would agree with that.

On a lesser scale, officials in my own State were concerned about the impact of closure of Green Belt National Park, Catoctin Mountain Park, Fort McHenry and the Smithsonian, which had an obvious impact on tourism in the Maryland suburbs. The Speaker and the leadership would like the American people to think that these national assets can keep going even while they close down the Government, the parts they do not like.

Last week in the Subcommittee on Civil Service, Social Security Commissioner Chater was questioned about why she did not retain more employees to keep critical services moving ahead. My Republican friends must learn you cannot have it both ways. You cannot deliberately shut down the Government and then use backdoor methods to keep open agencies in operation that happen to be especially popular.

In addition to raising a number of serious legal and management questions, this legislation is yet another attack on Federal workers. While many of our parks rely on volunteer help, it is outrageous to suggest that State workers with many other duties to fulfill can instantly qualify to manage our parks and national wildlife refuges.

The Patuxent Wildlife Research Center in my district is renowned for its work with endangered species. I do not believe any volunteer, frankly, without training could come in and operate it. If the leadership is serious about keeping our parks open, if the leadership is serious about keeping our parks open, they ought to do what they should have done by October 1, pass the appropriation bills that the President can accept. If the Republicans are serious about keeping Social Security functioning, they ought to pass a Labor-Health appropriations measure that the President can sign.

Today is December 12 and the leadership has not even brought a bill to the floor in the Senate on this issue. Some 50,000 employees, they are not national parks, but they are people who need programs to make sure that they have housing, make sure that they can eat, make sure their kids can get Head Start programs and other things that may not be as important as seeing the 7th Wonder of the World, but they are important to some.

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I urge the House to reject this measure and keep the pressure on the Republican leadership to take their responsibilities seriously. Do not shut down Government.

BOB DOLE said we ought not to do it, and he is right. And it will take 5 seconds. A unanimous consent to do a continuing resolution to continue the inexistence continuing resolution offered by the Republican leadership just days ago and say that it will go until January 26 or 30. Five seconds and this problem would be eliminated.

Why does it exist? Political posturing.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, before I yield to the gentleman from Arizona, to say that we have just heard one of the most partisan presentations for a subject the gentleman knows nothing about.

It is very, very disturbing to me that before this, this was a debate about refuges and parks and the ability to keep them open to the taxpayer. And it disturbs me, as I have said before, that I have been here long enough to remember before we had these television cameras. If Members want to play the television, that is fine, but we are trying to solve a problem.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Arizona [Mr. SHADEGG].

Mr. SHADEGG. Mr. Speaker, I simply want to briefly respond to the remarks we have just heard. The notion that is posited here that this is a one-sided problem, that, indeed, only one party can be blamed for the budgetary impasse that we have before the Nation right now, nothing could be further from the truth.

The simple truth lies in the words which were used. Pass a bill the President can accept. It is a simple proposition. No measure passes this Congress without the votes to pass it, but it does not become law until the President also signs. The budget impasse we face today is of equal burden and falls upon both parties.

I have a discussion with my staffers when I hire them. There are two kinds of people in the world, those who look for ways to solve problems and those who look for excuses why they cannot be solved. What we have heard today is that there is an acknowledged problem. We have a budget impasse. The other side of the aisle says here are excuses why we cannot solve the problem. Our side says we can find a solution. This bill is the solution.

I simply want to add a dimension of the problem. This is a letter written by Susan Morley of Flagstaff, Arizona. It details how her husband died in 1992 of cancer at the age of 41. He asked his ashes to distributed at Ribbon Falls in the Grand Canyon, and then there was scheduled this year a family reunion of their entire family from across the Nation to visit Ribbon Falls in his memory. They were denied the right to do that, and she details in here her 13-year-old crying because she could not

go to Ribbon Falls to celebrate her father's passing and his memory because of the Federal Government shutdown.

There is a way to solve this problem and not to look for excuses. It is in this bill. I urge its passage.

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Maryland [Mr. HOYER].

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

My purpose was not to be partisan in presentation, as is alleged by the chairman, my good friend, the chairman of the committee. My purpose was to say that there is a very simple way to get out of this perceived problem, and that is to say, yes, we have differences, they are substantive differences, and we are debating them, and we will go on debating them for probably weeks to come because there is substantial disagreement within your party and between the President and the Congress. The simple way to do it is to say we do not intend to shut down the parks or other aspects of Government. The fact of the matter is, we are going to operate Government while we debate these issues.

I would say to the gentleman that that was my point. I think it is a valid point on this bill and others like it that seek to accept certain portions as opposed to making sure that the Government continues to operate.

Mr. VENTO. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. HOYER. I yield to the gentleman from Minnesota.

Mr. VENTO. Mr. Speaker, this is not the solution, this is a coverup in terms of what the real solution is. The real solution is passing the Interior appropriations bill.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, how much time do the parties have left?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. EWING). The gentleman from Alaska [Mr. YOUNG] has 2½ minutes, and the gentleman from California [Mr. MILLER] has 4 minutes remaining.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I have reserved the right to close, I believe, but I yield myself such time as I may consume to suggest if the gentleman had reached his point and not added all the little adjectives to it, I would have been much happier.

I will not disagree with some of the things he says, but I would suggest when he brings in the other appropriations bills, brings my leadership into question, when this is a two-party street, why did the gentleman not mention the President? That is all I suggested.

It means a great deal to me that we solve this problem of refuges and parks. And I hope on that side of the aisle, I hope Members understand if they vote against this bill what they are doing. It is not my fault, it may not be my colleagues' fault, but we are allowing the Secretary for the first time in history to deprive our taxpayers of the utilization of our refuges and parks, and tell me that is not political.

When Secretary Babbitt will run down and campaign in every district that has a Republican, and he has done that, and I have that documented, that is politics. I am tired of politics on this floor. I want to keep the parks open and the refuges open, because that is the taxpayer's right.

If my colleagues want to play politics, we will play politics. But let us leave this part of it out. This is for the parks and the refuges.

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the Grand Canyon was not closed because of the failure of the budgetary process. the Grand Canyon was closed because the Republican party, which numbers 234 in this House, has not passed an appropriations bill for the Department of the Interior. And the fact of the matter is, that bill was to be passed on October 1 and it is December 12 and it still has not passed. They brought it to the House twice and it was rejected on a bipartisan basis, overwhelmingly rejected because of its extreme nature.

The Republicans are looking for someone to point a finger at and someone to blame. They ought to take some personal responsibility. They have failed to pass the appropriations bill. If the appropriations bill was passed, then the Grand Canyon would be treated by those other agencies of the Federal Government whose bills were passed and they were not affected by the shutdown. But the Republicans have failed and now they want to blame somebody. They are not going to get away with it.

Pass the appropriations bill and pass a bill that, yes, is acceptable to the President of the United States and to the people of this country. That is not what the Republicans have been serving up on the floor of this House, and that is why they have been repudiated twice. Because the people of this country are not going to sacrifice these resources so that the Republicans can open them up some emergency basis.

Mr. Speaker, I know it is a cliche, but we often talk about the defendant that killed his parents and then threw himself on the mercy of the court because he was an orphan. The Republicans here have failed to deliver a bill in a timely fashion. The fact is they have failed, I believe, to deliver every appropriations bill in a timely fashion for, I believe, the first time in modern history in this Congress. And the fact of the matter is that is why the Government was shut down. That is separate from the budgetary process.

Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter is, we did not have a continuing resolution because the Republican leader, the Speaker of the House, threw a tantrum, and that tantrum resulted in tens of thousands of Federal employees being thrown out of work, and millions of Americans being disappointed, whether they were trying to bury their family in veterans cemeteries or at Ribbon Falls. But that happened for a single reason; because the Republican majority in this House failed to meet the mandates of the laws. It is just that simple. It is just that simple.

If the budget talks collapse tomorrow or the next day or next year, if the Republicans pass the appropriations bill, then those people will not be disappointed and those people will not be punished who are employees and those who wish to take advantage of the services of the Federal Government. So they have cooked up this bill. They have cooked up this bill to cover this trail. This is dragging the tree limbs behind the horse so maybe the people who are following this will not know where they are going. They know exactly where they are going.

The Republicans are planning to shut down the Government again. They are anticipating it, which suggests maybe the good faith bargaining everybody talks about is not taking place, and at the same time they are trying to cover up for the mistakes they made in the past. They were so excited to shut down the Federal Government, they did it prematurely. They did it before there was any controversy. But they went ahead and shut it down, and the American people said what the hell are they doing. This does not make sense. We have not even arrived at the point where we have a serious controversy.

So now they are coming back from that position that they found was so unpopular with the American public, and now they are trying to pretend they are doing something to deal with it. The Republicans can deal with this. Pass the Interior appropriations bill. But if the Republicans are going to load it up, as they have in the past, with a lot of provisions to destroy the forest and destroy the wild lands of this country, it will not be acceptable, and the President is not going to sign it, and they will, again, have enabled people to shut down the Government of this country because of their own failures to meet their deadlines and to meet the guidelines and the laws of this country.

Mr. Speaker, the only reason we are here today with H.R. 2677 is that the Republican majority failed to do its job and pass an acceptable appropriations bill to fund our national parks and wildlife refuges.

The majority has twice failed to generate sufficient votes to pass its own Interior bill. And now, to cover the tracks of that failure, they have cooked up this specious and absurd piece of legislation. Let us be clear: This bill is nothing but camouflage to conceal the Republican leadership's failure to do its job.

H.R. 2766 has been titled the "National Park and Wildlife Refuge Systems Freedom Act of 1995". This bill does not free our national parks or refuges from anything. Instead, it raises more concerns than it answers, and it places our parks, and our citizens, at great risk.

Which parks or refuges would be opened in the event of a Government shut-down?

What services would be provided?

Who would be liable to accidents to visitors or damage to resources? Governor Symington of Arizona tells us he thinks Federal taxpayers should indemnify States for damages and injuries caused when States operate Federal facilities. An interesting feature of the new federalism!

If you are serious seeking the answers to these and other questions about this hastily developed bill, do not look to the Committee on Resources. We have held one, perfunctory hearing, on a day when the House was not even in session; multiple questions about the bill went unanswered. We held no subcommittee mark up; no full committee mark up; there is no report on this bill.

And today, the House is being given no opportunity to amend this bill to address the many concerns and criticisms that have been raised about it.

H.R. 2677 is really a pretty poor solution to the Republican failure to provide an appropriations bill to fund our national parks and wildlife refuges. If you were really serious about this problem, we would be better off passing a law declaring all national park and wildlife refuge employees as emergency employees for the duration of a shutdown. Instead, you are going to have States determine what parks and refuges are open in a shutdown and what services will be provided. I note Governor Symington's offer to assist with Grand Canyon National Park, but what about Saguaro National Park, Petrified Forest National Park, or any of the 17 other national park units in Arizona? The Governor did not answer that one.

Let me tell you what this bill is really about.

It is not about keeping the parks open, because it is so poorly drafted and ill-conceived that no one seriously believes it is going to become law. It is polemics, not policy.

No, what this bill is about is the Republican leadership, who demanded that it be prematurely brought to the floor this week, wanting to immunize itself against charges that it shut down the national parks again because Republicans cannot figure out how to pass an Interior appropriations bill. And this bill is a little insurance policy, so they can go home and tell their disappointed constituents: "Oh, I didn't vote to close the parks. Those nasty Democrats did because they refused to pass H.R. 2677."

But the Republicans know, and the American people know, this bill could not become law in time for the possible shut-down this week, and so there is really no rush. It should be given much fuller consideration.

And last, let me mention that many of those who are promoting this bill are also advocates for turning over Federal lands, including protected national parks, to the States so that miners, loggers, and others can exploit them free from the management policies developed on behalf of all Americans by past Congresses.

H.R. 2677 has been conceived as a first step towards the dismantling of our parks, refuges, wilderness areas and other Federal lands. And that is exactly how passage of H.R. 2677 will be interpreted by its supporters.

Do not let the Republicans play dangerous political games with our national parks! Vote "no" on H.R. 2677.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, how much time do I have left?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman has 1½ minutes.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume to say that the gentleman that just spoke voted twice to recommit the bill. We brought a bill to the floor, an appropriations bill that could pass, to send to the President, and then if he vetoed it, we would know really where the differences lie. But the gentleman was in the minority. He was in the minority. And this House has not done its job because the minority says they know what is best for the majority.

The minority will have an opportunity this week to vote on the same bill. Hopefully, it will pass and it will go to the President and he will probably veto it. Then that is in his ballpark. But the big thing right now is, again, I want to stress that for the first time in history this Secretary, the arrogance of this individual, has taken away the rights of the American people.

All this bill does is say if a State wishes to do so, in the case of a conflict between the Congress and the President of the United States, they, in fact, can offer their services to keep these areas open for the general public.

Mr. Speaker, may I suggest, and correct the gentleman from California, that in 1987 the majority on that side passed, for a full year, 13 continuing resolutions for all 12 months for all 13 agencies. Do not tell me about the law. In fact, in 1974, when Mr. Carter was running around here, 1975 and 1976, in that period of time, 1978, I cannot remember all the years he has been there, each time they, in fact, passed continuing resolutions. They never met the time frame.

I have heard this argument again and again about the Republican party not doing this. The Democrats have failed miserably, and in the meantime put us $6 trillion in debt.

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to the bill before us. This bill would temporarily place the management of national parks and wildlife refuges under State control, and it raise several concerns. First, as author of the underlying legislation for the National Wildlife Refuge System, I have long opposed any giveaways in Federal authority to the States.

These lands belong to the people of the United States—not any one State, and they must be managed according to the purposes established through Federal legislation.

Second, as a long-time hunter, I, too, wish to see the refuges remain open. There is a simple way to achieve this, and one which the majority has twice failed to do by bringing an appropriations bill to this floor which is so extreme that it cannot pass. The Interior appropriations bill is over 2 months late.

Third, there are unresolved questions about the liability and other matters when the Federal Government hands over the keys of these treasures to the States.

The majority is right! It is irresponsible to close down our national parks and the refuge system. It is a shame that we are facing a second Government shutdown later this week because the majority is unable to pass a reasonable funding bill for parks and refuges.

Now I must say that I have the most respect for the chairman of the Resources Committee, with whom I have worked diligently to assemble a bill which will make improvements in our Refuge System. H.R. 2677 is bad legislation which goes against those things which Chairman YOUNG and I are trying to achieve with legislative reforms to improve our refuges, and does so to try to carve out exemptions for hunters.

As a hunter, I want refuges open. As a legislator, I want good legislation for our refuge system. H.R. 2677 might be good politics, but it is terrible policy. I urge defeat of this bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time has expired.

The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Alaska [Mr. YOUNG] that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2677, as amended.

The question was taken.

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

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 5 of rule I and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

***NOTICE***

***Incomplete record of House proceedings. Except for concluding business which follows, today's House proceedings will be continued in the next issue of the Record.***

## CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 1977, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1996

Mr. REGULA submitted the following conference report and statement on the bill (H.R. 1977) making appropriations for the Department of the Interior and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1996, and for other purposes:

CONFERENCE REPORT (H. REPT. 104–402)

The committee of conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendments of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 1977) making appropriations for the Department of the Interior and related agencies, for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1996, and