

else's. The Monterrey Peninsula is a lot different from some of the other districts, and a wonderful place that the gentleman should be quite proud of and one that I am sure attracts tourists from all over the world, a great place in the world to be from, and his remarks were right on point.

Mr. FARR of California. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. OXLEY. I yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. FARR of California. Mr. Speaker, I really believe that in every community we have certainly wonderful natural beauty. I did not even mention the 27 golf courses. But I think every community in America has something historically beautiful about it, and certainly people went there originally, they ventured their risk capital, saying, "We're going to settle here." I think we have to reach into that because if we find that same spirit, every town in America can be a tourist attraction.

Mr. OXLEY. I thank the gentleman for his contribution.

Mrs. VUCANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 2579, the Travel and Tourism Partnership Act. Travel and tourism is vitally important to the U.S. economy. The travel and tourism industry employs nearly 13 million Americans, and contributes approximately \$400 billion to the U.S. economy. Also, travel and tourism will be the single largest job-creator for Americans in the 21st century.

With all the promising statistics about the benefits of the travel and tourism industry, the United States is faced with a potentially devastating problem. The U.S. share of the fast-growing international travel and tourism market is decreasing. In 1995, the United States had 2 million fewer international visitors than in 1993. This decline in international visitors cost 177,000 Americans travel-related jobs.

Many questions have arisen concerning the sudden decline in international visitors to the United States. What prompted this decline? How should we address this decline to benefit the U.S. travel and tourism industry? Mr. Speaker, the answers lie in H.R. 2579. This legislation is a bold new approach to marketing the United States as a travel destination. Rather than relying on the Federal Government, H.R. 2579 creates a partnership between the tourism industry and the public sector to devise and carry out a more efficient and effective marketing plan.

This is a job-creating bill. International travel to the United States adds \$70 billion a year to our economy. Recapturing our lost market share and putting us back on a growth track will generate jobs through every district in America.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to take this opportunity to commend Congressman TOBY ROTH, the chairman of the Travel and Tourism Congressional Member Caucus. TOBY has been in the forefront in this effort, laboring tirelessly to advance this legislation and initiatives that will benefit the travel and tourism industry in all States. My State of Nevada, well known as a popular tourist destination, has benefited greatly over the years from his efforts, and I know that his leadership regarding the travel and tourism industry will be sorely missed

when he retires. It has been an honor and a privilege serving with him as the Secretary of the Travel and Tourism Congressional Caucus.

Mrs. LINCOLN. Mr. Speaker, today we are debating a bill that affects one of the three largest industries in Arkansas. The travel and tourism industry has a tremendous impact on my home State's economy and on our Nation's economy. It is America's largest services export, second largest employer, and third largest retail sales industry. However, the national focus on this industry has been minimal and changes are necessary in order to utilize the benefits this industry brings to America. That is why I am a cosponsor of H.R. 2579, the Travel and Tourism Partnership Act of 1995. I believe that this public/private partnership will provide the tourism industry with the proper organizational structure to increase our competitiveness in the global market.

Mr. Speaker, allow me to share some facts that help illustrate the impact of tourism on Arkansas. Nearly 18,000 people visited Arkansas in 1994 which created over 46,000 travel related jobs. State travel expenditures neared the \$3 billion mark in 1994 which is a \$1 million increase since 1986. The Natural State is a fitting nickname for a State with 600,000 acres of lakes, 9,700 miles of streams, and nearly 10,000 campsites. Fishing, hunting, camping, biking, and hiking are very popular in Arkansas' 47 State parks. Whether you are enjoying the natural springs of Hot Springs National Park or digging for diamonds at the only diamond mine in the United States, it is not hard to realize the impact tourism has on Arkansas.

The First Congressional District has also felt the positive impact of the tourism industry. The natural resources and outdoor activities of the area have attracted an increasing number of travelers visiting the first district. The district is home to such attractions as Greers Ferry Lake, Blanchard Springs Caverns, the Buffalo National River, the White River, and numerous hunting areas and wildlife refuges. The recent government shutdowns reminded us all of the impact these recreational facilities have on revenues generated in this State. Because of the shutdown, our hunting lands and refuges were not available to potential visitors, thus meaning lost revenues for the first district.

Mr. Speaker, the United States is falling behind the rest of the world in the travel and tourism industry. Changes must be made or we will continue to encounter lost opportunities, but more importantly, lost jobs and lost revenue. That is why I believe it is vital that we pass this bill. The National Tourism Board and National Tourism Organization would give us a structured organization to develop a clear and concise vision for the future.

Mr. Speaker, the importance of the tourism industry is becoming more evident. This bill, which reflects the findings of last October's White House Conference on Travel and Tourism, provides for an appropriate commitment to this Nation's tourism industry. This issue is extremely important to me because of its economic impact on the people of Arkansas and the first district, and I urge my colleagues to support this needed piece of legislation.

Mr. GILLMOR. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 2579, the Travel and Tourism Partnership Act, and commend the work of the gentleman from Wisconsin [Mr. ROTH] who in the final days of his congressional career is

bringing this bipartisan legislation to our attention.

Travel and tourism are vital components to our growing service and leisure oriented economy and I think it is appropriate that Congress, like many other countries, recognize the benefits and implications of travel and tourism from a national and international perspective. H.R. 2579 tries to reverse the decline in the number of tourists visiting the United States by establishing a federally chartered private tourism organization.

Travel and tourism efforts are not just for warmer, tropical climate far south of here. I think we would be missing the boat—or plane, train, and automobile—if we stopped right there. Many of our own districts have places that people flock to for relaxation and enjoyment of their precious free-time. In my own district, which encompasses significant portions of Lake Erie, we have several areas that rely on travel and tourism to bolster their economies. In particular, I would point to both Put-In-Bay and Cedar Point, OH, whose popular restaurants, amusement parks, and taverns serve as an oasis to the rigors of the workweek. These places are the under-recognized stories of this industry.

Mr. Speaker, this bill reminds the world, and ourselves, about the numerous sojourns our country offers. H.R. 2579 offers opportunities, tempered with the current budget realities and ongoing government downsizing, that many would argue are necessary to move the United States up from 33d in tourism promotion and increase the number of travel-related jobs now held in our country. While this bill is not a panacea, it is a good first step for an industry that employs nearly 14 million Americans, contributes \$400 billion dollars to the economy, and generates a \$19 billion trade surplus.

I urge all my colleagues to support passage of this bill. It should not be forgotten that many small businesses are the beneficiaries of a vibrant travel economy. Travel and tourism are as much about creating and maintaining jobs as they are about rest and relaxation.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. (Mr. EWING). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. OXLEY] that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2579, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. OXLEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous material into the RECORD on H.R. 2579.

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

There was no objection.

TENSAS RIVER NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

Mr. SAXTON. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and concur in the Senate amendments to the bill (H.R. 2660) to increase the amount authorized to be appropriated to the Department of the Interior for the Tensas River National Wildlife Refuge.

The Clerk read as follows:

Senate amendments:

Page 2, after line 12 insert:

SEC. 2. BAYOU SAUVAGE URBAN NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE.

(a) REFUGE EXPANSION.—Section 502(b)(1) of the Emergency Wetlands Resources Act of 1986 (Public Law 99-645; 100 Stat. 3590), is amended by inserting after the first sentence the following: "In addition, the Secretary may acquire, within such period as may be necessary, an area of approximately 4,228 acres, consisting of approximately 3,928 acres located north of Interstate 10 between Little Woods and Pointe-aux-Herbes and approximately 300 acres south of Interstate 10 between the Maxent Canal and Michoud Boulevard that contains the Big Oak Island archaeological site, as depicted on the map entitled "Bayou Sauvage Urban National Wildlife Refuge Expansion", dated August, 1996, on file with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. SAXTON] and the gentleman from American Samoa [Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA] each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. SAXTON].

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

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

Mr. SAXTON. Mr. Speaker, on April 23 of this year, the House overwhelmingly adopted H.R. 2660, a bill introduced by our colleague from Louisiana, JIM MCCRERY, to increase the authorization level for the Tensas River National Wildlife Refuge.

The other body has not acted on this legislation and while they made no changes in the Tensas River provision, they did add a new title to the bill dealing with the Bayou Sauvage National Wildlife Refuge in Louisiana.

This refuge was established in 1986 to protect 19,000 areas of coastal wetlands. In fact, the refuge, which is located within the corporate limits of the city of New Orleans, has the distinction of having the largest amount of coastal wetlands in the United States that is easily accessible to city residents.

Title II of H.R. 2660 will allow the Secretary of the Interior to acquire an additional 4,228 acres of land. According to the authors of this provision, the inclusion of this property within the refuge will enhance the populations of migratory, shore, and wading birds, protect threatened and endangered species, encourage natural diversity of fish and wildlife species, and provide valuable opportunities to the public for

environmental education on some of our Nation's essential coastal wetlands.

I am pleased to present this bill to the House and strongly believe that these modifications in two refuge units in Louisiana are consistent with the fundamental goals of our National Wildlife Refuge System.

I urge a vote in favor of H.R. 2660 and compliment JIM MCCRERY for his outstanding leadership in this matter.

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

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

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

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I support this piece of legislation. It expands our national wildlife refuge system. It authorizes land acquisition in the State of Louisiana for the protection and conservation of wildlife. The administration also has given its support of this legislation. I want to commend the gentleman from Louisiana who is the chief sponsor of this legislation. I urge the adoption of this bill.

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

Mr. SAXTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Shreveport, LA [Mr. MCCRERY], the author of this bill.

Mr. MCCRERY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. SAXTON], the chairman of the subcommittee, for yielding me this time, and I thank the gentleman from American Samoa [Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA] for his kind remarks, and also the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. STUDDS], the ranking minority member of the subcommittee, for their help and cooperation in getting this bill to the floor.

Also, as we all know, staff always play an important part in getting legislation through the various hoops and hurdles in the legislative process, and I want to thank the staff of the subcommittee as well for their hard work, particularly Harry Burroughs.

This bill, as Chairman SAXTON explained, would increase to \$20 million the authorization for land purchases in the Tensas National Wildlife Refuge. This refuge encompasses 64,000 acres in two parishes, or counties, in my district, Tensas and Madison Parishes, and the refuge is home to some of the Nation's rarest species, including the bald eagle and the peregrine falcon.

The Tensas Refuge also hosts the largest remaining population of the endangered Louisiana black bear. Also, a wide variety of plant species are found in this tract, including the largest tract of bottomland hardwoods remaining in the Mississippi River delta.

So it is a very important piece of land, and we want to preserve it for future generations. We have done a good job in seeing to that so far.

This bill, by the way, will not enlarge the boundaries of the refuge. It simply will allow us to purchase from willing sellers inholdings within the current boundaries of the refuge, and this will make management of the area easier and more effective, and no land will be purchased from anyone other than willing sellers and owners of inholdings in this existing refuge.

In closing, let me again thank the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. SAXTON], the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. STUDDS], and the members of the subcommittee and the full committee for their support in getting this legislation to the floor. I urge my colleagues to support it and urge its approval.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I urge the adoption of the bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SAXTON. 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 New Jersey [Mr. SAXTON] that the House suspend the rules and concur in the Senate amendments to the bill, H.R. 2660.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SAXTON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the Senate amendments to H.R. 2660.

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

There was no objection.

WYOMING FISH AND WILDLIFE FACILITY

Mr. SAXTON. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill (S. 1802) to direct the Secretary of the Interior to convey certain property containing a fish and wildlife facility to the State of Wyoming, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read as follows:

S. 1802

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

SECTION 1. CONVEYANCE OF CERTAIN PROPERTY TO WYOMING.

(a) CONVEYANCE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Interior shall convey in "as is" condition, to the State of Wyoming without reimbursement—

(A) all right, title, and interest of the United States in and to the portion of the property commonly known as "Ranch A" in Crook County, Wyoming, other than the portion described in paragraph (2), consisting of