

Mr. BALDACCI. Mr. Speaker, reserving the right to object, I wish to state the minority has no objection to the approval of H.R. 2700, as amended.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 2700, as amended. This bill designates a post office in Elmendorf, TX as the Amos F. Longoria Post Office Building, with an amendment offered by Senator PRYOR. The amendment addresses mailing problems facing by Elderhostel, an independent nonprofit organization which operates a central course catalog and registration system for college level classes for people over the age of 60.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 2700, as amended, will solve a problem caused by the fact that Elderhostel does not fit neatly into the Postal Service's definitions and I urge my colleagues to support this measure.

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

Mr. BALDACCI. I yield to the gentleman from New York.

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

Mr. Speaker, this bill was passed and amended by this body on July 30, 1996 under suspension of the rules, as the gentleman from Maine just noted. It does what I certainly believe and I hope all our colleagues agree is a very worthwhile step in creating certain mailing rights for very worthy organization involved in educational activities.

I would note for the record, Mr. Speaker, that a preliminary analysis by the Congressional Budget Office reports that the enactment of the amendment as placed in this bill by the Senate would result in a cost to the U.S. Postal Service. However, as the Postal Service is classified as off budget, pay-as-you-go procedures would not apply. Mr. Speaker, I would urge our colleagues to support this bill as amended by the Senate. I think it is a worthy initiative that would do this House proud and I certainly hope for its passage.

Mr. BALDACCI. Mr. Speaker, I withdraw my reservation of objection?

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

There was no objection.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MCHUGH. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the Senate amendment to H.R. 2700.

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

There was no objection.

NATIONAL INVASIVE SPECIES ACT OF 1996

Mr. BOEHLERT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Commit-

tee on Transportation and Infrastructure and the Committee on Resources be discharged from further consideration of the bill (H.R. 4283) to provide for ballast water management to prevent the introduction and spread of nonindigenous species into the waters of the United States, and for other purposes, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

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

□ 2300

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, reserving the right to object, the bill before us is nearly identical to the Invasive Species Act that the House passed by voice vote earlier this week, except for limited amendments requested by the other body. I continue to have some concerns about at least one of those changes, but on balance those concerns are outweighed by the net gains to the Great Lakes region and to the rest of the Nation from this legislation.

One of the concerns I have is a major concern with the application of this legislation to the salt water ports, and with our chairman managing this bill, and with his deep concern for environmental issues, I do want to ask the gentleman from New York [Mr. BOEHLERT] for a commitment that we will examine these issues in the proper detail that they deserve in the coming Congress.

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

Mr. BOEHLERT. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman would yield, my colleague has those assurances.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Speaker, I will not object to passage of the National Invasive Species Act of 1996. The bill before us now is nearly identical to the Invasive Species bill that the House passed by voice vote earlier this week, except for limited amendments which have been requested by the other body. I continue to have some concerns regarding one of those changes, but on balance, those concerns are outweighed by the net gains to the Great Lakes region and to the Nation from this bill being signed into law this Congress.

This bill will contribute toward preventing further invasions by, and the spread of, nonindigenous aquatic species. It builds on the very successful program in the Great Lakes, which was developed under the 1990 "Nonindigenous Aquatic Nuisance Prevention and Control Act," and expands the scope of the law to the entire Nation.

Also of critical importance, the bill should promote the development of new technologies, recognizing the limitations of ballast exchange in preventing the spread of invasive species that already have been introduced into the Great Lakes and other U.S. waters.

We all have a great deal at stake in passage of this bill this year. Passage of this bill into law will:

Help prevent further unnecessary devastation of our most valuable fisheries, as has

happened repeatedly in my district in the Duluth-Superior Harbor, in the Great Lakes, and is at risk of happening in the Chesapeake Bay, the San Francisco Bay Delta Estuary, the Gulf of Mexico, and other of our most treasured ecosystems;

Avoid public and private expenditures of millions of dollars a year on clearing zebra mussels from intake pipes and water treatment systems, increasing the cost of providing water and electricity to our citizens; and help preserve native species and the natural biodiversity of our Nation's aquatic ecosystems.

Finally, this bill includes certain exemptions which concern me. I intend to further examine these provisions and their impacts when we return next year. Along those lines, I would like to clarify that nothing in the bill supersedes any requirement or prohibition under any other law pertaining to the discharge or exchange of ballast water, including any conditions for lifting the export ban on Alaska North Slope crude oil.

I will not object to passage of this bill.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, further reserving the right to object, I yield to the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. LATOURETTE] and compliment him for the leadership that he has taken on authoring this legislation, which I am proud to cosponsor and for moving it along.

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

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Minnesota [Mr. OBERSTAR] for yielding, and I thank him because he has gone above and beyond reaching across the aisle to make sure we can get this done. I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. SHUSTER], the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. BORSKI], but most of all I thank the gentleman from New York [Mr. BOEHLERT] without whose persistence and shepherding we would not be here, and I thank his staff, in particular Ben Grumbles.

Also, Mr. Speaker, it happens to be Chairman BOEHLERT's birthday and I am not going to hold him up any longer. I would hope that we could all support this bill and I thank all my colleagues for making it happen.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 4283, the National Invasive Species Act, as amended by the Senate. We arrive at this point today due to strong bipartisan cooperation. Many concerns were raised about the potential impact of the Senate amendments. After careful review, I am pleased to report that the Senate amendments will not compromise the fundamental purpose and goals of H.R. 4283.

H.R. 4283 will build upon the Nonaquatic Nuisance Prevention and Control Act of 1990 that addressed zebra mussels and other invasive species in the Great Lakes. However, it is important to note that H.R. 4283 is national in scope, extending a voluntary incentive-based approach to all coasts and regions at risk. H.R. 4283 coordinates agencies, research institutions and others to prevent and control the introduction and spread of invasive species primarily through voluntary ballast water exchange and management education and research.