

"And that word was 'feasible.'"

Oberstar, ranking Democrat on the Transportation Committee, sponsored the portage bill in the House while Rod Grams (R-Minn.) pushed passage in the Senate. The Clinton administration opposes both, as it did a measure last year that would have increased outdoor use while bringing the wilderness area under a "local management council."

Todd Indehar, president of the grass-roots Conservationists With Common Sense, said such a council remains his ultimate goal. But lawmakers insist their ambitions extend only to the three portages (and keeping motors on a section of one large lake where they are scheduled to be banned under the 1978 agreement).

"I'm not saying you have to open this up and kowtow to the people of Northern Minnesota and give them everything they want," Grams said. "But what are they asking for? Only what they had."

In Ely, the appetite for a win is keen. With main roads lined by canoe outfitters and a clutch of outdoorsy boutiques (including one named for polar adventurer Will Steger, the most famous local resident), the town of 4,000 appears prosperous. But Ely has lost population in the decade since the open pit mines cut back at the nearby Mesabi Iron Range. And the tourism that, during the short summer, has taken up some of the slack is built on a more effete appreciation of the outdoors than most locals knew growing up.

"The impression is we get a lot of rich yuppies who don't even know what to do with their money and they tell us what to do, where to do it and when to do it. And the portages is a symbol of that," said Vince O'Conner, 41, of nearby Babbitt.

The enmity goes back to at least 1978 and the "compromise" that Indehar said destroyed a vibrant local heritage of fishing shacks and family outings in the name of an urban elite view of "wilderness." The politically active region mobilized against the U.S. Senate bid of Donald Fraser, who had championed the measure in the House. And the memory of his upset loss is still savored at the Hook, Line & Sinkers bait and tackle shop on Sheridan Street.

"You're looking at one of the baldheaded [expletives] who helped send him down the tubes," said owner Leonard Katauskas, the Salem in the corner of his mouth going jaunty for a moment.

It does not matter that the economic benefit of opening the portages likely would be, as Katauskas put it, "minuscule." Nor is there traction for the argument that motors are welcome in the 98 percent of Minnesota lakes that lie outside the wilderness area.

The lakes many area residents grew up fishing lay inside the Boundary Waters, and locals say they want to reach them again even if the Forest Service imposes a \$10 daily user-fee, as it recently announced it would.

"This," Oberstar said, "is a contest over lifestyles."

TRIBUTE TO JUDGE JAMES
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HON. DAVID E. BONIOR

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 22, 1997

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to pay tribute to Judge James Nowicki who is being honored with the Boy Scout's Distinguished Citizen of the Year Award by the Clinton Valley Council of Boy Scouts of America.

The award was presented to Judge Nowicki on October 22, 1997 at Fern Hill Country Club.

Judge Nowicki has served Macomb County as Probate Court Judge since 1975. In 1978, Judge Nowicki's colleagues elected him Chief Probate Judge. Under Judge Nowicki's leadership, the Probate Court has initiated innovated programs such as a mediation process and referee system. He also established the appointment of Guardian Ad Litem to help senior citizens protect their rights during periods of illness or mental incapacity.

Throughout the years, Judge Nowicki has been active in a variety of community organizations. Some of his past and present affiliations include the Founders Day Committee of Orchard Lake Schools, the John W. Smith's Old Timers, the Mt. Clemens JC, and the Clinton Valley Council Boy Scouts of America. His civic contributions have touched the lives of many people.

Taking an active role in one's community is a responsibility we all share, but few fulfill. Judge Nowicki's time, talents, and energy are appreciated by all of us. I thank him for his efforts and commend him for his good work. I applaud the Boy Scouts of Clinton Valley Council for recognizing Judge Nowicki. He has provided outstanding leadership to our community and I know he is proud to be honored by the Scouts.

On behalf of the Boy Scouts of America, I urge my colleagues to join me in saluting Judge James Nowicki.

TRIBUTE TO HENRY B. GONZALEZ

SPEECH OF

HON. LORETTA SANCHEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 7, 1997

Ms. SANCHEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend Congressman HENRY B. GONZALEZ who, after 36 years of service, is resigning from Congress this year. I would like to join my colleagues in honoring this great leader.

Congressman GONZALEZ leaves a legacy of hard work and dedication to his constituents as well as the entire country. He provided leadership by serving diligently as the House Banking Committee chairman from 1989 to 94, where he shepherded 71 bills through the legislative process from introduction to enactment into law.

Congressman GONZALEZ is a role model for young men and women as well as the Hispanic community. Before serving in Congress, he operated a Spanish-English translating business with his father and taught math to veterans and citizenship classes to resident aliens seeking citizenship. He went on to serve his constituents of San Antonio as a member of the city council for 3 years and then as State senator for nearly 5 years.

Congressman GONZALEZ is a devoted public servant who will be missed by all of his colleagues. I am very proud of his achievements and contributions to our country.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 2169,
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
AND RELATED AGENCIES
APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1998

SPEECH OF

HON. LOUIS STOKES

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 9, 1997

Mr. STOKES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 2169, the Transportation appropriations conference report for fiscal year 1998. This measure provides a net total of \$42.2 billion, which is \$5.1 billion—14 percent—more than the current level, but \$320 million—1 percent—less than the House-passed bill. H.R. 2169 funds the Department of Transportation and related agencies, including the following agencies within the Department: Coast Guard, Federal Aviation Administration; Federal Highway Administration; Federal Railroad Administration; and the Federal Transit Administration.

In particular, H.R. 2169 funds two valuable projects for the Regional Transit Authority [RTA] in Ohio's 11th Congressional District. I am very pleased that Congress saw the need for expanding the blue line and the waterfront line. These are important improvements for Greater Cleveland.

The RTA will receive \$800,000 for a major investment study of extending the blue line of the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority through Shaker Heights to the Highland Hills Corridor. This extension would directly link a growing suburban employment center with the region's largest employment center—downtown Cleveland. This rail transportation link is especially important since there is no direct freeway link between these two employment centers.

Congress also allotted \$1 million for a major investment study for a waterfront line extension that would serve the Playhouse Square, Cleveland State University, and the rest of the St. Vincent Quadrangle. This study would assess the needs of north-south transportation in the eastern portion of the central business district. The study may also further support how the waterfront line extension could improve the entire region's transportation system goals.

I am pleased with the positive effects the RTA extensions can have on Greater Cleveland's workers. With RTA extensions, the Beachwood-Orange-Highland Hills area will be able to attract major commercial/industrial employers to undeveloped and underdeveloped land. Suburban residents will also be better linked to their downtown employers.

Funding for these RTA studies is part of an effort to assure accommodating and economical access between the city center and the suburbs for all Greater Cleveland citizens. The need for an expansion of our public transit system is a good sign; it reflects the development of the Warehouse District, the success of the Flats Entertainment District, and the popularity of the downtown sports facilities, among the many other assets of Cleveland. I am glad that Congress recognizes these developments, and I support H.R. 2169.