

A NATIONAL SYMBOL FOR
GERMAN-AMERICANS

HON. DAVID MINGE

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 31, 1997

Mr. MINGE. Mr. Speaker, this summer I was honored to be part of a glorious event for German-Americans, the Hermann Monument Centennial in New Ulm, MN. The 100-year dedication drew thousands of Americans with German ancestry to a parade and several festivals at the site of the Hermann Monument, a statue of a celebrated German hero.

The Hermann Monument stands at a crest of a hill overlooking the city of New Ulm. To the thousands of residents in the heavily German-American New Ulm area, the monument symbolizes the importance of German ancestry. To German-Americans scattered across the country, the Hermann Monument represents unity of the German people.

The formation of a united Germany began in 9 A.D. when Arminius, or Hermann, defeated three Roman Legions who had invaded the area known today as Germany. His victory laid the foundation for German identity. Hermann went on to symbolize German unity and the hard work and perseverance it took to attain that goal.

Centuries later in America, Hermann signified the struggle of the German immigrant coming to America. To Germans who came to this new country, Hermann stood for pride in having made it to America, and in having established opportunity for the future. Hermann was recast as a German-American symbol, representing the essence of the German-American experience.

German-Americans are an integral part of the culture and history of our Nation. There are more than 57.9 million individuals of German heritage residing in the United States, representing nearly 25 percent of the population. German-Americans surpass all other ancestries as the largest ethnic group in the United States.

Currently, we do not have a national symbol of the German heritage. The Hermann Monument celebrates the unity of German-Americans throughout our Nation. Consecrating a monument to this great leader, and manifesting it as a national symbol for German ancestry, emphasizes the importance of recognizing the contributions German-Americans have made to our country. This monument, visited by thousands of Americans of German ancestry, and revered by German history scholars, should be a national symbol for the contributions of German-Americans.

It is with the goal of recognizing the German-American experience that I have introduced a concurrent resolution that designates the Hermann Monument as a National German-American Monument and a symbol of pride for Americans of German heritage. The bill will recognize the Hermann Monument as a sight of special historical significance.

Scattered across the country in small towns as well as large cities, German-Americans are separated by regions of the country, but deeply united in ancestry. It is our duty to recognize the importance of the history and culture of German-Americans who have helped to mold our great Nation. This monument, representing unity of a great people and celebrat-

ing the experience of a unique culture, is but a small token of the contributions made by German-Americans to our great Nation.

SUPPORT STANDARDS OF
EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION

HON. BOB ETHERIDGE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 31, 1997

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to announce the introduction of my resolution in support of voluntary educational standards of excellence. I urge my colleagues to join the 23 original cosponsors and myself in support of this important measure.

This simple, straightforward resolution is a commonsense approach to improving education in this country. The American people strongly support educational standards of excellence so parents, teachers, students, and taxpayers will have the advantage of quality public schools. This Congress must go on record in support of high education standards.

As the former two-term, elected superintendent of North Carolina's Department of Public Instruction, I know firsthand that aiming high and providing our teachers and students the tools they need to get the job done is the proven way to improve academic achievement. America needs educational standards of excellence, and the House must pass this important resolution.

Mr. Speaker, my resolution is strongly supported by the Council of Chief State School Officers, the American Legion, and other groups dedicated to providing a quality education to each and every child in this Nation. Our country's commitment to public education has been the great equalizer in this society. We must pass this resolution to strengthen and improve our public schools.

I have worked with the administration in developing this resolution, and it can be supported by both Republican and Democratic Members of this House.

Mr. Speaker, nothing is more important than our children. I urge my colleagues to join me in support of this important resolution to encourage education standards of excellence for every school in America.

FORAGE IMPROVEMENT ACT OF
1997

SPEECH OF

HON. HELEN CHENOWETH

OF IDAHO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 30, 1997

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2493) to establish a mechanism by which the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of the Interior can provide for uniform management of livestock grazing on Federal lands.

Mrs. CHENOWETH. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of H.R. 2493, as amended by the manager's amendment and its second degree amendment. As originally written, I had grave concern over H.R. 2493's impact to the private property use and preference rights that spring

from the Taylor Grazing Act. But after extensive discussions with Agriculture Chairman BOB SMITH and Ranking Member STENHOLM, my concerns have been addressed and I am pleased to support the measure. I wish to thank Chairman SMITH for his stalwart leadership. It is not easy to bring so many divergent views together and reach agreement. No one worked harder than he, and I appreciate him.

Mr. Chairman, the second degree amendment to the manager's amendment that I worked out with Chairman SMITH was quite simple. It merely deleted the definitions of "allotment" and "base property," and deleted a paragraph about lease transfers. It was my concern that these definitions threatened the rights found in the Taylor Grazing Act, and that the lease transfer language could allow the Secretary concerned to separate the Taylor's preference right from the base property. I wanted to ensure that when an individual sells or leases his or her ranch, that the grazing preference for the allotments go with it. The amendment merely leaves the current law in place, and I am unaware of anyone having concerns with the current definitions. However, I do realize that the current lease transfer regulations on Forest Service land cause problems. But I was concerned that we were agreeing to bad language. I would rather pass no law than bad law.

To understand my position, one must understand the history of how the Western United States was settled and the history of the development of the use right inherent in the grazing preference.

The arid grazing lands of the Western States were settled by hardy persons who endured severe hardships in developing ranching operations where there was water to support those operations. You must understand, much of this country gets less than 10 inches of rain fall per year. There is less forage, and it therefore takes a whole lot more land to raise cattle. These individuals established base properties, but had to depend upon the massive Federal lands for forage to support a viable livestock herd. They developed use rights, such as rights of way across the Federal lands, which were recognized by Congress in 1866 when it passed R.S. 2477.

Major John Wesley Powell, Chief of the U.S. Geological Survey issued a report entitled "Report on the Arid Lands of the United States," which led to the passage of the act for the Relief of Settlers on the Public Lands, May 14, 1880. That act recognized the act of settlement itself as initiating and maintaining the settler's property rights. The report pointed out that nearly all the land in the West was primarily suited to livestock grazing and had been settled on as ranches. After passage of that act, settlement itself was sufficient to put other settlers on notice that the land had already been appropriated to private forage use.

The rights of the settlers to use of these Western grazing lands were confirmed and ratified by a series of congressional actions such as the act of August 30, 1890 as amended by the act of March 3, 1891, the act of January 13, 1897, the act of June 4, 1897, the act of June 11, 1906, the acts of March 4 and September 30, 1913, the Stock-Raising Homestead Act of 1916, which authorized homesteading of those lands designated as "chiefly valuable for grazing and raising forage crops," and several other acts leading up to passage of the Taylor Grazing Act in 1934. Each of the