

Another irony was pointed out by Weiner. "The money that they would raise would not go toward the implementation of the ESA, it would go toward the landowner incentives," she said. "It would go right back to the corporate landowner. . . . It's not actually going to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to help them enforce the act or implement the act or come up with recovery plans. It's going straight to the private landowners."

If agreements between landowners and the federal government go away? The CRS report states succinctly that S. 1180 would "probably not make citizen (law) suits available to enforce conservation agreements." The House bill expressly allows such citizen lawsuits.

Bill Snape, legal director of Defenders of Wildlife, doesn't expect any real movement on the Senate bill until after Easter recess. "The huge, thousand pound gorilla on the back of this bill is that not one environmental group in the country supports it. Not one. . . . Until that occurs, it's unlikely that Republicans will want to reinforce their anti-environmental message, particularly the Senate Majority Leader (Trent Lott) as they head into the November elections."

The machinations of Congress—it may be that Lott is really attempting to kill the Senate bill with his amendments while looking cozy to his corporate donors.

The House version of the Endangered Species Recovery Act, introduced by Rep. George Miller, now has 102 co-sponsors. According to Snape, it won't move until the Senate bill passes or dies.

There are three major differences between the House and Senate ESA bills:

The Miller bill gives landowners assurances that conservation agreements will stand, but requires landowners to post performance bonds to make certain they live up to the requirements of minimizing the impact on threatened or endangered species. The Senate bill has no such bonding provisions.

The Miller bill would improve habitat protection on federal lands, while the Senate bill creates more loopholes to ignore impacts that put endangered and threatened species at risk.

The Miller bill focuses directly on the recovery of species by setting up definite standards and procedures. The Senate bill, according to Snape, "plays up service to recovery, but what they're really talking about is survival."

However, not everyone is happy with the Miller bill.

In February, a letter from the presidents of 11 professional scientific societies specializing in plant and animal biology was sent to Congress and the Clinton administration. The letter condemns both House and Senate bills for allowing habitat destruction under conservation agreements.

The Miller bill may not have the unified support of the environmental and conservation communities, but it clearly does more for the recovery of endangered species.

Don't expect either bill to pass during this session of Congress. Neither one will. These two bills, however, have defined the terms of discourse regarding endangered species.

And this critical environmental issue will undoubtedly be a part of the public debate during election campaigns. It will have an influence on the outcome of some congressional races in the West.

THE PREBLE'S MEADOW JUMPING MOUSE ON COLORADO'S FRONT RANGE

HON. BOB SCHAFFER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 1, 1998

Mr. BOB SCHAFFER of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, the Secretary of Interior, through the Fish and Wildlife Service, will soon make an important decision concerning whether to list the Preble's meadow jumping mouse as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act. This decision comes at a troubling time for the people of the State of Colorado. A decision to list this species would have profound impacts on Colorado's thriving front range.

Colorado has taken steps to preserve our Western heritage and quality of life. Coloradans care about their environment. Those that depend upon the land and its resources have a vital link to their environment. If they do not manage their resources responsibly, they do not survive. Today, family-owned farms and ranches are at risk. According to some sporadic studies by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the habitat for the Preble's meadow jumping mouse is also at risk.

Colorado has aggressively dealt with the issues of growth and suburban sprawl along the front range. Land use planning, and growth issues are effectively being dealt with at the local and state levels. So too, is Colorado dealing with the issue of the Preble's meadow jumping mouse.

Colorado's General Assembly is considering a state law that would establish a trust fund to conserve species before their status becomes critical enough to justify listing under the Endangered Species Act. That bill has already passed the Agriculture Committee and is currently being considered for appropriations. In addition, Colorado has established a broad-based coalition of land owners, state and local government officials and conservationists to protect the mouse and its habitat. Colorado's approach to species preservation provides as much, if not more protection, than other successful programs applied across the country.

In light of existing and developing efforts to protect the species, the need to solicit additional data, and the profound impacts that listing would have on Colorado's front range, the Secretary of the Interior of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service should allow the State to fully develop their state and local plans to preserve Colorado's quality of life, and the Preble's meadow jumping mouse.

HEALTH INSURANCE TAX DEDUCTIBILITY ACT OF 1998

HON. GENE GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 1, 1998

Mr. GREEN. Mr. Speaker, today I introduced the Health Insurance Tax Deductibility Act of 1998. This bill is a simple, common sense solution to a very complex and destructive problem in our society.

Since I came to Congress in 1992, we have debated health care reform and considered a

wide range of proposals—all designed to insure a greater number of Americans. When President Clinton signed the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) into law in 1996, everyone said Congress had taken the first step towards ensuring access to health insurance to more individuals and families.

Unfortunately, a recent study by the General Accounting Office shows us this goal has not been achieved. Although HIPAA did expand access to health insurance, it did nothing to ensure that Americans can afford health insurance. And as the GAO study recognized, affordability has become the major hurdle for the American family to clear.

In the past, Congress has passed initiatives to encourage and assist people to get health insurance. We allow employers who sponsor health insurance for their employees to deduct the employer's share of the premium as a business expense. We allow self employed people to deduct a percentage of the health insurance premium they purchase. Yet we provide no assistance or incentive for individuals whose employers do not provide health insurance.

The Health Insurance Tax Deductibility Act of 1998 will do just this. Under this legislation, individuals will be able to deduct a portion—linked to the deduction for the self insured—they pay for health and long-term care insurance. This proposal will make health insurance more affordable for individuals and their families, which in turn, will give American families greater piece of mind.

IN MEMORY OF U.S. CAPITOL POLICE OFFICER THOMAS ROBINSON

HON. BOB GOODLATTE

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 1, 1998

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to one of the finest Capitol Police officers we have known, Officer T.O. "Tommy" Robinson, whose life was tragically taken by cancer on March 23.

While Officer Robinson was a dedicated law enforcement officer and public servant, his life was a testimony to others as well. He will be deeply missed by all who had the great privilege of knowing him.

Tommy Robinson served his country in the U.S. Army from 1965 to 1968, and served honorably as a member of the Capitol Police for 27 years. He leaves behind his wife of 20 years, Denise, as well as their 12-year-old son Christopher. He was a man of steadfast faith, which he lived out on a daily basis.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to insert into the RECORD a copy of the eulogy given by our Capitol Police Chief Gary Abrecht in memory of Tommy Robinson, which pays tribute to his life and testimony. Everyone who came in contact with Officer Tommy Robinson is a better person for having done so. I know that the entire House joins me in expressing our deepest sympathies and prayers for Denise and Christopher.

I submit the following article.

IN MEMORY, OFFICER T.O. "TOMMY" ROBINSON

As I consider all the men and women of the US Capitol Police, I'm struck by the particular strengths each individual brings to the