

measure, passed by the Senate last year, that would extend for 3 years the legislative authority for the Board of Regents of Gunston Hall to establish a memorial to George Mason.

Public law 101-358 authorized the Board of Regents of Gunston Hall to establish a memorial to George Mason, who is widely recognized for his role in events surrounding the drafting of the U.S. Constitution and its first 10 amendments known as the Bill of Rights.

Plans for the memorial provide for its location on Federal land in the district of Columbia, near the 14th Street Bridge, which was previously named in his honor.

A 3-year extension of the memorial authorization is necessary in order to allow planning and fund-raising to be brought to a successful conclusion. Senate bill 423 was favorably reported from the committee on Resources last October, without amendment. The bill does have the support of the administration. I ask my colleagues to support this legislation.

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

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of S. 423, legislation to extend the legislative authority for the Board of Regents of Gunston Hall to establish a memorial to honor a distinguished Virginian, George Mason.

In 1776, George Mason wrote the Virginia Declaration of Rights, the first document in America calling for freedom of the press, freedom of religion, proscription of unreasonable searches, and the right to a speedy trial. The Virginia Declaration of Rights not only served as a model for our national Bill of Rights; but historians believe that Mason's refusal to sign the Constitution for its failure, initially, to include a declaration of rights was a major impetus for eventual adoption of the first ten amendments of the Constitution.

George Mason sacrificed friendships by insisting that a strong national government could not be secured without also firmly establishing individual rights, and Mason inevitably chose his family over politics. He retired from public office following the Constitutional Convention and died just a few years later in 1792. His contemporaries, Thomas Jefferson and James Madison, lived decades longer and were elected presidents of the United States, and thus Mason's contributions were soon overshadowed.

During the 101st Congress legislation authorizing a private, nonprofit organization to establish a memorial to George Mason on Federal land in the District of Columbia passed and was signed by then-President George Bush. In the 102nd Congress, a resolution passed concurring that George Mason was an individual "of preeminent historical significance to the nation," and authorized the placement of the memorial within select Area I lands, in sight of the memorials of two of Mason's closest friends: George Washington and Thomas Jefferson. The legislation was signed into law on April 28, 1992 and approved by the National Capital Memorial Committee in December 1993.

To pay homage to a man whose ideas played a prominent role in the founding of the

American republic, a fitting memorial has been designed for this site, located between Ohio Drive and the 14th Street Bridge, overlooking the Tidal Basin. The memorial designs have been completed and submitted for review to all necessary advisory and review boards and by agreement, the United States Park Service is to maintain the memorial once completed. In accordance with the Commemorative Works Act of 1986, one million dollars must be raised in non-federal funds to construct this historic monument and ground breaking must occur no later than August 1998. The Board of Regents of Gunston Hall Plantation, a historical organization that oversees Mason's family home in Fairfax County, is dedicated to raising the necessary funds for the monument and seeing this important project through to its completion, however, the August 1998 deadline is rapidly approaching. At this time, fund-raising efforts, while successful, will not be completed by the August 1998 deadline. That's why I support this necessary legislation granting an extension until August 2000.

The Commemorative Works Act requires two separate acts of Congress before a memorial may be placed in Area I lands. This monument has met both requirements. The final battle is a fundraising one and the Board of Regents of Gunston Hall has a plan of attack. Last year, they launched Liberty 20000, a campaign to share George Mason's legacy of liberty. The Board of Regents hope to build an endowment fund to ensure a secure future for Gunston Hall and attain the necessary non-federal funds to break ground and complete their efforts to bring George Mason's legacy to the Mall.

This is non-controversial legislation that passed the Senate and the House Resources Committee unanimously. I ask my colleagues to join me in supporting this three-year extension so we may properly commemorate this great statesman and Virginian, George Mason. Mr. HANSEN. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I have no additional speakers. I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Utah (Mr. HANSEN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill, S. 423.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid upon the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HANSEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on S. 423, the Senate bill just passed.

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

There was no objection.

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages in writing from the President of the United States were commu-

nicated to the House by Mr. Sherman Williams, one of his secretaries.

□ 1630

U.S. HOLOCAUST ASSETS COMMISSION ACT OF 1998

Mr. LEACH. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3662) to establish a commission to examine issues pertaining to the disposition of Holocaust-era assets in the United States before, during, and after World War II, and to make recommendations to the President on further action, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 3662

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "U.S. Holocaust Assets Commission Act of 1998".

SEC. 2. ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMISSION.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established a Presidential Commission, to be known as the "Presidential Advisory Commission on Holocaust Assets in the United States" (hereafter in this Act referred to as the "Commission").

(b) MEMBERSHIP.—

(1) NUMBER.—The Commission shall be composed of 21 members, appointed in accordance with paragraph (2).

(2) APPOINTMENTS.—Of the 21 members of the Commission—

(A) 8 shall be private citizens, appointed by the President;

(B) 4 shall be representatives of the Department of State, the Department of Justice, the Department of the Army, and the Department of the Treasury (1 representative of each such Department), appointed by the President;

(C) 2 shall be Members of the House of Representatives, appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives;

(D) 2 shall be Members of the House of Representatives, appointed by the minority leader of the House of Representatives;

(E) 2 shall be Members of the Senate, appointed by the majority leader of the Senate;

(F) 2 shall be Members of the Senate, appointed by the minority leader of the Senate; and

(G) 1 shall be the Chairperson of the United States Holocaust Memorial Council.

(3) CRITERIA FOR MEMBERSHIP.—Each private citizen appointed to the Commission shall be an individual who has a record of demonstrated leadership on issues relating to the Holocaust or in the fields of commerce, culture, or education that would assist the Commission in analyzing the disposition of the assets of Holocaust victims.

(4) ADVISORY PANELS.—The Chairperson of the Commission may, in the discretion of the Chairperson, establish advisory panels to the Commission, including State or local officials, representatives of organizations having an interest in the work of the Commission, or others having expertise that is relevant to the purposes of the Commission.

(5) DATE.—The appointments of the members of the Commission shall be made not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

(c) CHAIRPERSON.—The Chairperson of the Commission shall be selected by the President from among the members of the Commission appointed under subparagraph (A) or (B) of subsection (b)(2).