

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

Mr. HEFNER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, first of all I would like to congratulate the gentleman from California (Chairman PACKARD) for his work, as well as the work of the staff on the committee, which I think is one of the staffs that is most responsive to the needs of the members on the Committee on Appropriations.

This is a good bill. We did the very best that we could with very limited funds, and we targeted it toward quality of life for our men and women in the Armed Forces. I would urge everyone to support this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the conference agreement for the FY 1999 Military Construction bill.

I also want to thank the Subcommittee Chairman, Mr. PACKARD, for his hard work as well as the bipartisan spirit he has encouraged among the members of this committee.

The bill provides \$8.4 billion for military construction, family housing, and the last two rounds of base closings.

Although members recognize the importance of this bill in meeting the needs of the men and women that serve us in the military, this bill is \$734 million dollars below last years level. I can't say that I am happy to see funding for this important bill drop like this.

Within the allocations, though, this is a good agreement that responds to the highest priority needs of our service men and women.

Of course, I am very proud of the years of service that I have given this subcommittee. It used to be easy to forget the folks that serve us in the military, and we have changed that.

The past few years, though, the numbers keep getting lower and lower. It worries me.

Giving our men and women in the military a decent place to live and work is not just one of the keys to military readiness and retention, it is also a basic responsibility we all shoulder.

I urge all members to support the conference agreement.

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

Mr. PACKARD. Mr. Speaker, let me conclude by simply saying this is the last conference report for the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HEFNER) and we want to thank him with a round of applause.

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

Mr. HEFNER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY).

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I will not take the 2 minutes. I simply want to, on this side of the aisle, express our congratulations to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HEFNER) for the wonderful service he has provided this institution.

He has worked for as long as he has been here for decent working conditions and decent living conditions for our American servicemen and service-women, and I think this institution owes him a debt of gratitude for the work he has done on behalf of all of them.

Mr. HEFNER. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. PACKARD. Mr. Speaker, we have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the conference report.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the conference report.

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XV, the yeas and nays are ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were— yeas 417, nays 1, not voting 16, as follows:

[Roll No. 353]

YEAS—417

Abercrombie	Cox	Hall (TX)
Ackerman	Coyne	Hamilton
Aderholt	Cramer	Hansen
Allen	Crane	Hastert
Andrews	Crapo	Hastings (FL)
Archer	Cubin	Hastings (WA)
Armye	Cummings	Hayworth
Bachus	Cunningham	Hefley
Baessler	Danner	Hefner
Baker	Davis (FL)	Herger
Baldacci	Davis (IL)	Hill
Ballenger	Davis (VA)	Hilleary
Barcia	Deal	Hilliard
Barr	DeFazio	Hinchee
Barrett (NE)	DeGette	Hinoyosa
Barrett (WI)	Delahunt	Hobson
Bartlett	DeLauro	Hoekstra
Barton	DeLay	Holden
Bass	Deutsch	Hooley
Bateman	Diaz-Balart	Horn
Becerra	Dick	Hostettler
Bentsen	Dicks	Houghton
Bereuter	Dingell	Hoyer
Berman	Dixon	Hulshof
Berry	Doggett	Hunter
Bilbray	Dooley	Hutchinson
Bilirakis	Doolittle	Hyde
Bishop	Doyle	Inglis
Blagojevich	Dreier	Istook
Bliley	Dunn	Jackson (IL)
Blumenauer	Edwards	Jackson-Lee
Blunt	Ehlers	(TX)
Boehlert	Ehrlich	Jefferson
Boehner	Emerson	Jenkins
Bonilla	Engel	John
Bonior	English	Johnson (CT)
Bono	Ensign	Johnson (WI)
Borski	Eshoo	Johnson, E. B.
Boswell	Etheridge	Johnson, Sam
Boucher	Evans	Jones
Boyd	Everett	Kanjorski
Brady (PA)	Ewing	Kaptur
Brady (TX)	Farr	Kasich
Brown (CA)	Fattah	Kelly
Brown (FL)	Fawell	Kennedy (MA)
Brown (OH)	Fazio	Kennedy (RI)
Bryant	Filner	Kennelly
Bunning	Foley	Kildee
Burr	Forbes	Kilpatrick
Burton	Ford	Kim
Buyer	Fossella	Kind (WI)
Callahan	Fowler	King (NY)
Calvert	Fox	Kingston
Camp	Franks (NJ)	Kleczka
Campbell	Frelinghuysen	Klink
Canady	Frost	Klug
Cannon	Furse	Knollenberg
Capps	Gallely	Kolbe
Cardin	Ganske	Kucinich
Carson	Gejdenson	LaFalce
Castle	Gekas	LaHood
Chabot	Gephardt	Lampson
Chambliss	Gibbons	Lantos
Chenoweth	Gilchrest	Largent
Christensen	Gillmor	Latham
Clay	Gilman	LaTourette
Clayton	Goode	Lazio
Clement	Goodlatte	Leach
Clyburn	Goodling	Lee
Coble	Gordon	Levin
Coburn	Goss	Lewis (CA)
Collins	Graham	Lewis (GA)
Combest	Granger	Lewis (KY)
Condit	Green	Lipinski
Conyers	Greenwood	Livingston
Cook	Gutierrez	LoBiondo
Cooksey	Gutknecht	Lofgren
Costello	Hall (OH)	Lowey

Lucas	Pease	Slaughter
Luther	Pelosi	Smith (MI)
Maloney (CT)	Peterson (MN)	Smith (NJ)
Maloney (NY)	Peterson (PA)	Smith (OR)
Manton	Petri	Smith (TX)
Manzullo	Pickering	Smith, Adam
Markey	Pickett	Smith, Linda
Martinez	Pitts	Snowbarger
Mascara	Pombo	Snyder
Matsui	Pomeroy	Solomon
McCarthy (MO)	Porter	Souder
McCarthy (NY)	Portman	Spence
McCrery	Poshard	Spratt
McDade	Price (NC)	Stabenow
McDermott	Pryce (OH)	Stark
McGovern	Quinn	Stearns
McHale	Radanovich	Stenholm
McHugh	Rahall	Stokes
McInnis	Ramstad	Strickland
McIntosh	Redmond	Stump
McIntyre	Regula	Stupak
McKeon	Reyes	Sununu
McKinney	Riggs	Talent
McNulty	Riley	Tanner
Meehan	Rivers	Tauscher
Meek (FL)	Rodriguez	Tauzin
Meeks (NY)	Roemer	Taylor (MS)
Menendez	Rogan	Taylor (NC)
Metcalf	Rohrabacher	Thomas
Mica	Ros-Lehtinen	Thompson
Millender-McDonald	Rothman	Thornberry
Miller (CA)	Roukema	Thune
Miller (FL)	Roybal-Allard	Thurman
Minge	Royce	Tiahrt
Mink	Rush	Tierney
Mollohan	Ryun	Traficant
Moran (KS)	Sabo	Turner
Moran (VA)	Salmon	Upton
Morella	Sanchez	Velazquez
Murtha	Sanders	Vento
Myrick	Sandlin	Visclosky
Nadler	Sanford	Walsh
Nethercutt	Sawyer	Wamp
Neumann	Saxton	Waters
Ney	Scarborough	Watkins
Northup	Schaefer, Dan	Watt (NC)
Nussle	Schaffer, Bob	Watts (OK)
Oberstar	Schumer	Waxman
Obey	Scott	Weldon (FL)
Olver	Sensenbrenner	Weldon (PA)
Ortiz	Serrano	Weller
Owens	Sessions	Wexler
Oxley	Shadegg	Weygand
Packard	Shaw	White
Pallone	Shays	Wicker
Pappas	Sherman	Wilson
Parker	Shimkus	Wise
Pascrell	Shuster	Wolf
Pastor	Sisisky	Woolsey
Paxon	Skaggs	Wynn
Payne	Skeen	Young (AK)
	Skelton	

NAYS—1

Paul
NOT VOTING—16

Duncan	Moakley	Towns
Frank (MA)	Neal	Whitfield
Gonzalez	Norwood	Yates
Harman	Rangel	Young (FL)
Linder	Rogers	
McCullum	Torres	

□ 2142

So the conference report was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MCDADE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and that I may include tabular and extraneous material on H.R. 4060, the matter to be considered now.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

APPOINTMENT OF CONFEREES ON H.R. 4060, ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1999

Mr. MCDADE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table the bill (H.R. 4060) making appropriations for energy and water development for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1999, and for other purposes, with a Senate amendment thereto, disagree to the Senate amendment, and agree to the conference asked by the Senate.

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

There was no objection.

MOTION TO INSTRUCT CONFEREES OFFERED BY MR. VENTO

Mr. VENTO. Mr. Speaker, I offer a motion to instruct conferees.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. VENTO moves that in resolving the differences between the House and Senate, the managers on the part of the House at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the bill H.R. 4060, be instructed to disagree with the provision in Title IV of the Senate amendment, providing funding for the Denali Commission, and the provision in Title VI of the Senate amendment, the authorization for such Commission.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the rule, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. VENTO) will control 30 minutes and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MCDADE) will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. VENTO).

Mr. VENTO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, this is an important motion that could save the American taxpayers \$20 million in this fiscal year which is included in the Senate bill, unauthorized, and could save tens of millions of dollars in each of fiscal years 2000, 2001, 2002 and 2003.

The Senate provisions of the Energy and Water Development Bill include a small title, title VI, that goes under the innocuous title of Denali Commission. However, if one reads the title, it becomes clear that this Denali Commission is designed to be more than a small help for the isolated communities of Alaska. This commission is destined to become the new Alaska Department of Economic Development funded by the Federal Government and the Federal taxpayers.

This commission is granted broad authority to develop a statewide comprehensive plan for economic and infrastructure development and, as I said, is given \$20 million to approve project and grant proposals in fiscal year 1999. The bill goes on to authorize such sums

as may be necessary for the following 4 years.

It does not take much imagination, given the prominent role of Alaska in the Senate appropriation process, as to what is going to happen with regards to this in future years. Federal funding will be as much as the traffic will bear, fundamentally. While we would be handing over millions of dollars for economic development in Alaska, we are providing a pittance of Federal oversight or accountability.

There are no guidelines or standards as to the grants that are provided. There is no qualification. There is no matching funds. The oversight, of course, by the GAO and the Inspector General will probably prove ample if something like this were ever put in place and point out in graphic detail all the mistakes and political deal that will have been made and the misappropriation and or waste of federal dollars.

This Denali Commission is stacked and is dominated by Alaskans with a board composed of a representative from the Chamber of Commerce, the executive director of the Alaska Municipal League, the president of the University of Alaska, a representative of the governor and a single Federal representative, who would be subject to Senate confirmation, in essence a Senate veto over the one national voice.

Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that the original intent of the legislative proposal was to help those Alaskans who lived in the bush regions, the rural parts of the State. Mr. Speaker, this is far afield of what was considered.

The bill did not have any hearings in the House or Senate. It was inserted into the Senate appropriations bill. As a member of an authorizing committee, I would point out to my colleagues this is how bad law is developed. I would hope that we would instruct our conferees not to agree to this egregious provision, that we go back to the regular order, the regular process in terms of hearings in the sunlight of open hearing and debate on this issue; to pass the authorization, if there is a justification to pass it, through the House and the Senate and then provide for an appropriate commission and funding as justified and reasonable.

I might say, too, that Alaska as a State seems to be doing quite well these days and has not been short-changed with regards to resources of the Federal Government. In fact, it is pointed out that it is one of the leading States in terms of per capita investment by the Federal Government and has a surplus today of \$25 billion due to its oil revenues, so much so that it will be making \$1,400 rebates this year for each person without a sales tax in most parts of Alaska, without an income tax.

I think that the State of Alaska, while having serious problems that we need to work on, and I have worked on many of them over the years, this is not the way to go, this is not the route

to go to create an economic authority to pass out grants. I urge my colleagues to strongly support my motion to instruct conferees, not to accept these provisions.

Mr. Speaker, I include the following two documents for the RECORD:

TAXPAYERS FOR COMMON SENSE,

Washington, DC, July 29, 1998.

Hon. BRUCE VENTO,

House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE VENTO: Taxpayers for Common Sense is pleased to support your motion to instruct House conferees to oppose authorization and funding for the Denali Commission (Title VI) in the FY99 Energy and Water Appropriations bill. We oppose Title VI for the following reasons:

Process: A big new commission doesn't belong in a spending bill. Even if such a commission were a nice idea (Taxpayers for Common Sense doesn't think it is), it is totally outrageous that the five pages of authorization language creating this commission are stuck into an appropriations bill.

Cost: No ceiling. The language authorizes "such sums as may be necessary" for the years 2000 through 2003. If this commission is enacted, no doubt there will be huge pressure to continue it after 2003. In short, Congress would be establishing an open-ended program with no authorization ceiling.

Substance: No controls and poorly drafted. Many other federal public works programs contain safeguards to make sure the money goes to good use. But Title VI requires no local cost sharing (as is required for Corps of Engineers water projects), no targeting of benefits to communities of need, and no criteria for judging priorities. There is nothing in Title VI to prevent money from simply being spread around to politically influential localities for low-priority projects and people who don't need the benefits.

Role: Should federal taxpayers pay for this? The commission would use federal taxpayers' money to accomplish what are clearly state projects addressing unique state concerns. Congress should be eliminating programs like this, not creating more of them.

Waste: Half-baked commission unlikely to achieve goals. With all of these failings, the commission is unlikely to achieve its goals and may very well end up wasting taxpayer money.

When the House considers the motion to go to conference on the FY99 Energy and Water Appropriations bill, Taxpayers for Common Sense urges all Representatives to vote for your motion to instruct on this issue. Please call me at (202) 546-8500 x102 if you have questions.

Sincerely,

RALPH DEGENNARO,
Executive Director

[From the Anchorage Daily News, July 12, 1998]

PERMANENT FUND; RECORD DIVIDEND ON OUR RICHES

The Alaska Permanent Fund provided further proof of its status as the state's most powerful economic engine on Thursday with word that its value grew to about \$25 billion as of June 30, the end of the fiscal year.

That's a staggering number. But a much smaller number is the one that strikes home for most Alaskans—the estimated \$1,460 that each Alaskan will receive this fall for doing no more than living here.

That number is a guess, but Alaska Permanent Fund Corp. spokesman Jim Kelly does promise a record check, meaning something bigger than the \$1,296 sent to each Alaskan in 1997.