

date, we can achieve the confirmation of these three new members to the board.

NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I am pleased to join my colleague from South Dakota, the minority leader, in submitting for the RECORD and acknowledging the importance of a letter we received last week from 40 of our Nation's Governors. This letter is distinctly bipartisan and the signatories represent both coastal and inland states. It unequivocally demonstrates strong national support for reinvesting a substantial portion of federal outer continental shelf (OCS) oil and gas development revenues in coastal conservation and impact assistance; open space and farmland preservation; development and maintenance of federal, state and local parks and recreation areas; and wildlife conservation. The Governors also stressed the importance of recognizing the role of state and local governments in planning and implementing these conservation initiatives.

Although the signatories to this letter did not identify specific legislation to which they are lending support, I believe that S. 25, the Conservation and Reinvestment Act of 1999, of which I am a cosponsor along with 20 other Senators, most nearly achieves the objectives outlined by the Governors. S. 25 has strong bipartisan support and offers Congress the best opportunity to pass legislation this year.

I share the belief of these Governors that the 106th Congress has a historic opportunity to demonstrate our solid commitment to natural resource conservation for the benefit of future generations. I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join hands in advancing this noble effort.

I thank the Governors for their letter. I invite the attention of my colleagues to this very important area which is a win-win-win for those who live in the coastal regions as I do, but also inland Governors who will help us with conservation and preservation.

I ask unanimous consent that this letter be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the letter was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

SEPTEMBER 21, 1999.

Hon. TRENT LOTT,
Majority Leader, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.
Hon. THOMAS DASCHLE,
Minority Leader, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.
Hon. J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker of the House, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

Hon. RICHARD GEPHARDT,
Minority Leader, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATORS LOTT AND DASCHLE AND REPRESENTATIVES HASTERT AND GEPHARDT: The 106th Congress has an historic opportunity to end this century with a major commitment to natural resource conservation that will benefit future generations. We en-

courage you to approve legislation this year that reinvests a meaningful portion of the revenues from federal outer continental shelf (OCS) oil and gas development in coastal conservation and impact assistance, open space and farmland preservation, federal, state and local parks and recreation, and wildlife conservation including endangered species prevention, protection and recovery costs.

Since outer continental shelf revenues come from nonrenewable resources, it makes sense to permanently dedicate them to natural resource conservation rather than dispersing them for general government purposes. Around the nation, citizens have repeatedly affirmed their support for conservation through numerous ballot initiatives and state and local legislation. We applaud both the Senate Energy and Natural Resources committee and the House Resources Committee for conducting a bipartisan and inclusive process that recognizes the unique role of state and local governments in preserving and protecting natural resources.

The legislation reported by the Committees should, to the maximum extent possible, permanently appropriate these new funds to the states, to be used in partnership with local governments and non-profit organizations to implement the various conservation initiatives. We urge the Congress to give state and local governments maximum flexibility in determining how to invest these funds. In this way, federal funds can be tailored to complement state plans, priorities and resources. State and local governments are in the best position to apply these funds to necessary and unique conservation efforts, such as preserving species, while providing for the economic needs of communities. The legislation should be neutral with regard to both existing OCS moratoria and future offshore development, and should not come at the expense of federally supported state programs.

We recognize that dedicating funds over a number of years to any specific use is a difficult budgetary decision. Nevertheless, we believe that the time is right to make this major commitment to conservation along the lines outlined in this letter.

We look forward to working with you to take advantage of this unique opportunity and are available to help ensure that this commitment is fiscally responsible. Thank you for your consideration of these legislative principles as you proceed to enact this important legislation.

Sincerely,

John A. Kitzhaber, Oregon; Mike Leavitt, Utah; Tom Ridge, Pennsylvania; Mike Foster, Louisiana; John G. Rowland, Connecticut; Parris N. Glendening, Maryland; Howard Dean, Vermont; Thomas R. Carper, Delaware; Christine Todd Whitman, New Jersey; James B. Hunt, Jr., North Carolina; Roy B. Barnes, Georgia; Jim Hodges, South Carolina; Lincoln Almond, Rhode Island; Angus S. King, Jr., Maine; Gary Locke, Washington; Argeo Paul Cellucci, Massachusetts; Cecil H. Underwood, West Virginia; Marc Rancot, Montana; Don Siegelman, Alabama; Gray Davis, California; Mel Carnahan, Missouri; Benjamin J. Cayetano, Hawaii; Jane Dru Hull, Arizona; Dirk Kempthorne, Idaho; Tony Knowles, Alaska; George H. Ryan, Illinois; James S. Gilmore III, Virginia; Jeanne Shabean, New Hampshire; Bill Graves, Kansas; George E. Pataki, New York; Paul E. Patton, Kentucky; Tommy G. Thompson, Wisconsin; Bill Owens, Colorado; Mike Huckabee, Arkansas; Frank Keating, Oklahoma; Jim Geringer, Wyoming; Edward T.

Schafer, North Dakota; Frank O'Bannon, Indiana; Kirk Fordice, Mississippi; William J. Janklow, South Dakota.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I thank the majority leader. We recognize and applaud the desire of a number of groups and organizations in this country to take the proceeds from this non-renewable resource and reinvest a portion of these outer continental shelf revenues in the conservation and enhancement of our renewable resources.

When the Land and Water Conservation Fund was created more than thirty years ago, the intention was for revenues from off-shore oil and gas drilling to be deposited into the fund, allowing federal and state governments to protect green space, improve wildlife habitat and purchase lands for conservation purposes.

In my state of South Dakota this program has been particularly beneficial, helping local and state governments to purchase park lands and develop facilities in municipal and state parks throughout the state.

Unfortunately, the Land and Water Conservation Fund has rarely received adequate funding.

Congress has the opportunity this year to pass legislation that would finally ensure consistent funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund and provide a permanent stream of revenue for conservation.

We applaud the efforts of the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources as well as the House Committee on Natural Resources for conducting the process thus far in a fair and bi-partisan manner.

We encourage these committees to continue their progress so that Congress as a whole can debate and pass what may well be the most significant conservation effort of the century.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Several Senators addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the Senator from Utah.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to speak as in morning business for up to 10 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I may object. I have been standing here about 45 minutes waiting to speak. I thought we were going to go back and forth across the aisle. I want to speak on the bill, not as in morning business. Since I like the Senator from Utah so much, I will not object. I wanted to make my point.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is the Senator from Iowa requesting time to speak?

Mr. HARKIN. I did not hear the request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is the Senator from Iowa requesting, as part