

Specifically, the two reports call on Congress to increase our investment in the study, management, and protection of our oceans. Relative to their size and economic value, funding for ocean research and management pales in comparison for other natural resource programs. The federal government spends over \$10 billion to manage public lands and more than \$16 billion on space exploration.

In 2001, the Pew Commission recommended a doubling of the NOAA budget to \$6 billion over 5 years. Similarly, the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy recommended an additional \$3.9 billion in new spending on top of what we already allocate to NOAA. Yet, the legislation we are debating today sets NOAA's budget for Fiscal Year 2006 at only \$3.95 billion. This level is only a modest increase of \$28 million over funding levels enacted in FY '05 (\$3.92 billion total).

Now I have a great deal of respect for the Chairman, Mr. WOLF, and the Ranking Member, Mr. MOLLOHAN, and I know that they did the best they could with this bill under the tight budget allocations that they were forced to deal with. In this conference report there are modest increases to fishery and coastal management programs but these are unfortunately accompanied by cuts to other vital programs such as marine sanctuaries, the Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program, and the National Sea Grant Program.

Our economy, security, and health all hinge on healthy ocean ecosystems. I look forward to working with the Chairman and the Ranking Member on implementing the recommendations of the Ocean Commissions and investing appropriately in our coasts and oceans in the FY 2007 budget.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam Speaker, I rise to applaud the passage of the FY 2006 Science-State-Justice-Commerce Appropriations Bill, which includes funding for Montgomery and Prince George's Counties Joint Gang Suppression and Prevention Initiative in my district. I salute my colleague Mr. WOLF and thank him for his leadership on confronting the issue of gang violence in the Washington metropolitan area.

The federal funding approved today builds on the ongoing work of the Joint County Gang Prevention Task Force, which was established by the county executives of Montgomery and Prince George's Counties in February 2004. This funding will allow for the establishment of centralized anti-gang units within each county's police force, enabling them to pursue a zero-tolerance policy for gang violence. A cross jurisdictional community-based program, serving youth and families, would be created to provide gang prevention education, mentoring, and outreach services. Critical after-school programs would be funded for areas where there is a high incidence of gang activity.

Law enforcement research shows that there are approximately 3,600 gang members in Maryland, the District of Columbia and Virginia and that there are nine major active gangs and more than 100 additional crews region wide. Montgomery County Police estimate that there are 20 to 22 active gangs with approximately 540 to 560 active members and associates. Prince George's County Police estimate that there are 50 crews or gangs in that county with a total of over 400 members. Officials in Prince George's County note a recent increase in the number of Latino gangs and

report that the criminal activity of these gangs has expanded to sophisticated car theft rings and prostitution.

This funding will help the people of Montgomery and Prince George's Counties fight the growing problem of gang violence and teach young people that gang life is not the road to success, but rather the path to prison. It is important that we provide our law enforcement officials, our teachers, and our community leaders with the support they need as they work to keep our youth safe from gangs and teach them the long term consequences of joining a gang.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. BIGGERT). 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 10 of rule XX, the yeas and nays are ordered.

Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on the motion to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Any record vote on the postponed question will be taken tomorrow.

VETERANS HOUSING AND EMPLOYMENT IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2005

Mr. BOOZMAN. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3665) to amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide adaptive housing assistance to disabled veterans residing temporarily in housing owned by a family member and to make direct housing loans to Native American veterans, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 3665

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) *SHORT TITLE.*—This Act may be cited as the “Veterans Housing and Employment Improvement Act of 2005”.

(b) *TABLE OF CONTENTS.*—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

TITLE I—HOUSING ASSISTANCE

Sec. 101. Adaptive housing assistance for disabled veterans residing temporarily in housing owned by family member.

Sec. 102. Permanent authority to make direct housing loans to Native American veterans.

Sec. 103. Extension of eligibility for direct loans for Native American veterans to a veteran who is the spouse of a Native American.

Sec. 104. Terminology amendments to revise references to certain veterans in provisions relating to eligibility for compensation or dependency and indemnity compensation.

TITLE II—EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Sec. 201. Extension of operation of the President's National Hire Veterans Committee.

Sec. 202. Additional duty for the Assistant Secretary of Labor for Veterans' Employment and Training to raise awareness of skills of veterans and of the benefits of hiring veterans.

Sec. 203. Modifications to the Advisory Committee on Veterans Employment and Training.

TITLE III—HOMELESS VETERANS REINTEGRATION PROGRAM

Sec. 301. Reauthorization of appropriations for Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program.

TITLE IV—TECHNICAL, CLARIFYING, AND CLERICAL AMENDMENTS

Sec. 401. Technical and clarifying amendments to new traumatic injury protection coverage under Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance.

Sec. 402. Technical and clerical amendments.

TITLE I—HOUSING ASSISTANCE

SEC. 101. ADAPTIVE HOUSING ASSISTANCE FOR DISABLED VETERANS RESIDING TEMPORARILY IN HOUSING OWNED BY FAMILY MEMBER.

(a) *ASSISTANCE AUTHORIZED.*—Chapter 21 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by inserting after section 2102 the following new section:

“§2102A. Assistance for veterans residing temporarily in housing owned by family member

“(a) In the case of a disabled veteran who is described in subsection (a)(2) or (b)(2) of section 2101 of this title and who is residing, but does not intend to permanently reside, in a residence owned by a member of such veteran's family, the Secretary may assist the veteran in acquiring such adaptations to such residence as are determined by the Secretary to be reasonably necessary because of the veteran's disability.

“(b) The assistance authorized under subsection (a) may not exceed—

“(1) \$10,000, in the case of a veteran described in section 2101(a)(2) of this title; or

“(2) \$2,000, in the case of a veteran described in section 2101(b)(2) of this title.

“(c) The assistance authorized by subsection (a) shall be limited in the case of any veteran to one residence.

“(d) Assistance under this section shall be provided in accordance with such regulations as the Secretary may prescribe.

“(e) No assistance may be provided under this section after the end of the five-year period that begins on the date of the enactment of the Veterans Housing and Employment Improvement Act of 2005.”.

(b) *LIMITATIONS ON ADAPTIVE HOUSING ASSISTANCE.*—Section 2102 of such title is amended—

(1) in the matter in subsection (a) preceding paragraph (1)—

(A) by striking “shall be limited in the case of any veteran to one housing unit, and necessary land therefor, and”; and

(B) by striking “veteran but shall not exceed \$50,000 in any one case—” and inserting “veteran—”; and