habitat restoration projects around the Sound and we manage shoreline cleanups in Connecticut, partnering with citizens, agencies and other organizations to achieve results.

Sincerely,

ROBIN KRIESBERG,
Director, Environmental Projects.

Mr. BISHOP of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. ISRAEL), the cochair of the Long Island Sound Caucus.

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in very strong support of the reauthorization of the Long Island Sound Restoration Act. I want to begin by thanking Chairman YOUNG and Ranking Member OBERSTAR for their efforts to bring this legislation to the floor today. I want to in particular thank my cochair of the Long Island Sound Taskforce, Mr. SIMMONS, and Mr. BISHOP for their leadership on this important legislation and their ongoing efforts to put politics aside and advance the cause of environmental and economic preservation of the Long Island Sound.

This is, as the gentleman from Connecticut said, a classic example that there is no Republican or Democratic way to protect a body of water. This is something that we need to develop consensus on and this bill does just that. This bill is bipartisan, and it is bicoastal at the same time. I am hoping that when we come back next year we can continue that spirit of bipartisanship and advance the Long Island Sound stewardship program which Mr. BISHOP, Mr. SIMMONS, and I have been working on; and I am confident that the same sense of consensus will prevail.

As we have heard, Mr. Speaker, the Long Island Sound is one of America's great natural wonders. It sustains the diversity of birds, wildlife, marine organisms and serves as a recreational magnet and economic generator to the tens of millions of American who live within 50 miles of its shores. The Long Island Sound is an important part of America's heritage. Nathan Hale slipped across the Long Island Sound, arrived in Huntingtown. It played a critical part in the American Revolution. It is important to our economy. It is important to our national identity. It is important to our environment.

For thousands of years, the sound has been a productive and a central resource for the human inhabitants occupying its shores. Three New York counties, 24 Connecticut towns border the sound. That puts pressure on this environmental asset in terms of surface run off from some of the most densely populated areas in the country. Over 100 sewage treatment plants discharge a combined one billion gallons of waste into the sound each day.

Thankfully, in 2000 the Long Island Sound Restoration Act authorized the Federal Government to spend $40 million annually over 5 years to clean the sound. Now we need to continue that important effort.

There is still a lot of work to be done. We have made some progress, but not enough. Nitrogen levels have decreased since 2000, but the sound continues to suffer from significant nitrogen pollution, and high nitrogen levels in the sound lead to decreased levels of dissolved oxygen in the water, a condition called hypoxia, which kills marine life and destroys the delicate ecosystem of the sound.

This reauthorization gives us an opportunity to continue the important work of respecting and preserving the Long Island Sound, not only as a critical environmental asset for the United States of America but also as an important economic generator.

Once again I want to thank the gentleman from New York (Mr. BISHOP), the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SIMMONS), my cochair of the Long Island Sound; the ranking member and chairman for bringing us to this point today and urge support for this bill.

Mr. BISHOP of New York. Mr. Speaker, I will close simply by urging my colleagues to support this very worthwhile and very important piece of legislation. Again I want to thank the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SIMMONS) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. ISRAEL) for their great work on this important bill.

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

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, I will close simply by saying, as has been pointed out, 8 million people live directly within the Long Island Watershed, 28 million people within 50 miles, and millions more visit those areas each year. This is a bill that is very important for the environment and very important for the economy. Both of these bills amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, and both the BEACH Act and the Long Island Sound legislation are good bills that all Members on both sides can be very proud of.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to support H.R. 3963, a bill to extend the authorization of appropriations for the Long Island Sound Program until 2010. A healthy Sound is critical to the communities surrounding the urban watershed as well as to the wildlife within it. I offer my congratulations to my colleagues on the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Mr. BISHOP and Mr. SIMMONS, for working so diligently on this imperative bill.

Long Island Sound stretches 110 miles, from New York City to southern New England. One in ten Americans lives within an hour's drive of the Sound, which provides over $5 billion for the local economy. Over 120 species of finfish currently inhabit its waters, supplying a diverse population for sport fishing and the seafood industry. The Sound supports its neighboring industries with not only products for sale but also an important means of transportation. It provides aquatic recreation activities, sightseeing, and beautiful views for homes along its shores. Indeed, the Sound is the foundation of livelihood for many.

However, many pressures from residential, industrial, and agricultural activities have caused the natural conditions of this region to be altered. Economic advances in the watershed have changed land surfaces, reduced open spaces, and restricted access to the Sound, while increasing several types of pollution in the waters.

These harmful effects are not a hopeless ending to the Sound. In the early 1900s, the Sound's population of terrapins was near the point of extinction due to overfarming to feed the nation's appetite for turtle soup. During Prohibition, however, sherry—a key ingredient in turtle soup—was forbidden to be sold. The farming for the terrapins waned and the population was able to rebound to its natural state, even after sherry became legal once more.

Similar progress to restore and protect the populations and quality of the Sound are still necessary, this time in a more direct manner. The Long Island Program contributes this support that is so direly needed.

I support this bill and urge my colleagues to take swift action for its passage.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 3963, which would reauthorize appropriations through fiscal year 2010 for the Office of Management Conference of the Long Island Sound Study and for grants to implement the Long Island Sound Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan.

Protecting and preserving the environment is one of the most important jobs I have as a Member of Congress. We simply will not have a world to live in if we continue our neglectful ways.

Long Island Sound, which contributes more than $5 billion annually to the regional economy, is one of the most populated and visited areas of our country. In fact, approximately 10 percent of the American population lives within the Long Island Sound watershed.

It is a source of livelihood, nourishment and recreation for many in Connecticut and elsewhere, and it is critical that we treat it well.

In the interest of preserving open space, increasing access to the Sound, and protecting and managing important habitats, the reauthorization of this funding is needed to identify and protect coastal areas along this precious estuary with significant biological, scientific or recreational value.

I am pleased this legislation is being considered so we ensure funding for this critical habitat will continue to be preserved and urge passage of the legislation.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DUNCAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3963.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ETHICS IN GOVERNMENT ACT OF 1978 AMENDMENT

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4311) to amend section 105(b)(3) of the Ethics in Government Act of 1978.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 4311

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

That section 105(b)(3) of the Ethics in Government Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.) is amended by striking subparagraph (E).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 4311 currently under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge my colleagues to support H.R. 4311, which would reauthorize a crucial judicial security measure. Under the Ethics in Government Act, judges and other high-level judicial branch officials must file annual disclosure reports. In the 105th Congress, we enacted the Identity Theft and Assumption Deterrence Act of 1998, which allows the Judicial Conference to redact statutorily required information in a financial disclosure report where the release of that information could endanger the filer or his or her family. This provision was extended for 4 years in the 107th Congress and is due to expire on December 31 of this year.

H.R. 4311 would permanently extend this important component of Federal judicial security. This legislation was recently passed on the House floor on November 9 by a vote of 375–45 as a provision of H.R. 1751; but since the other body has not taken up that bill, I have introduced this freestanding measure.

Judges today face a number of threats from convicted criminals seeking revenge against those who have presided over their trial to defendants seeking to influence a judge during a trial. In some cases, Federal judges and their families have been subject to more than just threats, as has been demonstrated by the murder of Judge Joan Lefkow's husband and elderly mother in their own home by a former plaintiff in Chicago earlier this year.

Since the authority was enacted in 1998 and renewed in 2001, Federal judges have been able to request the temporary redaction of some or all of the information on their disclosure forms. The Marshals Service must agree that the information on their disclosure forms could be used to harm the judge or his or her family in order for it to be redacted.

Disclosure information might seem to some to be an unlikely source of useful information to someone looking to harm a judge. That is a flawed assumption. For example, the fact that a judge's daughter has received a scholarship from a particular college must be reported on that judge's disclosure form. This information can then be used to identify the location of the judge's daughter.

Under this existing authority, judges are still required to make semi-annual disclosures and are only allowed to redact information during the time in which a threat exists. Once the threat ends, the information is once again made public. The GAO undertook an audit of this authority in 2004 and found minimal issues.

As a strong proponent of government openness and oversight, I recognize the impact of redaction authority. However, I also recognize that judges should not be forced to put their lives on the line or those of their families simply by doing their jobs. This fair and impartial administration of justice requires freedom from fear and intimidation. This legislation helps protect judges and their families from fear of reprisal.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

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

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4311. This bill protects judges against certain security threats. The September 11 tragedy and events thereafter have only heightened the security concerns that make this legislation necessary.

H.R. 4311 permanently extends the ability of judges to request redaction of their financial disclosure reports. The current redaction authority sunsets at the end of this year. Thus it is imperative that we act quickly to get this bill to the Senate where we hope it will pass before the end of the year so that the legislation can be enacted.

The redaction authority for judges is appropriately limited and thus should not raise concerns about undue restrictions on public access to financial disclosure reports. A judge's report may only be redacted if the Judicial Conference and the U.S. Marshals Service both find that revealing the personal and sensitive information could endanger that particular judge. Furthermore, the report can only be redacted to the extent necessary to protect the judge and only for so long as a danger exists.

The redaction authority has not been abused to date. Of over 2,000 judges filing reports in 2000, only 6 percent had their reports redacted in any way. Typically, the information redacted is limited to such things as a spouse's place of work, location of a judge's second home and things of that nature. It is obvious how a person of ill will could misuse that information to harm a judge or the judge's family.

This law is tightly drawn, and it requires the Judicial Conference, in concert with the Department of Justice, to file an annual report detailing the number and circumstances of all of the redactions. This statutory reporting requirement enables Congress to monitor for any abuse of the redaction authority, so I would urge my colleagues to vote ''yes'' on this legislation.

□ 1130

Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. SLAUGHTER).

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

This is a critically important piece of legislation that everyone in the House should support without reservation. H.R. 4311, which amends the 1978 Ethics in Government Act, will make permanent an expiring provision which protects the safety of our Nation's judges as well as the integrity of our judicial system.

And I know that everyone here remembers, as Mr. SENSENBRENNER just reminded us, the horrifying murders of a Chicago judge's family members this past summer. These crimes were committed by an individual, who was angered by a ruling on his case. He went to the judge's home to confront her and, while there, shot her husband and mother in cold blood.

The bill we have before us will allow judges who have been threatened to withhold certain personal information from public record, information, such as their home address, that has been used in the past for the most tragic of ends.

And I want to emphasize that I strongly support the bill and I commend the chairman of the Judiciary Committee for bringing it to the floor today. No one here wishes to avoid our responsibility to protect those men and women who form the bedrock of our legal system, nor do any of us desire to in any way detract from the significance of this bill.

However, Mr. Speaker, I believe that this bill does not go far enough. My conscience compels me to pause here and remind my friends on the other side of the aisle that we are discussing a reform to the Ethics in Government Act, which should be extended to really talk about ethics in government, a vitally important piece of legislation which, when it was passed, confirmed the national commitment to the creation and preservation of the government as good and as ethical as the people it serves.

I, therefore, cannot let this moment pass without speaking of what has become a standing source of shame for this body and for this Nation: the collapse of ethical conduct within our House. Mr. Speaker, I have no choice but to speak of the topic here and now because this is the last time the House will address the subject of ethics this year.

Ethics reform has not made the Republican leadership's December agenda, just like it has not made the cut all

year long. But the ethical conduct of Members of this body is on the minds of those in whose interest we claim to act, the American people. They are demanding that action be taken, and it is on their behalf that I speak now.

The bill we will hopefully approve today is an example of the kind of legislation we should be passing here. It puts the well-being of the American people first. But the majority ushered in the year by putting itself first, gutting the ethical standards imposed on Members of this body so that they could more easily take advantage of the people's trust and get away with it.

With a little time and distance, it is now painfully obvious why the leadership went to such great lengths to roll back the ethics rules of the conference and of this House. A prolonged and impassioned public outcry forced the majority to abandon this blatant assault on ethics several months later, but the battle was far from over.

Even though the Republicans were shamed into retreat on the ethical assault, we have not had a working Ethics Committee in this House all year and we still do not today. As Members may recall, the majority initially attempted to eliminate its power, and when it could not do that, it fired the qualified investigative staff and tried to deliberately politicize the committee, and we have not had a working ethics process since. Only recently have we been able to forge an agreement which could restart the ethics process next year. And for both his principled stand in defense of the rules of the body and for his patience and commitment to restoring the ethics process, I commend the ranking member of the committee.

But the real question still lingers: What was the majority hiding? Despite their best efforts, the truth has come forth, and every day brings a new revelation which demonstrates the extent to which power has been abused and corruption scandals have mounted. Indictments and resignations have dominated the headlines. And Member after Member of this body has been shown they have committed their votes not in the public interest, but to special interests, those who seek the benefit of the few at the expense of the many.

Critical decisions at Federal agencies are being unethically manipulated by White House political operatives, and the results of these decisions are having a direct impact on the people of this Nation.

Make no mistake about it. This White House and this leadership have placed America up for sale to the highest bidder, and it is the American people paying the price while corrupt politicians and special interests reap the profits.

Citizens of this Nation have watched it all, stunned, disillusioned, and increasingly angry. The majority leader of the House repeatedly admonished on ethical violations and is now indicted for money laundering. A Member resigned in shame and pled guilty to bribery. New investigations by the Justice Department threatening to embroil many more of our colleagues in the growing stench of corruption surrounding Republican lobbyist Jack Abramoff.

And as the public trust is battered and broken and potential ethics investigations pile up, the Ethics Committee chairman, who fired an experienced staff and supported changing the rules, has announced he will not conduct additional investigations into serious allegations of corruption because we do not have the money. Apparently, we cannot afford an ethics process in this government, only more tax cuts.

From this majority leadership, there has been no leadership. And the startling truth is it has been almost 12 months since we have had a functioning ethics process in the House. We still have no working Ethics Committee. We have no ethics reform. And after 12 months, we have scandal and deception and only silence, and that has become a national shame.

The time for accountability is now. The time for real reform is now. And the time for change is certainly now. And surely, Mr. Speaker, America can do better than this.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO).

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this bill to make permanent an expiring provision in the current law that ensures protection for judges and for their families when they are threatened and they may be in danger. This is a much-needed revision of the 1978 Ethics in Government Act. But, in addition, this House would do well to pass a 2005 Ethics in Government Act of its own.

Indeed, we have seen in recent months how broken the ethics process in this body is. Had the majority shown as much initiative in fixing that process as it has in bringing this bill to the floor, perhaps we would not have seen Members of that majority indicted or pleading guilty to charges of bribery, money laundering, and tax evasion. As it stands, the Washington Post says investigators are now looking into the actions of at least a half dozen Members of Congress, senior congressional staff, one former Deputy Secretary of the Interior, and several lobbyists.

In the wake of the tragic murder of a Chicago judge last summer, the underlying legislation we consider takes steps to protect that judiciary. But in the wake of countless scandals that continue to bring shame to this institution and the majority, Democrats believe that the time has come to protect the integrity of the judicial process as well.

Mr. Speaker, just as we must protect the hardworking judicial officials in our country, so must we protect the American people, whom this breakdown in the ethics process impacts the most. As the leadership of this House spends more time in courthouses than in the people's House doing the people's business, they are the ones that we are putting at risk when we fail to protect our homeland, as the September 11 Commission chairman found just this week.

I support this legislation. But the time has come to put the needs of people before the special interests of the lobbyists.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. CAPUANO).

Mr. CAPUANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this bill. I think it is a fantastic bill. I congratulate the chairman and ranking member for putting this bill forward. It has been wisely thought out and well written, and I look forward to voting in its favor. However, it is not the only ethics issue that we have.

I am not one who has ever in any situation said to anybody that anyone should be considered guilty until proven so; however, the process that we have here has not been working, and we all know it. And as one Member, while we are doing something on ethics, I thought it was important to mention that this House should also be moving forward on our own ethics investigations.

For 1 year we have had an Ethics Committee that really has not done much. It has been stalled. It has been delayed. It has been sidetracked. I am not going to presume what the results of any of the investigations would be. I think that would be wrong and inappropriate. Nonetheless, as one Member, I am embarrassed for this country that we have failed to do our job and our duty to look into the ethics issues of our own Members when allegations are brought forth.

This bill is a good bill. This bill is something that we should be doing. But it is not enough if we really want to deal with the ethics issues that are facing the American people today.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, this is a very important bill. It deals with the protection of judges, and I would hope that the Members of the House would pass the bill.

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

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, I deeply appreciate all of the comments from my friends on the other side of the aisle about what a great bill this is. I thank them for that. It is a great bill.

But what we have seen here with this great bill and this necessary bill being brought up in order to protect judges and their families and court personnel is another example of why this House has sunk into partisan politics. Partisan politics should have nothing to do with whether or not we give the judicial conference the authority to redact personal information necessary to

protect the safety of judges and their families. But nonetheless, we have heard from three Members on the other side of the aisle in basically making a partisan attack.

Mr. Speaker, there is a time for partisan politics and there is a time to deal with the people's business. This bill deals with the people's business. I appreciate the support from the folks on the other side of the aisle, but, Mr. Speaker, this was not the vehicle to launch a partisan attack, and I am sorry that they chose to do so.

I urge support of the bill.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BISHOP of Utah). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4311.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

SECURING AIRCRAFT COCKPITS AGAINST LASERS ACT OF 2005

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1400) to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide penalties for aiming laser pointers at airplanes, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 1400

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 ''Securing Aircraft Cockpits Against Lasers Act of 2005''.

SEC. 2. PROHIBITION AGAINST AIMING A LASER POINTER AT AN AIRCRAFT.

(a) OFFENSE.—Chapter 2 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''§ 39. Aiming a laser pointer at an aircraft

''(a) Whoever knowingly aims the beam of a laser pointer at an aircraft in the special aircraft jurisdiction of the United States, or at the flight path of such an aircraft, shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than 5 years, or both.

''(b) As used in this section, the term 'laser pointer' means any device designed or used to amplify electromagnetic radiation by stimulated emission that emits a beam designed to be used by the operator as a pointer or highlighter to indicate, mark, or identify a specific position, place, item, or object.''.

(b) AMENDMENT TO TABLE OF SECTIONS.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 2 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new item:

''39. Aiming a laser pointer at an aircraft.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 1400 currently under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1400, the Securing Aircraft Cockpits Against Lasers Act of 2005.

Over the past several years, there have been an increasing number of alarming reports to the Federal Aviation Administration concerning the aiming of lasers into airplane cockpits. Since 1990 the FAA reports there have been well over 400 incidents and more than 100 in the past year alone. It was not that long ago that there was a frenzy of media coverage surrounding these types of events. While the media coverage may have subsided, the threat has not.

Laser pointers, while readily obtainable and relatively inexpensive, are not toys. In 1997, the Food and Drug Administration issued a warning to parents and school officials concerning handheld laser pointers. The FDA warning stated that ''the light energy that laser pointers can aim into the eye can be more damaging than staring directly at the sun.'' Federal law requires a warning on laser pointers about this potential hazard to the eyes, and that is 21 Code of Federal Regulations 1040.

FAA research has shown that laser illuminations can temporarily disorient or disable a pilot, particularly during critical stages of flights such as landings and takeoffs. Direct laser exposure to the eye can even cause temporary blindness. In some cases these laser illuminations can cause permanent damage. In fact, just last year, a laser aimed into a Delta Airlines flight over Salt Lake City injured the eye of one of the plane's pilots. This type of interference, whether it is intentional effort to sabotage a plane or just a misguided prank, should not be tolerated because of the potential for catastrophe.

□ 1145

H.R. 1400 is a straightforward, commonsense measure aimed at deterring and prosecuting those who would willfully committ a senseless act of potential sabotage.

The bill would impose criminal penalties upon any individual who knowingly aims a laser pointer at an aircraft within the special aircraft jurisdiction of the United States.

These criminal penalties include fines of up to $250,000, and imprisonment of up to 5 years. The bill before us today includes an amendment proposed in mark-up offered by gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE).

During committee consideration of the bill, the gentlewoman suggested that the bill include a definition for the term ''laser pointer.'' That definition has been added to the bill, and I thank the gentlewoman for her important contribution.

Finally, I would like to thank the gentleman from Florida (Mr. KELLER), the author and lead proponent of H.R. 1400, for his leadership on this issue. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

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

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I am a cosponsor of H.R. 1400, and I urge my colleagues to support it. The rash of incidents involving hand-held lasers have fueled a growing concern within the aviation industry. In fact, since November of November of 2004, airline pilots have reported over 100 incidents of lasers being aimed into their cockpits.

The potential harmful effects of such lasers is quite serious. The FAA research has shown that even some low-level lasers can temporarily disable and disorient a pilot during critical stages of flight. Needless to say, the results could be devastating.

Although I have some concern that when the bill is applied, it will likely involve some stupid or misguided young person fooling around with a laser beam, we all realize that the conduct the bill prohibits can be very dangerous, whether done by a fool or by a terrorist. So it must be strongly discouraged.

Since the bill does not have mandatory minimum sentencing, the Sentencing Commission and the courts can apply the appropriate punishment for violators based on specific facts and circumstances of the case.

After this bill is passed, as a further precautionary step, perhaps the appropriate committee of jurisdiction could also consider requiring manufactures of laser products to issue strong notices and warnings on lasers and packaging alerting them to the provisions of this law so that all will be on notice.

But for now I think this bill is an appropriate step for Congress to address this potentially disastrous problem. Mr. Speaker, I support the bill and urge my colleagues to do the same.

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

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. KELLER).

Mr. KELLER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, aiming a laser beam into the cockpit of an airplane is a clear and present danger to the safety of all of those on board the aircraft. It is only a matter of time before one of