it's very important to understand that the question of water rights for Rocky Mountain National Park wilderness is entirely different from many considered before, and is far simpler.

To begin with, it has long been recognized under the laws of the United States and Colorado, including a decision of the Colorado Supreme Court, that Rocky Mountain National Park already has extensive federal reserved water rights arising from the creation of the national park itself.

This is not, so far as I have been able to find out, a controversial decision, because there is a widespread consensus that there should be no new water projects developed within Rocky Mountain National Park. And, since the park sits astride the continental divide, there's no higher land around from which streams flow into the park, so there is no possibility of any upstream diversions. And it's important to emphasize that in any event water rights associated with wilderness would amount only to guarantees that water will continue to flow through and out of the park as it always has. This preserves the natural environment of the park, but it doesn't affect downstream water use.

The bottom line is that once water leaves the park, it will continue to be available for diversion and use under Colorado law regardless of whether or not lands within the park are designated as wilderness.

These legal and practical realities are reflected in my bill—as in my predecessor's—by inclusion of a finding that because the park already has these extensive reserved rights to water, there is no need for any additional reservation of such right, and an explicit disclaimer that the bill effects any such reservation.

Some may ask, why should we designate wilderness in a national park? Isn't park protection the same as wilderness, or at least as good? The answer is that the wilderness designation will give an important additional level of protection to most of the park.

Our national park system was created, in part, to recognize and preserve prime examples of outstanding landscape. At Rocky Mountain National Park in particular, good Park Service management over the past 83 years has kept most of the park in a natural condition. And all the lands that are covered by this bill are currently being managed, in essence, to protect their wilderness character. Formal wilderness designation will no longer leave this question to the discretion of the Park Service, but will make it clear that within the designated areas there will never be roads, visitor facilities, or other manmade features that interfere with the spectacular natural beauty and wildness of the mountains.

This kind of protection is especially important for a park like Rocky Mountain, which is relatively small by western standards. As nearby land development and alteration has accelerated in recent years, the pristine nature of the park's backcountry becomes an increasingly rare feature of Colorado's landscape.

Further, Rocky Mountain National Park's popularity demands definitive and permanent protection for wild areas against possible pressures for development within the park. While only about one tenth the size of Yellowstone National Park, Rocky Mountain sees nearly the same number of visitors each year as does our first national park.

At the same time, designating these carefully selected portions of Rocky Mountain as wilderness will make other areas, now restricted under interim wilderness protection management, available for overdue improvements to park roads and visitor facilities.

So, Mr. Speaker, this bill will protect some of our nation's finest wild lands. It will protect existing rights. It will not limit any existing opportunity for new water development. And it will affirm our commitment in Colorado to preserving the very features that make our State such a remarkable place to live. So, I think the bill deserves prompt enactment.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. SUE WILKINS MYRICK

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 9, 2006

Mrs. MYRICK. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to participate in the following votes. If I had been present, I would have voted as follows:

February 28, 2006: Rollcall vote 14, on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 1096, to establish the Thomas Edison National Historical Park, I would have voted ''aye.'' Rollcall vote 15, on the motion to suspend the rules and agree to H. Res. 668—celebrating the 40th anniversary of Texas Western's 1966 NCAA Basketball Championship, I would have voted ''aye.'' Rollcall vote 16, on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 1259—to authorize the President to award a gold medal on behalf of the Congress, I would have voted ''aye.''

March 1, 2006: Rollcall vote 17, on the motion to suspend the rules and agree to H. Res. 357—honoring Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, I would have voted ''aye.''

March 2, 2006: Rollcall vote 18, on ordering the previous question, H. Res. 702—providing for consideration of H.R. 4167, to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act, I would have voted ''aye.''

TRIBUTE TO FAMILY-LIFE TV

HON. PHIL ENGLISH

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 9, 2006

Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize and honor the 30th Anniversary of Family-Life TV. Throughout its existence, Family-Life TV has offered quality religious, entertainment, and informational programming and it is my hope that it will continue to provide these services long into the future.

Founded on March 7, 1976, Family-Life TV was the brainchild of David J. Croyle. Too young to legally run the station himself, David's father, Reverend Robert F. Croyle, served as the station's first President. This role passed to David upon his father's death in 2001.

The station initially broadcasted three hours each day and only reached cable subscribers in central Armstrong County. Since that time, Family-Life TV has grown rapidly. It now offers 24 hour programming and reaches cable subscribers well beyond its initial range. Additionally, Family-Life TV has ventured into the realm of the internet, touching the lives of individuals from over 30 different nations worldwide.

Family-Life TV has become the thread that binds the Armstrong community together and ties it to the world. For this, its record of impeccable quality programming, and its 30 years of broadcasting, Family-Life TV deserves thanks and congratulations.

Mr. Speaker, I hope my fellow members will join me at this time, and once again congratulate Family-Life TV on its 30th Anniversary and wish it a long and successful future.

OPPOSITION TO LIMITATIONS ON RELIGIOUS FREEDOM IN ROMANIA

HON. WALTER B. JONES

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 9, 2006

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my opposition to any limitations on religious freedom In Romania.

The religion bill that recently passed the Romanian Senate, discriminates against virtually all Christians except the dominant Orthodox Church. The bill that now stands before the Chamber of Deputies would in many ways treat Evangelical Protestants and Catholics as inferior.

The Romanian bill would restrict minority religious education and the use of church cemeteries, and would not protect private legal rights for all religious denominations or allow tax incentives to donors.

The spokesperson for a leading human rights group in Bucharest said ''the draft law infringes many laws and the Constitution of Romania, as well as international human rights commitments to which Romania is subject'' and that ''it would close the possibility for religious communities, such as the Greek Catholic churches, to reclaim any property in the hands of other faiths.'' The head of the Romanian Evangelical Alliance, Dr. Paul Negrut, pronounced NAY GROOTS, with whom I met two weeks ago said: ''this is a very critical time for religious liberty in Romania.''

Because we as Americans have to stand for religious freedom everywhere, we are especially concerned about this development in an emerging democracy that is a friend and ally of the U.S.

As one who has championed the Houses of Worship bill in the U.S. Congress, it is a personal matter of importance to me.

I urge the Romanian President and the Romanian Parliament to reject this discriminatory religious bill to help protect freedom of religion and to help improve U.S.-Romanian relations.

CALLING FOR THE IMMEDIATE CONSIDERATION OF THE ''FAIR LABOR STANDARDS ACT OF 2005''

HON. JOE BACA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 9, 2006

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to call for the immediate passage of H. Res. 614, a bill which allows for the consideration of the Fair labor Standards Act of 2005, to provide for an increase in the Federal minimum wage.