

I urge support for the bill.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. KIND. Madam Speaker, I would like to yield at this time such time as he may consume to the chief sponsor of this legislation, my good friend from the State of New Mexico, Mr. TOM UDALL.

(Mr. UDALL of New Mexico asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Madam Speaker, this legislation will bring long overdue resolution to a dispute between the Jicarilla Apache Nation and Rio Arriba County in the State of New Mexico. Both parties and the Secretary of the Interior have already executed the terms agreed to within the settlement agreement. All that stands between the parties to this dispute and the long-overdue resolution is congressional approval.

This legislation upholds Congress' trust responsibility to the Jicarilla Nation by placing restrictive covenants on the trust land transferred to the county. As a result of the transferred land's proximity to the reservation, certain uses of the transferred land would have a detrimental effect on the remaining reservation. Therefore, this legislation allows the county to use the land only for governmental purposes and specifically prohibits the county from using the land for prisons, jails, or other incarcerated persons, and other purposes.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support passage of this important legislation. Both the Nation and the county have waited years for this agreement to be implemented.

The dispute concerns the ownership of a road on a parcel of land formerly referred to as the Theis Ranch. The Theis Ranch property became part of the Jicarilla Nation Reservation in September of 1988.

A lawsuit was filed in October 1987 to determine the ownership status of a disputed road. In the original lawsuit, Rio Arriba County sought to establish that the County acquired the disputed road by prescription and, therefore, that the County was the road's rightful owner. However, the Jicarilla Nation contended that the Nation owned the road because the road was, and continues to be, within the boundaries of the expanded 1988 Jicarilla Reservation. On December 10, 2001, the District Court found in favor of the Jicarilla Nation, determining that the disputed road traversed the Jicarilla Reservation in several locations. Rio Arriba County appealed the District Court decision, and the appeal is currently pending before the Court of Appeals of the State of New Mexico.

In an effort to settle the road dispute amicably, the Jicarilla Nation and Rio Arriba County entered into mediation. The parties successfully reached a settlement. Representatives of the Secretary of the Interior approved the settlement on June 18, 2003. The settlement agreement, which would be implemented by this legislation, provided that the Jicarilla Nation would transfer approximately 70.5 acres of land located with the expanded 1988 Jicarilla Reservation to Rio Arriba County. In

exchange for the Jicarilla Nation's land conveyance, Rio Arriba County agreed to permanently abandon any and all claims to the disputed road.

The settlement also provides that the terms of the agreement do not take effect until all parties complete their respective promises in the agreement and the United States, pursuant to federal law, approves of the conveyance of this particular Jicarilla trust land to Rio Arriba County.

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

Madam Speaker, I just want to take a moment to again commend my colleague from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) for his determination in getting this legislation before us today. Some of the more difficult and contentious issues that we deal with in this place are often issues involving property lines, jurisdictions of towns, private landowners, and Indian tribes. Mr. UDALL has never shied away from such matters, especially when they affect the Indian tribes in New Mexico, and I commend him for his leadership on this issue and encourage adoption of this legislation.

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

Mr. GOHMERT. Madam Speaker, we are also grateful to Mr. UDALL from New Mexico for his hard work in resolving this dispute. As a former judge, there is nothing that looks better than when all the parties can come together and agree, and I appreciate the gentleman's hard work in making that happen.

Madam Speaker, I have no additional speakers, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4876.

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.

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ALLOWING FOR RENEGOTIATION OF PAYMENT SCHEDULE OF CONTRACTS BETWEEN SECRETARY OF INTERIOR AND REDWOOD VALLEY COUNTY WATER DISTRICT

Mr. GOHMERT. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5516) to allow for the renegotiation of the payment schedule of contracts between the Secretary of the Interior and the Redwood Valley County Water District, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 5516

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

SECTION 1. RENEGOTIATION OF PAYMENT SCHEDULE.

Section 15 of Public Law 100-516 (102 Stat. 2573) is amended as follows:

(1) By amending paragraph (2) of subsection (a) to read as follows:

“(2) If, as of January 1, 2006, the Secretary of the Interior and the Redwood Valley County Water District have not renegotiated the schedule of payment, the District may enter into such additional non-Federal obligations as are necessary to finance procurement of dedicated water rights and improvements necessary to store and convey those rights to provide for the District's water needs. The renegotiated schedule of payments shall commence when such additional obligations have been financially satisfied by the District. The date of the initial payment owed by the District to the United States shall be regarded as the start of the District's repayment period and the time upon which any interest shall first be computed and assessed under section 5 of the Small Reclamation Projects Act of 1956 (43 U.S.C. 422a et seq.).”

(2) By striking subsection (c).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) and the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. KIND) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

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

Madam Speaker, H.R. 5516, sponsored by Congressman MIKE THOMPSON, amends Public Law 100-516 and allows for the renegotiation of the payment schedule of water contracts between the Secretary of the Interior and the Redwood Valley County Water District in northern California.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Madam Speaker, I, too, want to commend my colleague from the First Congressional District of California, Mr. THOMPSON, for the hard work and leadership that he has shown on this important piece of legislation.

We, too, support it and encourage its adoption.

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

Mr. GOHMERT. Madam Speaker, I have no additional speakers, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5516.

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.

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TO MODIFY A LAND GRANT PATENT ISSUED BY THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR

Mr. GOHMERT. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3606) to modify a land grant patent issued by the Secretary of the Interior.