

As a result, the National Park Service has been reconsidering the appropriate size for the park's elk population and ways to address the problem of chronic wasting disease, CWD, a fatal brain disease known to affect deer and elk, which has been detected in elk within the park. Research begun in 1994 was aimed at gathering critical information needed to provide a scientific basis for a new management plan.

I have been following this matter with interest, and last year I wrote the National Park Service about the four alternatives discussed in their draft environmental impact statement, DEIS, on the subject.

As I said in that letter, while I am not a wildlife biologist, my own observations and discussions of the matter with both nearby residents and people with some professional expertise led me to conclude that the document correctly identified adverse consequences for aspen trees and other vegetation that would result from continued high elk densities in the park. Accordingly, as my letter said, I support action to reduce the numbers of elk in the park to something like the numbers that would be expected under natural conditions.

One option discussed in the DEIS would be release of a limited number of gray wolves, in order to return a natural predator that could control elk numbers. However, the DEIS notes that this would involve "numerous uncertainties," including "whether park managers could effectively control wolf behavior and movements and keep wolves in the park," which I think is a source of valid concern for ranchers who operate on nearby lands and for other park neighbors. And, in any case, the DEIS indicates that it would still be necessary for there to be "lethal reduction"—meaning shooting of elk—at least for some time because the small number of wolves would not be enough to accomplish the desired reduction in the number of elk in the park.

So, as I noted in my letter, I readily understand why this has not been identified as the preferred alternative.

Instead, the DEIS said it would be preferable to have people cull the elk herd by "lethal reduction"—meaning the shooting of selected animals to reduce the overall numbers to a more appropriate level.

The DEIS identified two "lethal reduction" scenarios, differing mainly in the number of elk to be shot: 100 to 200 annually over 20 years or 200 to 700 elk annually for four years and after that 25 to 150 elk annually for 15 years. The DEIS says "adaptive use of wolves" could eventually become part of the second scenario, and it identified it as the preferred alternative.

I think the DEIS did a good job of providing reasons for that choice. However, as I said in my letter, I think serious consideration should be given to some changes in its implementation—particularly by exploring ways to increase participation by Colorado sportsmen and sportswomen.

There are several reasons I think this should be explored, especially the potential for significant savings to the taxpayers.

The DEIS estimates that implementing the preferred alternative would cost between about \$16.55 million and \$18.26 million over the next 20 years, with "labor" accounting for between \$6.55 million and \$7.37 million of those totals. Evidently, these "labor" costs would be mostly for compensating the people

doing the shooting, between 3 and 10 FTEs, with a smaller amount for administration (1.5 FTEs).

As I indicated in my letter, I think the National Park Service should explore the possibility that those costs could be substantially reduced by offering qualified Coloradans an opportunity to take part—under the strict guidance and direction of the National Park Service—either without compensation or for less compensation than the amounts on which the DEIS estimates were based.

Having reviewed my letter and other public comments on the DEIS, the National Park Service is now moving toward a decision on how to go about reducing the number of elk in Rocky Mountain National Park. That is what they should be doing.

But I am concerned that some of their statements in a recent meeting with Colorado wildlife officials suggest they have mistakenly concluded that they do not have the legal authority to act along the lines I suggested. My bill is intended to make it clear that they do have that authority.

At the meeting, the National Park Service distributed a paper entitled "Legal Analysis of Hunting within Rocky Mountain National Park." I am not a lawyer, and I do not dispute the accuracy of that paper. But I do dispute its relevance—because what is involved here is not "hunting," as that term is generally used, but instead a plan to reduce elk numbers by having people selected by the National Park Service and acting in accordance with its instructions shoot specified numbers of animals over specified periods of time.

So, the question is not whether the National Park Service plans to have elk shot—it does. The question is whether the National Park Service has the authority to consider allowing qualified Coloradans—specifically, those who have hunting licenses and who meet whatever qualifications the National Park Service may set—do the shooting.

My bill would resolve that question by making it clear that the laws applicable to Rocky Mountain National Park do not prevent the National Park Service from doing that.

It also would require the National Park Service to consult with the Colorado Division of Wildlife regarding the possible participation of that state agency in implementing the new plan for managing elk in the park. I have included that provision because, while management of the park is and should remain the sole responsibility of the National Park Service, I think the Service should at least discuss the matter to see whether the Division of Wildlife can be helpful in addressing this matter of concern to both agencies and the public.

I think my bill can help the National Park Service to move forward to resolve a real management problem in a cost-effective manner.

For the benefit of our colleagues, here is an outline of the legislation:

Section 1 provides definitions of terms used in the bill

Section 2 states that nothing in the laws applicable to management of Rocky Mountain National Park is to be construed as prohibiting the Interior Department from using the services of qualified individuals, as volunteers or under contract, from assisting in implementation of the new elk and vegetation management plan by using lethal means to reduce the park's elk population. The term "qualified indi-

viduals" means people with Colorado resident big-game hunting licenses who have whatever other qualifications the National Park Service may set after consulting with the Colorado Division of Wildlife. This section would not require the National Park Service to use the services of qualified Coloradans, but it would make clear that there is no legal obstacle to their doing so.

Section 3 would require the National Park Service to consult with the Colorado Division of Wildlife regarding that state agency's possible participation in implementing the new plan to manage elk in the park. This would not require such participation, but it would require the National Park Service to consider it.

Section 4 states that nothing in the bill is to be construed as applying to the taking of wildlife within the park for any purpose other than implementation of the new elk management plan.

IN RECOGNITION OF SISTER
BARBARA SUESSMAN

HON. NYDIA M. VELÁZQUEZ

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 16, 2007

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Madam Speaker, I rise today on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives to recognize the life and work of a tremendous role model, advocate, and longtime resident of Brooklyn, Sister Barbara Suessman.

Born on February 26, 1937 in Brooklyn, Barbara attended St. Agnes High School in Rockville Center before joining the "Dominican Sisters" in 1956. It was through her involvement with the Dominican Sisters that led Sister Barbara to hear her calling and two years later, she pronounced her religious vows and embarked on a life dedicated to serving the underprivileged.

Sister Barbara held a strong belief that through active involvement with New York City's youth she would be most effective in serving the community. It was this conviction that led her to commit her life to working with various community organizations, schools, and ministries.

She spent the next twelve years teaching in several schools in Brooklyn and Queens. While she valued her years teaching the community's children, Sister Barbara wanted to take on more of an active role training peers how to mentor each other. In 1970, she accepted the position of supervisor at the Brooklyn Diocese sponsored "New School," offering special leadership training. After four years, she left to take over as Program director of the Brooklyn group home, Martin de Porres, where she remained until 1979.

Sister Barbara's dedication to the community's youth was undying—she always sought out additional ways to serve. She was instrumental in founding "Project Bridge," a program under the auspices of Christian Charities aimed at addressing the teen pregnancy problem in New York City. Over time, this modest program grew into a full-service organization with numerous locations around the city, providing services to teenage boys, as well as girls, who are pregnant, parenting, or at-risk of becoming parents.

In 1995, Sister Barbara began yet another endeavor, taking the position of Director of Finance with her Dominican Congregation, and

upon completion of her term, devoted the rest of her time with us to consulting for various religious congregations.

Sister Barbara dedicated her entire life to serving others. She used the power of her beliefs and commitment to instill hope and inspiration in all who knew her.

Therefore, Madam Speaker, I rise with my colleagues in the House of Representatives to honor the life and contributions of Sister Barbara Suessman.

RECOGNIZING JAMES EDWARD
LEACH FOR ACHIEVING THE
RANK OF EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 16, 2007

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize James Leach, a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 314, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

James has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the years James has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Madam, Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending James Leach for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

CONGRESS MUST CO-SIGN ACT

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 16, 2007

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Madam Speaker, I am today introducing a bill to require focused, careful consideration and separate Congressional approval of a form of back-door spending that could leave the taxpayers exposed to serious financial liability.

It is cosponsored by our colleagues Mr. WALZ, Mr. FLAKE, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Ms. MALONEY, Ms. BACHMANN, Mr. GARRETT, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. KLINE, Ms. MUSGRAVE and Mr. MILLER of Florida. I greatly appreciate their assistance and support.

The bill, entitled the "Congress Must Co-Sign Act" deals with proposals to have the Department of Transportation lend a billion dollars—or more—for any one purpose.

It would require greater transparency regarding such loans and a separate Congressional vote to approve each such loan, even if it had received preliminary approval either on its own or as part of a larger measure.

The purpose is to increase Congressional accountability and to reduce the chance the taxpayers will find themselves stuck with the bill if the lender should default on one of these loans.

The bill would require the Secretary of Transportation to provide Congress advance written notice at least 60 days before any De-

partment of Transportation funds can be used to make a loan in an amount greater than \$1 billion. This notice would have to include information about the purpose, the authority and the terms and conditions of the loan.

And the bill would require that after receiving the notice, Congress would have to pass legislation approving the loan before the Transportation Department could go forward and lend the money.

This is not just a theoretical matter—one such mega-loan is now being processed within the Administration. And that fact illustrates the need to broaden the focus in the debate about "earmarks" and special tax breaks. We in Congress need to take a harder look not just at direct spending and the indirect spending through the tax code, but also at backdoor spending through the lending of taxpayer dollars.

In all these areas, there is a need for greater transparency and accountability. That's why I have introduced H.R. 595, the "Stimulating Leadership in Controlling Expenditures"—or "SLICE"—Act, to enact a constitutionally sound version of a line-item veto for individual spending items.

It's also why I have introduced H.R. 905, the Commission on Unfair Tax Breaks and Subsidies—or "CUTS"—Act, which would provide another way to require action to increase equity and accountability in the federal budget.

And that is why I am introducing this bill today—not because I am convinced that the pending loan, or some similar loans in the future, would not be appropriate, but because I think it's essential that a decision to approve such a mega-loan should be made in a careful, deliberate way with full discussion of the merits and potential risks and a separate vote here in the Congress. At the end of the day, I might vote to approve the pending loan or some other loan of that type, or I might conclude that the potential costs outweigh the likely benefits. My purpose is not to prejudge the result, but to require a better, more open way of making a decision.

The federal budget remains awash in a sea of red ink and we are continuing to add to the Nation's towering pile of debt. People in Colorado and across the country expect greater transparency and accountability from their elected officials and our decisions on spending. This bill would take an important step in that direction and I think it deserves the support of all our colleagues.

EXPRESSING SORROW OF THE
HOUSE AT THE DEATH OF THE
HONORABLE CHARLIE NORWOOD,
MEMBER OF CONGRESS FROM
THE STATE OF GEORGIA

SPEECH OF

HON. F. JAMES SENSENBRENNER, JR.

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 14, 2007

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, it is with deep sadness that I mourn the loss of my friend and colleague, Congressman CHARLIE NORWOOD. CHARLIE was a tenacious fighter in Congress who would not back down from his beliefs. More important than his work in the House of Representatives, he was a dedicated husband, loving father of two sons and a grandfather of four.

CHARLIE served his country proudly in Vietnam and was a decorated veteran. Upon his return to the states, he practiced dentistry and helped countless Georgians. In 1994, he brought his compassion and conservative values to Washington. I soon learned that CHARLIE NORWOOD was a man of impressive character and conviction, with a Southern charm and heart of gold.

CHARLIE NORWOOD was a fervent believer in tackling the problem of illegal immigration, and I enjoyed working with him to pass immigration reform. CHARLIE made a valuable contribution to the House's immigration bill in the 109th Congress by including parts of his CLEAR Act in the legislation. I shared his belief that we should direct local law enforcement to help us apprehend the illegal immigrants in this country who are criminals.

CHARLIE courageously battled cancer for a number of years, and he was an inspiration to many, including his colleagues on both sides of the aisle. I am pleased that I had the opportunity to work with CHARLIE, and my wife Cheryl and I extend our deepest sympathies to Gloria Norwood and their entire family.

RECOGNIZING RYAN DANIEL HARRIS
FOR ACHIEVING THE RANK
OF EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 16, 2007

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Ryan Harris, a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 314, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Ryan has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the years Ryan has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Ryan Harris for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

INTRODUCING THE IRAQ
CONTINGENCY PLANNING ACT

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 16, 2007

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Madam Speaker, this week the House has considered a resolution focused on the President's plan to escalate the war in Iraq by committing more troops. That certainly deserves the debate it has received.

I voted for the resolution disapproving of the escalation plan because I think that plan is misguided and will not be effective in the context of the civil war that has emerged in Iraq.

Of course, I'm not under any illusion that the president will listen to the resolution's message. He has made clear his intention to move