

signed the 1872 General Mining Law, I am introducing legislation to provide much-needed fiscal and environmental oversight for the hardrock mining industry operating on Federal lands.

This legislation would overhaul that antiquated statute penned into law by President Grant on May 10, 1872—a law that contains no environmental protection provisions governing the mining of hardrock minerals such as platinum, gold, silver, and copper on public domain lands in the western States. The 1872 Mining Law also allows extraction of these minerals from the public domain without the payment of a royalty to the American taxpayers, and it allows a mining company to purchase mineral rich public lands for no more than \$2.50 or \$5 an acre, irrespective of the land's true value.

This legislation would bring the hardrock mining law into the 21st century.

The lack of a royalty in the 1872 Mining Law and the absence of deterrents or penalties for irresponsible mining have caused enormous taxpayer giveaways and liabilities. Under the Mining Law the Federal Government has handed out over \$245 billion in mineral rich public lands.

To be sure, Congress has attempted to reform the Mining Law at various times over its history—only to be thwarted each time by powerful mining interests. Former Congressman Mo Udall came close to achieving reform of the mining law in the 1970's. During the 102nd Congress in 1991, I introduced mining reform legislation. And we came close to enacting legislation that would have reformed this archaic law in 1994. But, at the last moment, after both the House and the Senate had passed separate bills, the Conference failed to reach a compromise, and the rest, as they say, is history. Since then, I have re-introduced reform legislation in each succeeding Congress.

Many Americans support reform and question why Congress does not address this issue. These people believe that American taxpayers are being robbed every time a multinational conglomerate breaks U.S. ground and mines our valuable minerals for free.

It is time, well past time, that the Congress replace this archaic law with one that reflects our values and goals. Ensuring a fair return to the public in exchange for the disposition of public resources and properly managing our public lands are neither Republican nor Democratic issues. They are simply goals that make sense if we are to be good stewards of America's lands and meet our responsibilities to the American people.

Madam Speaker, during the years I have labored to reform the Mining Law of 1872 those who defend its privileges—and it is indeed a privilege to be deemed the highest and best use of our public domain lands—have often alleged that reform legislation fails to take into account the contribution of hardrock mining to area economies. They claim that reform would have dire consequences on the industry, that if we do not provide the industry with unfettered access to public lands and public minerals, the industry could no longer survive.

Let me just say at the outset that there is no Member in the House of Representatives whose Congressional District is more dependent upon mining for employment and its economic benefits than this gentleman from West Virginia. And when we are talking about the

effects of mining, I would suggest that there is little difference between coal mining and gold mining. The effects, whether measured in terms of employment, or in terms of the environment, are the same.

With that noted, I have engaged in the effort to reform the Mining Law of 1872 these past many years not just for the apparent reasons—valuable minerals mined for free, Federal lands available almost for free, and no comprehensive Federal mining and reclamation standards. But also because I am pro-mining, because I no longer believe that we can expect a viable hard rock mining industry to exist on public domain lands in the future if we do not make corrections to the law today. I do so because there are provisions of the existing law which impede efficient and serious mineral exploration and development. And I do so because of the unsettled political climate governing this activity, with reform coming, if not in a comprehensive fashion, certainly on a piecemeal basis.

So I say to my colleagues from the Western States who resist reform, I understand your concerns. I have been in your situation. In 1977 I served on what is now called the Natural Resources Committee as a young freshman. I was confronted by legislation being advanced by my chairman, Mo Udall. And I recall that the coal industry was dragged kicking and screaming into the debate that led to the enactment of the Surface-Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977.

I voted for that legislation. It was not an easy thing for me to do. But I voted for that bill because in my region of the country we were grappling with a legacy of acidified streams, highwalls, refuse piles, open mine shafts, and other hazards associated with coal mining practices. That is a legacy, I would submit, that we are faced with today on lands administered by the Forest Service and the BLM in the western States due to hardrock mining practices.

The fact of the matter is that the gloom and doom predictions made by industry against the Federal strip mining act all those years ago did not materialize. Predictions, I would note, that are almost to the word identical to those which industry has leveled at times against this Mining law of 1872 reform legislation.

Yet, today, the coalfields of this Nation are a much better place in which to live. And today, we are producing more coal than ever before.

Certainly, coal continues to have its controversies, whether they involve mountaintop removal coal mining or the problems we are having with coal waste impoundments. But at least there are laws on the books to deal with those situations.

At least there are in place basic Federal mining and reclamation performance standards. At least when one mines coal on Federal lands a royalty is paid to the Federal Government. And at least we are making provision for the restoration of lands left abandoned by past coal mining practices.

None of this exists with respect to hardrock mining under the Mining Law of 1872.

I believe that with enough courage, and fortitude, we can continue to address the problems facing mining, and dovetail our need for energy and minerals with the necessity of protecting our environment.

For at stake here in this debate over the Mining Law of 1872 is the health, welfare, and

environmental integrity of our people and our Federal lands. At stake is the public interest of all Americans. And at stake is the ability of the hardrock mining industry to continue to operate on public domain lands in the future, to produce those minerals that are necessary to maintain our standard of living.

RESPONSIBILITY TO IRAQI REFUGEES ACT

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 10, 2007

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Madam Speaker, today, along with Congresswoman JAN SCHAKOWSKY and Congressman CHRISTOPHER SHAYS, I am introducing the "Responsibility to Iraqi Refugees Act." Iraq is the world's fastest growing refugee crisis, yet the U.S. response has been minimal.

For one group in particular, however, our moral responsibility is unquestionable—Iraqis who are at risk because they helped the United States. Having cooperated with the United States military, the United Nations or even with a nongovernmental organization can literally mean a death sentence at the hands of any of the many sides in this civil war.

Our legislation would admit Iraqis to the United States who are at risk because they helped coalition or reconstruction efforts in Iraq, establish a Special Coordinator for Iraqi Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons and require strategies to ensure the well-being and safety of Iraqi refugees in the region; and increase the number of persecuted Iraqis who can be admitted to the United States as refugees.

I urge every Member of the House to co-sponsor this broad, ambitious and comprehensive response to the Iraqi refugee crisis before it is too late for the people whose only crime was working with Americans.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2008

SPEECH OF

HON. JOHN D. DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 9, 2007

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1684) to authorize appropriations for the Department of Homeland Security for fiscal year 2008, and for other purposes:

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Chairman, Representative CARDOZA will highlight the importance of communications interoperability for our Nation's first responders, and the urgent need for cost-effective and forward-looking technology solutions. Last year, Congress established an interoperability grant program at the Department of Commerce to draw upon its spectrum and telecommunications expertise. This program is distinct from efforts by DHS, which, as evidenced by a recent report of the Government Accountability Office, still need much work to achieve full interoperability across our Nation.

I did not support the creation of this Cabinet level Department, but I applaud Chairman THOMPSON for his efforts in this reauthorization. Coordination is the goal, not confusion of authority.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1294, THOMASINA E. JORDAN INDIAN TRIBES OF VIRGINIA FEDERAL RECOGNITION ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. TOM COLE

OF OKLAHOMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 8, 2007

Mr. COLE of Oklahoma. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1294, the Thomasina E. Jordan Indian Tribes of Virginia Federal Recognition Act of 2006. This is a bill that is long overdue and provides an opportunity to right an historical wrong.

As clearly outlined in the language of this legislation, these six tribes are of great historical significance. These tribes were some of the first Native Americans to come into contact with European settlers, and save for the active cooperation of these tribes, a number of the first English settlements in America may not have survived.

Having clearly impacted the course of our Nation and having endured in a country of drastic change and challenges for four centuries, I am pleased to support a bill that will provide these six tribes federal recognition at long last.

Mr. Speaker, the only reservation I have with this bill is the fact that it prohibits every single one of these tribes from gaming. For if indeed this bill passes "into public law, these tribes should be afforded every right they deserve as a sovereign entity as granted to them under the Constitution of the United States. These tribes should not have to bargain away any one piece of their sovereignty they have

sought to preserve in order to receive federal recognition. This diminishes the tribes, and places them at a lesser status than states and other tribes. In the future, I hope that Congress recognizes that it is not fair to blackmail tribes into giving up part of their rights in order to provide them sovereignty.

With that said, Mr. Speaker, I recognize that these tribes negotiated with the House and the state in which they reside and ultimately agreed to this prohibition on their right to engage in certain forms of lawful economic activities. Therefore, although I fear the precedent this may establish, I honor the settlement reached between the House, the state of Virginia, and the tribes, and urge my colleagues to support passage of H.R. 1294.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. GUS M. BILIRAKIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 10, 2007

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Madam Speaker, unfortunately, I was unavoidably detained and missed rollcall vote No. 281.

I take my voting responsibility very seriously, and if I had been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall No. 281.

TEACHER APPRECIATION WEEK

HON. ADRIAN SMITH

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 10, 2007

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Madam Speaker, for the past 15 years, communities across the United States have set aside the first full week of May as Teacher Appreciation Week.

As the school year winds down in many areas of the country, this week gives us the opportunity to thank these individuals for making a difference and for helping all of us succeed in school and in life.

As a former educator, and the son of one of the best teachers I know, I wanted to take the time to recognize the educators who give so much of their time and personal freedom to accomplish so much for the future of our country.

As Henry Adams said, "A teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops."

Today I encourage my colleagues to remember those teachers whose influence continues in these Chambers and throughout the world.

FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE

HON. F. JAMES SENSENBRENNER, JR.

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 10, 2007

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Madam Speaker, through the following statement, I am making my financial net worth as of March 31, 2007, a matter of public record. I have filed similar statements for each of the 28 preceding years I have served in the Congress.

ASSETS

Real property	Value
Single family residence at 609 Ft. Williams Parkway, City of Alexandria, Virginia, at assessed valuation. (Assessed at \$1,523,982). Ratio of assessed to market value: 100% (Unencumbered)	\$1,523,982.00
Condominium at N76 W14726 North Point Drive, Village of Menomonee Falls, Waukesha County, Wisconsin, at assessor's estimated market value. (Unencumbered)	148,300.00
Undivided 25/44ths interest in single family residence at N52 W32654 Maple Lane, Village of Chenequa, Waukesha County, Wisconsin, at 25/44ths of assessor's estimated market value of \$1,659,700.	943,011.36
Total Real Property	\$2,615,293.36

2007 DISCLOSURE

Common & Preferred Stock	No. of shares	\$ per share	Value
Abbott Laboratories, Inc.	12200	55.80	680,760.00
Alcatel-Lucent	135	11.82	1,595.70
Allstate Corporation	370	60.06	22,222.20
AT&T	2944,044	39.43	116,083.65
JP Morgan Chase	4539	48.38	219,596.82
Benton County Mining Company	333	0.00	0.00
BP PLC	3604	64.75	233,359.00
Centerpoint Energy	300	17.94	5,382.00
Chenequa Country Club Realty Co.	1	0.00	0.00
Comcast	634	25.95	16,452.30
Darden Restaurants, Inc.	1440	41.19	59,313.60
Delphi Automotive	212	2.90	614.80
Dunn & Bradstreet, Inc.	2500	91.20	228,000.00
E.I. DuPont de Nemours Corp.	1200	49.43	59,316.00
Eastman Chemical Co.	270	63.33	17,099.10
Eastman Kodak	1080	22.56	24,364.80
El Paso Energy	150	14.47	2,170.50
Exxon Mobil Corp.	9728	75.45	733,977.60
Gartner Group	651	23.95	15,591.45
General Electric Co.	15600	35.36	551,616.00
General Mills, Inc.	2280	58.22	132,741.60
General Motors Corp.	304	30.64	9,314.56
Hospira	1220	40.90	49,898.00
Idearc	67	35.10	2,351.70
Imation Corp.	99	40.38	3,997.62
IMS Health	5000	29.66	148,300.00
Kellogg Corp.	3200	51.43	164,576.00
Kimberly-Clark Corp.	6384	68.49	437,240.16
Merck & Co., Inc.	34078	44.17	1,505,225.26
3M Company	2000	76.43	152,860.00
Medco Health	4109	72.53	298,025.77
Monsanto Corporation	2852,315	54.96	156,763.23
Moody's	2500	62.06	155,150.00
Morgan Stanley/Dean Whitter	312	78.76	24,573.12
NCR Corp.	98	47.77	3,248.36
Newell Rubbermaid	1676	31.09	52,106.84
JP Morgan Liquid Assets Money Mkt	4533,72	1.00	4,533.72
Pactiv Corp.	200	33.74	6,748.00
PG&E Corp.	175	48.27	8,447.25
Pfizer	22211	25.26	561,049.86