

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Guam?

There was no objection.

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

H.R. 1771, the Crane Conservation Act, was introduced by our colleague from Wisconsin, Congresswoman TAMMY BALDWIN. The overall purpose of H.R. 1771 is to assist in the conservation of the world's 15 species of crane, such as the whooping crane and the sandhill crane in North America. The bill would establish a new Crane Conservation Fund to finance Federal matching grants supporting critical conservation projects for endangered birds and their scarce and shrinking habitats in Europe, Asia, South Asia, Africa, and North America.

Mr. Speaker, cranes play an important role in cultures around the world. These birds are viewed as symbols of good fortune, happiness, and peace, and I ask Members on both sides to support passage of this noncontroversial bill that will help conserve this iconic family of large endangered birds.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I rise too in support of H.R. 1771, the Crane Conservation Act. This bill is a worthy addition to existing multinational species conservation funds. They have demonstrated that even a small amount of taxpayers' money can make a real difference in saving flagship species from extinction around the globe, such as the highly endangered cranes.

I urge an "aye" vote on H.R. 1771.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlelady from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) such time as she may consume.

Ms. BALDWIN. Thank you, Chairwoman BORDALLO, for recognizing me today.

I rise today in support of the Crane Conservation Act of 2008, legislation to help protect and preserve the world's 15 species of cranes for generations to come. Cranes are the most endangered family of birds in the world, with 11 of the world's 15 crane species at risk of extinction. Their special characteristics and unique ability to bring people together across cities, States, and international boundaries places them in a class worthy of our conservation efforts.

Cranes are revered throughout the world for their beauty, grace, and long-distance migrations, frequently spanning numerous countries. In fact, their appeal is so vast that they figure prominently in the culture, folklore, and art of many people around the world. They are featured in the silks, sculpture, poetry, and folk tales of many cultures. And, because of their long life spans, they have become symbols of longevity and good fortune.

These magnificent birds have served as ambassadors of harmony and peace in the international arena. Representatives from nations with various polit-

ical struggles have reached beyond the instability to address the conservation of cranes. In fact, just about a year ago, representatives from bordering nations, including India, China, Pakistan, Iran, Afghanistan, and others, met in an attempt to overcome strained relations and send a message of goodwill for the sake of protecting this threatened species. Similarly, African nations which share troubled borders have also joined together in recent years to stop the illegal trade of cranes.

In North America, the whooping crane is the rarest of the crane species. Back in 1941, only 21 whooping cranes existed in the entire world. Today, there are almost 400 birds in existence. The resurgence is attributed to the birds' tenacity for survival and to the efforts of conservationists in the United States and Canada. In fact, since 2001, coordinated efforts have focused on encouraging young whooping cranes to migrate from their breeding grounds in Wisconsin's Necedah National Wildlife Refuge to their winter destination in Florida. In an effort to reintroduce migratory flocks into their historic range in the eastern United States, the recovery team used ultralight aircraft to train and lead the young cranes on their spectacular journey stretching from city to city and State to State. Fortunately, these efforts have been successful, and the Crane Conservation Act would complement them, both domestically and internationally.

The bill will provide the resources to support initiatives to protect cranes and their habitats, which have deteriorated due to industrial development, pollution, and other human disturbances, including wars.

The bill will also provide the means for the United States to fulfill various international obligations and commitments, thus having a large environmental and cultural impact across the globe. Additionally, the Crane Conservation Act will provide resources for the United States to bring people and governments around the world together to protect ecosystems, develop adequate habitats, and encourage overall goodwill. Specifically, the Crane Conservation Act will authorize up to \$5 million per year to be distributed in the form of conservation project grants to protect cranes and the wetlands and grassland ecosystems on which they depend.

Congress has passed similar bills in support of globally significant and endangered wildlife species, including tigers, rhinos, elephants, and neotropical migratory birds. And just as these efforts took significant steps in international wildlife conservation, the Crane Conservation Act would play a similar and promising role in improving endangered wildlife and their habitats.

I encourage my colleagues to support the Crane Conservation Act.

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

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I, again, urge Members to support this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Guam (Ms. BORDALLO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1771, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

GOLETA WATER DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM CONVEYANCE ACT OF 2008

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3323) to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to convey a water distribution system to the Goleta Water District, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3323

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 "Goleta Water Distribution System Conveyance Act of 2008".

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) AGREEMENT.—The term "Agreement" means Agreement No. 07-LC-20-9387 between the United States and the District, entitled "Agreement Between the United States and the Goleta Water District to Transfer Title of the Federally Owned Distribution System to the Goleta Water District".

(2) DISTRICT.—The term "District" means the Goleta Water District, located in Santa Barbara County, California.

(3) GOLETA WATER DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM.—The term "Goleta Water Distribution System" means the facilities constructed by the United States to enable the District to convey water to its water users, and associated lands, as described in Appendix A of the Agreement.

(4) SECRETARY.—The term "Secretary" means the Secretary of the Interior.

SEC. 3. CONVEYANCE OF THE GOLETA WATER DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM.

The Secretary is authorized to convey to the District all right, title, and interest of the United States in and to the Goleta Water Distribution System of the Cachuma Project, California, subject to valid existing rights and consistent with the terms and conditions set forth in the Agreement.

SEC. 4. LIABILITY.

Effective upon the date of the conveyance authorized by section 3, the United States shall not be held liable by any court for damages of any kind arising out of any act, omission, or occurrence relating to the lands, buildings, or facilities conveyed under this Act, except for damages caused by acts of negligence committed by the

United States or by its employees or agents prior to the date of conveyance. Nothing in this section increases the liability of the United States beyond that provided in chapter 171 of title 28, United States Code (popularly known as the Federal Tort Claims Act).

SEC. 5. BENEFITS.

After conveyance of the Goleta Water Distribution System under this Act—

(1) such distribution system shall not be considered to be a part of a Federal reclamation project; and

(2) the District shall not be eligible to receive any benefits with respect to any facility comprising the Goleta Water Distribution System, except benefits that would be available to a similarly situated entity with respect to property that is not part of a Federal reclamation project.

SEC. 6. COMPLIANCE WITH OTHER LAWS.

(a) COMPLIANCE WITH ENVIRONMENTAL AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION LAWS.—Prior to any conveyance under this Act, the Secretary shall complete all actions required under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.), the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.), the National Historic Preservation Act (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.), and all other applicable laws.

(b) COMPLIANCE BY THE DISTRICT.—Upon the conveyance of the Goleta Water Distribution System under this Act, the District shall comply with all applicable Federal, State, and local laws and regulations in its operation of the facilities that are transferred.

(c) APPLICABLE AUTHORITY.—All provisions of Federal reclamation law (the Act of June 17, 1902 (43 U.S.C. 371 et seq.) and Acts supplemental to and amendatory of that Act) shall continue to be applicable to project water provided to the District.

SEC. 7. REPORT.

If, 12 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary has not completed the conveyance required under section 3, the Secretary shall complete a report that states the reason the conveyance has not been completed and the date by which the conveyance shall be completed. The Secretary shall submit a report required under this section to Congress not later than 14 months after the date of the enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Guam (Ms. BORDALLO) and the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Guam.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. BORDALLO. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Guam?

There was no objection.

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

H.R. 3323, introduced by our colleague from California, Congresswoman LOIS CAPPs, authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to convey all rights of the United States to the Goleta Water Distribution System to the Goleta Water District in Santa Barbara, California.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Congresswoman CAPPs for her hard work on this important legislation, and

I strongly urge my colleagues to support H.R. 3323, as amended.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I too rise in support of this bill. It's always a good thing when the Federal Government evaluates land it does not need, that has previously been owned by local municipalities or private individuals and takes steps to return that at no cost to the taxpayers. So I join with the gentlelady from Guam and my colleague from California, LOIS CAPPs, in urging support for the return of this land to the Goleta Water District.

Mrs. CAPPs. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 3323, the Goleta Water Distribution System Conveyance Act of 2007—a bill I introduced last year that would authorize the title transfer of a federally owned water distribution system in my congressional district from the Bureau of Reclamation to the Goleta Water District.

First, I want to thank the chairman of the Natural Resources Committee, Mr. RAHALL, and chairwoman of the Subcommittee on Water and Power, Ms. NAPOLITANO, as well as the ranking members of the full Committee and Subcommittee for bringing H.R. 3323 before us today.

The purpose of the legislation is to simplify the operation and maintenance of the District's water distribution system and eliminate unnecessary paperwork and consultation between the District and the Bureau.

The Goleta Water District has operated and maintained the facilities proposed for transfer since the 1950s. They have worked through all requirements of the Bureau's title transfer process, including public meetings, fulfillment of their repayment obligations, completion of an environmental assessment, and compliance with all other applicable laws.

The only step remaining to complete the process is an act of Congress enabling the Secretary of the Interior to transfer title.

It is important to note that the proposed transfer would apply only to lands and facilities associated with the District and would not affect the District's existing water service contract with the Santa Barbara County Water Agency nor the Federal government receipts from water deliveries under the contract. In addition, the proposed transfer does not envision any new physical modification or expansion of the service infrastructure.

I'm pleased the administration is supporting my legislation, which will allow the Bureau to focus its limited resources where they are needed most. In my view, this is an example of local problem-solving at its best. I commend the staff of the water district and the Bureau for their efforts to reach this agreement. I know that they have been working on this for several years now.

Again, I would like to thank the Natural Resources Committee for supporting this bill, and urge its immediate passage.

Mr. ISSA. I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I, again, urge my colleagues to support the bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Guam (Ms. BORDALLO) that the House suspend the

rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3323, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

LAKE HODGES SURFACE WATER IMPROVEMENT AND RECLAMATION ACT OF 2008

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2649) to make amendments to the Reclamation Projects Authorization and Adjustment Act of 1992, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2649

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 "Lake Hodges Surface Water Improvement and Reclamation Act of 2008".

SEC. 2. PROJECT AUTHORIZATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—*The Reclamation Wastewater and Groundwater Study and Facilities Act (Public Law 102-575, title XVI, 43 U.S.C. 390h et seq.) is amended by inserting after section 16 the following:*

"SEC. 16 . LAKE HODGES SURFACE WATER IMPROVEMENT AND RECLAMATION PROJECT.

"(a) AUTHORIZATION.—The Secretary, in cooperation with the Olivenhain Municipal Water District, California, is authorized to participate in the design, planning, and construction of projects to treat, reclaim, and reuse impaired surface water from Lakes Hodges in San Diego County, California.

"(b) COST SHARE.—The Federal share of the costs of the projects authorized by this section shall not exceed 25 percent of the total cost.

"(c) LIMITATION.—The Secretary shall not provide funds for the operation or maintenance of a project authorized by this section."

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections in section 2 of the Reclamation Projects Authorization and Adjustment Act of 1992 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 163 the following:

"Sec. 163 . Lake Hodges surface water improvement and reclamation project."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Guam (Ms. BORDALLO) and the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Guam.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. BORDALLO. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 days to revise and extend their remarks and include