

a small section around Lake Hodges. The entirety of Southern California is desperate for the massive amounts of water—not massive—but large amounts of water that is not safe to drink at this time.

I think this is a good cooperative effort. The local community has said we will match you 3 to 1. We will hold harmless the fact that the procedures didn't work out like we would all like it to do, but we will be able to make available very safe drinking water in a very environmentally friendly way.

And that's basically one of those things that I think we can look to as Federal representatives of cooperating, not doing something for the local community but helping the local community do itself and addressing concerns and problems that we might have been part and parcel involved, sticking to our responsibility as long as the local community is willing to stand up and take care of theirs.

With that, I would ask passage of this bill, Mr. Speaker. I think it's one of those, as the chairwoman for the committee pointed out, it's a reasonable, balanced approach. And when we talk about a 3 to 1 match, a local, I think we have got a very strong statement here that the Federal Government is willing to participate, especially when a community is willing to match us 3 to 1 for a situation that everyone agrees no one was without fault on this.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. May I simply say in closing on our side that I have to commend the gentleman from California for coming up with this water recycling project that would basically pre-treat the impaired surface of Lake Hodges, California, so that consumer water needs are going to be met.

The drought has largely been made because of litigation to protect a 3-inch fish, and it will decrease Southern California's water supplies. As a result, there will be water rationing in some areas and water rates will increase for working families and businesses.

There will be less imported water to recycle. However, water recycling is still, in the long term, a necessity for California and other arid regions in the West. And all these projects together will help ensure that there will be no such thing as a waste of our water. So I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Mrs. CHRISTENSEN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1219.

The question was taken.

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

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

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.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Ms. Evans, one of his secretaries.

REPEALING THE "BENNETT FREEZE"

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill (S. 39) to repeal section 10(f) of Public Law 93-531, commonly known as the "Bennett Freeze".

The Clerk read the title of the Senate bill.

The text of the Senate bill is as follows:

S. 39

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

SECTION 1. REPEAL OF THE BENNETT FREEZE.

Section 10(f) of Public Law 93-531 (25 U.S.C. 640d-9(f)) is repealed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Mrs. CHRISTENSEN) and the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative 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 the Virgin Islands?

There was no objection.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the pending legislation would settle a longstanding dilemma faced by the people of the Navajo and Hopi Nations in Arizona. At the outset, I would commend our colleague from Arizona (Mrs. KIRKPATRICK) for her tenacity in working to have this measure considered by the House, and hopefully by the end of the day, passed and sent to the President for his signature.

The need for this legislation dates back to an executive order issued in 1882 which set aside land in northern Arizona for the Hopi Tribe and such other Indians as the Secretary of the Interior may see fit to settle thereon. A 1934 act of Congress setting aside some of the same lands for the Navajo Nation further complicated the matter.

In 1962, a Federal District Court ruled that both the Hopi Tribe and the

Navajo Nation had joint rights to use the land in dispute. This ruling created great tension between the two tribes over critical issues such as access to sacred sites and the development of lands in the joint use area. Because of this situation, in 1966 the Commissioner of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Robert Bennett, issued a freeze on any development on the disputed lands. This freeze extended to some of the core aspects of tribal life, including the building of homes, improvement to property, public works projects, power lines, and water and sewer access.

After nearly a century of dispute between the Navajo Nation and the Hopi Tribe, the Navajo-Hopi Settlement Act was enacted in 1974 in an attempt to settle rights and interests between the two Native nations. However, in 1980, Congress amended that act to codify the Bennett Freeze. As a result of this freeze on development, tribal citizens living in the Bennett Freeze region find themselves living in 1966 conditions. Only 3 percent of these families affected by the Bennett Freeze have electricity and only 10 percent have running water.

In 2005, the Navajo and the Hopi governments entered into an intergovernmental agreement that resolved all outstanding issues regarding the land in dispute. This agreement contains language which puts an end to the ban on development on the disputed lands. The Secretary of the Interior approved this agreement in September 2006.

This legislation will clarify the law so that it is in agreement with all of the land users and finally close this longstanding dispute between neighboring Indian tribes.

I once again commend our colleague, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, who has a companion bill here in the House for her work in getting this bill to the floor today. The aforementioned conditions of those living in the Bennett Freeze area are unacceptable. The tribes have resolved their issues and the administration has fulfilled its duties, and now it is time for us to pass this legislation and fulfill our trust responsibility to these two native nations.

I urge all of my colleagues to support the passage of Senate bill 39.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise to support this bipartisan legislation that was authored by Senator JOHN MCCAIN. This bill would end more than 40 years of Federal restrictions placed upon native people living in the western area of the Navajo Nation. These restrictions have barred area residents from making any improvements and repairs to their homes and property.

Once this legislation becomes law, both Navajo and Hopi people will have the opportunity to move forward with critical development projects aimed at providing relief to their region. This