

world's freshwater drinking supply, and certainly that makes them a natural resource unparalleled on the planet.

This legislation, which would establish a national committee to study our Nation's water needs and to make recommendations for a comprehensive national water strategy, sounds very good and very noncontroversial at first blush. But whenever a national water policy is first discussed, we in Michigan and the Great Lakes Basin get very nervous. And whether it is due to population expansion and to dryer areas of the Nation in the South or the West or global warming or whatever, water is going to be a very important need for many in the 21st century.

In fact, just last year, Mr. Speaker, Business Week magazine did a cover story about why the great oilman T. Boone Pickens thinks water is actually the new oil. As a result of these challenges, some have begun to promote the idea of a natural water policy to deal with these challenges, and attention will undoubtedly turn to the places that have freshwater like the Great Lakes. There have been numerous examples of this over the decades on both sides of the aisle here. But let me illustrate a recent one.

During the 2008 Presidential campaign, New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson, who was then running for President, told the Las Vegas Sun, "I want a national water policy. We need a dialogue between the States to deal with issues like water conservation, water reuse technology, water delivery, and water production." And he went on to say, "States like Wisconsin are awash with water."

Fortunately, in order to prevent efforts by others to divert Great Lakes water outside the Basin, last fall we enacted the Great Lakes Compact, which reserves for the Governors of the Great Lakes States the opportunity to regulate diversions of water from the Great Lakes Basin. The compact bans new and increased diversions of water outside the Great Lakes Basin with only limited, highly regulated exceptions, and it establishes a framework for each State and the two provinces in Canada to enact laws protecting the Basin. And after being ratified by the Great Lakes State, the compact passed this House last September by a vote of 390-25, and the Senate actually passed it under unanimous consent, was then signed into law by then-President Bush.

In order to ensure that this new water initiative does not infringe on the principles associated with the Great Lakes Compact, I offered an amendment to the Rules Committee yesterday. Regrettably, it was not made in order. Quite simply, my amendment would have prevented the interagency committee, the National Water Initiative Coordination Office, the National Water Research and Assessment Plan from considering or promoting policies that would undermine

or interfere with the principles of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin Water Resources Compact.

The Great Lakes, as I said, are the very identity of my State of Michigan and all of us in the Great Lakes Basin, and we all take their care very seriously. My constituents will not abide even the prospect of a diversion of the Great Lakes water to other areas of the country where growth is beginning to outstrip their resources. And some might argue that the Great Lakes Compact provides all of the protections that we need.

I do agree that there are very strong protections in the compact, but I also fear that everything is subject to change. And while I am not suggesting that this legislation aims to divert Great Lakes water, it also does nothing to protect them or to protect and prohibit diversion either. Such protections would make, certainly, my constituents and all the people that live in the Great Lakes Basin much more comfortable with the establishment of a national water policy. And since those protections are not included in this legislation, Mr. Speaker, I will be opposing both this rule and the bill.

Mr. ARCURI. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlelady from Michigan for her insightful comments and certainly her strong leadership on protecting what I believe to be the greatest natural resource not only in America but also in North America and our water supply.

I would inquire if the other side has any other speakers.

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. No, we do not.

I thank my friend for the handling of the rule on this important matter.

Mr. Speaker, I would simply reiterate that while this issue is of great importance, there are many other issues facing this Nation, and for this entire week for this Congress to have done nothing else during this entire week is really unfortunate and it shows the manner in which the majority of this Congress, the leadership of the majority of this Congress is running this Congress, and the American people are finding out. They are discovering it.

We have no further speakers. At this time, I yield back the balance of our time.

Mr. ARCURI. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend from Florida (Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART) for his management of this rule.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I would like to thank Chairman GORDON for working to bring this important piece of legislation to the floor. As I said earlier, there really is nothing more important or elemental than our water and our water supply. We must manage it wisely. There is just too much at stake if we do not. I believe this bill is going to go a long way towards improving the way we manage our most precious natural resource and ensure that it is clean, safe, and abundant for future generations.

I urge a "yes" vote on the previous question and on the rule.

I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The previous question was ordered.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill, H.R. 1145.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Tennessee?

There was no objection.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has agreed to a concurrent resolution of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. Con. Res. 18. Concurrent resolution supporting the goals and ideals of World Malaria Day, and reaffirming United States leadership and support for efforts to combat malaria.

The message also announced that pursuant to Public Law 106-398, as amended by Public Law 108-7, in accordance with the qualifications specified under section 1238(b)(3)(E) of Public Law 106-398, and upon the recommendation of the Republican Leader, in consultation with the ranking members of the Senate Committee on Armed Services and the Senate Committee on Finance, the Chair, on behalf of the President pro tempore, appoints the following individuals to the United States-China Economic Security Review Commission:

Dennis Shea of Virginia, for a term expiring December 31, 2010.

Robin Cleveland of Virginia, for a term expiring December 31, 2010, vice Mark Esper of Virginia.

The message also announced that pursuant to Public Law 106-286, the Chair, on behalf of the President of the Senate, and after consultation with the Majority Leader, appoints the following members to serve on the Congressional-Executive Commission on the People's Republic of China:

The Senator from Montana (Mr. BAUCUS).

The Senator from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN).

The Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN).

The Senator from North Dakota (Mr. DORGAN), Chairman.

The Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN).

NATIONAL WATER RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE ACT OF 2009

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 352 and rule