

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

SPORTSMEN'S HERITAGE ACT OF 2012

SPEECH OF

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 17, 2012

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 4089) to protect and enhance opportunities for recreational hunting, fishing and shooting:

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Madam Chair, I rise today to express my support for the Sportsmen's Heritage Act, H.R. 4089. This bill would improve access to public lands for our hunters, fishers, and recreationists. By passing H.R. 4089, we will ensure that public lands will continue to be used and enjoyed by sportsmen across the country.

While many of us support H.R. 4089, I do have reservations about some of the bill's details. Specifically, titles I and II of this bill require new procedures for approved closures of public lands. Federal land management agencies currently have a process in place for closures that includes public notice, review, and approval at the local, state, or federal level depending on the individual situation. I believe these decisions are best made by local land managers who are uniquely familiar with the lands, the people, and the potential hazards. I am concerned that adding additional closure approval steps by people removed from the local areas will delay, or even discourage, closures that are based on sound science, and for the safety of the people and protection of the environment.

I also believe that hunting, fishing, and recreation are often compatible with the goals of public lands, including wilderness designation. However, there are some activities that are not. Oil and gas development, mining, logging, and motorized vehicle use outside of designated areas counter the goals of current wilderness management. In addition, these activities also run counter to the intent of H.R. 4089 by further restricting sportsmen's access. These restrictions on activities in Wilderness Areas should be explicitly stated in the bill and should not leave any room for misinterpretation.

Finally, I am discouraged to see the incorporation of an amendment to H.R. 4089 that would undermine the ability of the President to designate National Monuments under the Antiquities Act. This is a process that has protected some of our most precious national treasures and cultural heritage sites. I agree that local support should be weighed heavily when considering National Monument designations, but additional legislative road blocks are unnecessary.

I commend my colleagues in the House for supporting sportsmen's access to public lands, and I hope to see their enjoyment continue in a safe and environmentally responsible manner. We need to keep public lands open when

feasible, while also allowing for closures in a timely manner if it is in the best interest of public safety or environmental protection. I look forward to working with our Senate colleagues to make sure these concerns are addressed as H.R. 4089 moves forward.

COASTAL KIDS PRESCHOOL

HON. CHELLIE PINGREE

OF MAINE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

Ms. PINGREE of Maine. Mr. Speaker, I want to recognize an incredible community effort in Maine at the Coastal Kids Preschool in Damariscotta.

The program at Coastal Kids began in 1995, and has since become a community staple, welcoming any child regardless of income or special needs.

Their hard work and dedication to quality and equitable education has given them a place of honor within the community. Which is why when they had to expand in order to better meet the needs of the community, stakeholders from all over the mid-coast came together.

On April 23, 2012, the Coastal Kids Preschool will formally unveil their new facility. With the help of many businesses and USDA Rural Development, an opportunity for a head start in life has been afforded to more children. I applaud this effort and wish the teachers, students, and parents all the best in their new home.

HONORING KAYLA COX

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to interact with some of the brightest students in the 22nd Congressional District who serve on my Congressional Youth Advisory Council. I have gained much by listening to the high school students who are the future of this great Nation. They provide important insight into the concerns of our younger constituents and hopefully get a better sense of the importance of being an active participant in the political process. Many of the students have written short essays on a variety of topics and I am pleased to share these with my House colleagues.

Kayla Cox is a senior at Clear Springs High School in Galveston County, Texas. Her essay topic is: In your opinion, why is it important to be involved in the political process?

The definition of democracy is a government by the people with the component of majority rules. The United States of America has an altered version of democracy known as a representative democracy. The model according to which our government

functions allows the opportunity to be as close to a democratic government as possible with such a large population. Many question what the importance is in being involved in the political process. Being an active participant in politics is necessary to protect the interests of this diverse nation and is a demonstration of respect for our country.

America is composed of people from all backgrounds; including ethnicity, economic level, religious, and moral. Each person forms their opinions based on their previous experiences. This diversity and privilege to form our own opinions is a core value of our nation. If people were to choose not to express their opinions, whether it be through voting or various other means, then policies would not be as diverse. The government would start to represent the minority of the population, and would be run by the people for which that minority voted.

The United States was built upon the belief that people should have certain freedoms that cannot be taken away. Many individuals and groups have worked vigorously to mold our country into the desirable place it is today, and to extend those rights to more of the American population. In addition, they have worked to influence the extension of those rights to foreign countries. Americans have sacrificed their lives to give us the life of freedom we enjoy today. Participation in politics has shaped policies that, in turn, have improved the lives of fellow Americans. This participation can take many forms ranging from something as simple as making an issue known to coordinating with other people to directly influence elected representatives.

Although some people may believe that they cannot make a difference by voting or raising awareness on an issue, the proof that they can lies in the stories of the one's who did. Political Participation is vital to the policymaking process because the voices of the American people matter, and they are the key to maintaining this country's standards that have been set by those before us.

OBSERVING WORKERS MEMORIAL DAY

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, it is with immense respect that I rise today in remembrance of the many men and women who have lost their lives in the workplace and to honor those who have fought tirelessly to improve conditions for workers throughout the United States. On April 28, 2012, the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO) and union members nationwide will once again gather in various locations in observance of Workers Memorial Day. The great men and women of America's unions will pause to pay tribute to the many workers whose lives have been lost, and the millions who have become ill, due to accidents and unsafe conditions in the workplace. They will also reinforce their commitment to improving conditions for future generations to come.

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