

INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION
TO PROTECT OUR GREAT LAKES

HON. DAVE CAMP

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 30, 1999

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, I rise to introduce legislation that will protect our Great Lakes and ensure an effective strategy for conserving our water resources.

One hundred and sixty-six million people in 18 countries are suffering from water scarcity. Almost 270 million more in 11 additional countries are considered water stressed. By 2025, one fourth of the world will suffer from lack of water. These are a few of the reasons that experts are hypothesizing that water will soon change from a resource to a commodity.

Given these disturbing statistics, it's becoming very clear that we need to develop a better strategy for water management. One problem that is facing environmentalists, scientists and policy makers is the lack of sufficient and reliable information on water availability and quality. Efforts to balance supply and demand, and plans for a sustainable future, are severely hampered by this lack of information. That is why this legislation is so necessary.

The Great Lakes comprise 1/5 of the Earth's fresh water resources. Over the past few years, there have been numerous proposals to withdraw bulk quantities of water from the Great Lakes Basin. The Great Lakes hold over 6 quadrillion gallons of water. However, before we begin mass exports of bulk water from this giant resource, we must be very clear on how this will impact the Great Lakes region. We cannot allow commercial exploitation of such a precious resource.

Last year, the House passed a Resolution calling on the President and the other Body to work to prevent the sale or diversion of Great Lakes water in mass quantities. That resolution was an important first step. The legislation that I'm introducing today takes the necessary second step. This bill will impose a two year moratorium on exports of bulk fresh water. The moratorium will give the governors of the Great Lakes, who for the past fifteen years have effectively managed the Basin, the opportunity to effectively evaluate how and if bulk exports from the Great Lakes Basin should proceed.

Prudent management of our natural resources means looking ahead and planning for the future. As we enter a new millennium, we need to be responsible stewards of our environment, to ensure that our children are not denied the resources that we today are able to enjoy. Our water resources must be carefully conserved, and this legislation will allow the Great Lakes governors to develop an effective strategy to ensure our water supply and ecosystem are protected. I urge my colleagues to join me in support of this legislation.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

CONGRATULATIONS TO JEANNE
CAMERON'S CLASS AT OGDEN
MIDDLE SCHOOL

HON. JAMES V. HANSEN

OF UTAH

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 30, 1999

Mr. HANSEN. Mr. Speaker, I wish to bring before the Congress a marvelous example of a classroom of children at the Mt. Ogden Middle School in Ogden, UT. Mt. Ogden is an inner city school of approximately 880 children from both wealthy and economically disadvantaged homes. It is predominately Hispanic. Last year, the school wanted to create a new reading program for those students whose reading level is below that of their age level. That program would have cost \$20,000, and the school simply didn't have the money. That's where the kids came in.

This year, the Channel One Network, and educational program provider for schools around the country sponsored a current events knowledge competition, with a prize of \$25,000 to the school with the winning class. The contest involved identifying and describing the context of a series of current events images from around the world over a period of weeks. Well these kids and their teacher, Ms. Jeanne Cameron, got together and entered the contest along with nearly 2,000 other classes, and they won. The money will probably be used to create the special reading program and to buy new books for the school.

I understand that the class and its teacher were unaware of their success until they were filmed live upon receipt of the prize last week. I ask my colleagues to join me in extending warmest congratulations to Ms. Cameron's class and the Mt. Ogden Middle School for their learning and competitive spirit, and their partner, the Channel One Network, for making this program a reality.

INTRODUCTION OF THE "STATE
INITIATIVE FAIRNESS ACT"

HON. MARY BONO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 30, 1999

Mrs. BONO. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to introduce the "State Initiative Fairness Act." This commonsense judicial reform is legislation that is already well-known to my colleagues and courtwatchers. It passed the House of Representatives twice in recent memory. First, it passed as the free-standing bill, H.R. 1170, during the 104th Congress in 1995. And again, it passed as part of the Judicial Reform Act in 1998 during the 105th Congress where it was one of the first issues I considered upon joining this institution. This measure gained bipartisan and broad support in the past. This procedure contained in the bill establishing a three-judge panel review is simply the restoration of a judicial procedure that was the norm in the federal system for most of the twentieth century.

Strong voting rights are the keystone of our democratic system. It is noted that "A system

October 1, 1999

which permits one judge to block with the stroke of a pen what 4,736,180 state residents voted to enact as law tests the integrity of our constitutional democracy." (*See The Coalition For Economic Equity v. Wilson*, 110 F3d 1431, 1437 (9th Cir. 1997)). The unjust effect on voting rights created by injunctions issued in California by one judge against the will of the people of the State as reflected in propositions concerning immigration, medical marijuana, and affirmative action is well-known. This bill provides that requests for injunctions in cases challenging the constitutionality of measures passed by a State referendum must be heard by a three-judge court. Like other Federal voting rights legislation containing a provision providing for a hearing by a three-judge court, the bill is designed to protect voters in the exercise of their vote and to further protect the results of that vote. It requires that any state-passed initiative or referendum voted upon and approved directly by the citizens of a State be afforded the protection of a three-judge court pursuant to 28 U.S.C. 2284 where an application for an injunction is brought in Federal court to arrest the enforcement of the referendum on the premise that the referendum is unconstitutional.

It is not my intent to change the outcome of any litigation concerning the past propositions passed by the electorate. The goal of the bill is to secure the judicial process and guarantee to the people it is as objective as possible. For example, where the entire populace of a State democratically exercises a direct vote on an issue, one Federal judge will not be able to issue an injunction preventing the enforcement of the will of the people of that State. Rather, three judges, at the trial level, according to procedures already provided by statute, will hear the application for an injunction and determine whether the requested injunction should issue. An appeal is taken directly to the Supreme Court, expediting the enforcement of the referendum if the final decision is that the referendum is constitutional. Such an expedited procedure is already provided for in other voting rights cases. It should be no different in this case, since a State is restricted for purposes of a vote on a referendum into one voting block. The Congressional Research Service estimates that these 3-judge courts would be required less than 10 times in a decade under this bill, causing a very insubstantial burden on the Federal judiciary, while substantially protecting the rights of the voters of a State.

This bill recognizes that State referenda reflect, more than any other process, the one-person-one-vote system, and seeks to protect a fundamental part of our national foundation. This bill will implement a fair and effective policy that preserves a proper balance in Federal-State relations.

In closing, I wish to express my gratitude to my many colleagues who join me today as co-sponsors and their support as we strive to amplify and secure the will of the people.