

to harvesting while timber workers are left unemployed. The list goes on and on.

We must insure that the government keeps its promises to private property owners. The Fish and Wildlife Service has issued over 250 permits to various landowners for the use of their property. We need to insure that the federal government does not ignore those permits and demand even greater amounts of land and money in the future during the term of those agreements.

Fifth, we must recover the populations of species and then be sure they are taken off the lists of endangered species. Under the current ESA, the federal agencies list species and then never remove them from the lists even when their populations increase dramatically. This is unacceptable. The federal government must work with the local community and affected landowners to develop workable recovery plans for species. The federal government must then keep its word to delist species when the communities make concessions to recover species.

Our bill, the Common Sense Protections for Endangered Species Act of 2000 would bring back basic common sense solutions to help achieve all these goals. It would:

1. Improve the listing process by involving and relying upon the expertise of States.
2. Improve petitions and listing investigations and insure greater public participation in the listing process.
3. It would require the use of peer reviewed science to support the listing of species.
4. It would reduce conflicts and economic dislocation caused by federal agency shut downs and provide deadlines for agency decision making. It would insure that agencies fulfill their missions and provide a faster and surer method of resolving conflicts between agencies. It would insure that public safety will be protected.
5. It would allow affected citizens a full opportunity to participate in consultations; discuss the impacts of a biological opinion and any proposed alternatives, receive information on the biological opinion; and receive a copy of the draft biological opinion prior to its issuance.
6. It would prevent abusive and excessive demands on private landowners for their land and money as a condition of getting an ESA permit from the federal government and require reasonable deadlines for making permit decisions. It would insure that conservation agreements are binding on all parties to the agreement.
7. It would make recovery planning an inclusive process and would allow the Secretary to delegate to the states the development and implementation of recovery plans. Designation of critical habitat would become part of the recovery process. It would insure that recovery results in the delisting of species.

While I would personally prefer to make even more improvements in the ESA, I feel that these changes will be a good first start toward bringing back a common sense and reasonable approach to our federal government's efforts to recover species. I fully support protecting the rights of private property owners and believe that you can't protect wildlife unless you protect property owners. I also recognize that in order to achieve any goal, you

have to take a first step. This is our first step toward Common Sense Protections for Endangered Species.

COMPREHENSIVE ANTI-TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS ACT OF 1999

HON. SAM GEJDENSON

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 27, 1999

Mr. GEJDENSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise to introduce the Comprehensive Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 1999, legislation to combat trafficking in human beings, a form of modern day slavery. Thirty-four Members of Congress are original co-sponsors of this bill. I commend my colleagues for lending their bi-partisan support to this legislation, which seeks to combat in the United States and countries around the world one of the worst human rights violations of our time.

More than one million people, predominantly women and children, are trafficked around the world each year. U.S. Intelligence Agencies estimate that 45-50,000 women and children are trafficked annually into the United States, primarily from the Former Soviet Union and Southeast Asia.

Trafficking networks, dominated by organized criminal groups, lure or force victims into the industry using various schemes. Traffickers buy young girls from relatives, kidnap children from their homes, or allure women with false promises of earning money overseas as dancers, maids, factory workers, sales clerks or models. Traffickers then use tactics including rape, starvation, torture, extreme physical brutality and psychological abuse to force victims to work under slavery-like conditions as prostitutes, in sweatshops, or as domestic servants.

Trafficking in human beings is a multi-billion dollar industry that is growing at an alarming rate. Consequently, the United States must act now to combat all forms of trafficking and protect and assist trafficking victims. This legislation employs a domestic and international approach to this effort because we cannot stop trafficking into the United States if we do not address the root causes of this phenomenon in countries around the world.

The Comprehensive Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 1999 strengthens prosecution and enforcement tools against traffickers operating in the United States and expands existing services to meet the needs of domestic trafficking victims. This legislation also works through our international affairs agencies to help other countries prevent trafficking, protect victims, and enforce their own anti-trafficking laws. The bill creates an Inter-Agency Task Force to Monitor and Combat Trafficking, comprised of cabinet level members and chaired by the Secretary of State, and requires expanded coverage on trafficking in the annual Country Reports on Human Rights Practices. Finally, this legislation establishes a humanitarian, non-immigrant visa classification for trafficking victims in the United States and gives the President discretionary authority to impose sanctions against countries and individuals involved in trafficking.

Please join me and my colleagues in supporting the Comprehensive Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 1999.

THE SITUATION IN ARMENIA

HON. MARTIN T. MEEHAN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 27, 1999

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I am shocked and deeply saddened by the brutal assassinations of top Armenian officials this morning, as well as the continuing hostage crisis currently taking place in the Armenian Parliament. My heart goes out to the families of the victims and to all Armenians. We must not permit these senseless acts to hinder the progress made by Prime Minister Sarkisian and his late colleagues in furthering democracy in Armenian. In the face of these unspeakable atrocities, the United States must reaffirm its commitment to supporting the Republic of Armenia in her pursuit of a lasting democracy and enduring peace.

INTRODUCTION OF THE AGRIBUSINESS MERGER MORATORIUM ACT

HON. EARL POMEROY

OF NORTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 27, 1999

Mr. POMEROY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Agribusiness Merger Moratorium Act of 1999. I am honored to have Judiciary Committee Member TAMMY BALDWIN and my colleague on the Agriculture Committee, DAVID MINGE, join me as original cosponsors of this important legislation. Our legislation is very similar to the Senate legislation that was introduced recently by Senators WELLSTONE, DORGAN, HARKIN, and DASCHLE.

Unfortunately, the agriculture sector of our economy has experienced rapid consolidation, disrupting the competitive dynamic of the market place. Today, concentration is more prevalent than ever in agriculture as we have observed with the recent acquisitions of Continental Grain by Cargill and the Smithfield Foods merger with Murphy Family Farms. For example, if the proposed acquisition of Continental Grain by Cargill is allowed with the divestitures set forth in the proposed consent decree, Cargill will handle more than 25 percent of the all of the Nation's export markets.

To illustrate the degree of concentration in agriculture processing, in 1999, 80 percent of beef cattle are slaughtered by only four meat packers, 75 percent of sheep are processed by only four firms, and 60 percent of hogs are slaughtered by only four firms. At the same time concentration has been drastically increasing, a farmer's share of every food dollar spent decreased from 37 cents to 23 cents from 1980 to 1998.

The Agribusiness Merger Moratorium Act of 1999 is a short-term legislative response to the rapid consolidation that I have described. This legislation would establish an 18-month