

AGRICULTURE KEY TO OPEN SPACE

HON. BOB SCHAFFER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 1999

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, given Colorado's population boom, it is no surprise ours is among America's most sprawling regions. Ten acres are developed each hour in Colorado. During the next twenty years, the state's population could easily grow by another 1.5 million.

Often, irrigated farmland is consumed to fuel the demands associated with growth. While farmers and ranchers make up only three percent of the state's population, they hold most of the rights to Colorado's most valuable resource—water. This vital link between water, farmland and the nation's food supply cannot be overlooked in our search for solutions to regional growth problems.

Lawsuits and petitions filed by various extremist environmental groups over such rodents as the Preble's meadow jumping mouse and black-tailed prairie dog threaten farmers and ranchers with federal intervention and excessive regulation. However, Washington bureaucrats have proven themselves ill-suited to balance the many competing factors relative to growth in Colorado.

When I asked the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service about the decision to list the Preble's mouse under the Endangered Species Act, I was told farmers and ranchers could continue to work their land so long as they do it while the mouse hibernates. Farmers and ranchers need not fear the Endangered Species Act, say the agency, if they put up their crops between October and April!

When a member of my staff called the Fish and Wildlife Service for information on the black-tailed prairie dog, he was asked, "is that some kind of hunting dog or something?" These fundamental misunderstandings permeate Washington-based initiatives designed to control the growth and destiny of the West.

Sound policy to offset the effects of Colorado's population boom should focus instead on Colorado's best stewards of the land—its farmers and ranchers. Besides supplying safe and inexpensive food for our tables, farmers and ranchers provide valuable open space and wildlife habitat.

In fact, most of this nation's wildlife survives and thrives on private lands. To preserve these valuable assets we need to protect water and property rights and make it easier for farmers and ranchers to pass their land on to succeeding generations.

We must continue to fight ill-conceived Washington-based programs that threaten Colorado water, like Executive Order 13061 recently initiated by the White House. My fight against this invasive order was victorious for Colorado. Consequently, no Colorado waterways will be subject to subsequent federal control this year, but we must keep a wary eye on the future. Federal reserve water rights

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

and bypass flows continue to threaten Colorado farmers and ranchers. As a state, Colorado must continue to stand committed to protecting our water from further federal usurpations.

Colorado's farmers and ranchers are growing older. Factor in inflated property values, rising costs and low commodity prices and its clear Colorado's farmers and ranchers are fighting for their very survival. That is why I introduced legislation designed to keep family farms and ranches in the family.

The Family Farm Preservation Act blocks the death tax from family farms when they are passed along to the next generation. While the death tax has devastating effects on families (up to 55 percent of the farm's value may have to be paid to the I.R.S.), the amount raised by the tax accounts for less than one percent of federal tax revenues, two-thirds of which are wasted on administration and overhead.

Furthermore, Congress needs to further reduce capital gains taxes so retiring farmers can pass farming operations and equipment on to younger agricultural producers.

While certain anti-property rights groups fight for more regulation and government intervention, Colorado must become an aggressive advocate for agriculture. Preserving farms and ranches is one effective way to mitigate Colorado's booming urbanization.

Let us not look to more litigation or to Washington bureaucrats for the solution to Colorado's problems. Instead, let us pursue sound pro-agriculture and pro-environmental policies that help our neighbors and help ourselves.

CONGRATULATIONS TO TRACK COACH DELBERT BEST

HON. IKE SKELTON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 1999

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, it has come to my attention that Delbert Best, track coach for the last 24 years at Wellington-Napoleon High School, and athletic director for the past 18 years, was inducted into the Missouri Track and Cross Country Coaches Association Hall of Fame.

During his career at Wellington-Napoleon High School, Best's track teams won nine boys and one girls 1-70 Conference championships and six boys District championships. His boys teams placed first at the Missouri state finals in 1985, 1987, and 1991; second at state in 1986 and 1983 and third at state in 1992, and 1996. The girls team were second at the state championships in 1993 and third in 1992.

Best was selected 1A boys Coach of the Year once by his coaching peers. In 1994 he was selected as Region 5 National Coach of the Year.

I wish to extend my congratulations to Coach Best for his most deserved induction

into the Missouri Track and Cross Country Coaches Association Hall of Fame.

THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF ELECTRIC BOAT

HON. SAM GEJDENSON

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 9, 1999

Mr. GEJDENSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer congratulations to Electric Boat of Groton, Connecticut, on the occasion of its 100th anniversary. On February 7, 1899, the Electric Boat Company was incorporated, heralding the beginning of an enterprise that has performed an invaluable service to our nation. As Electric Boat celebrates its centennial, I would like to pay tribute to this national treasure and thank the men and women who have done so much to ensure our national security.

Beginning with the development of the Holland (S-1), the world's first practical submarine, Electric Boat has led the way in submarine innovation. The working men and women of Electric Boat have created an impressive historical record. They delivered the USS Cuttlefish—the first all-welded submarine—to the Navy in 1933. They produced submarines at an incredible pace paving the way to America's victory in the Pacific in World War II. The company's craftsmen and designers ushered in a new era of Naval technology in the mid-1950s with the USS Nautilus (SSN571)—the world's first nuclear-powered submarine. The list of accomplishments goes on and on: development of the first fleet ballistic missile submarine in 1959; design and modular construction of the Trident ballistic missile submarines that provide the undetectable leg of America's strategic nuclear triad; delivery of Seawolf class of submarines, the most capable attack submarine ever built; and continuing innovation with the New Attack Submarine. Simply put, Electric Boat has played the defining role in every innovation in submarine design and construction over the past century.

More impressive than the company's list of accomplishments, however, are the people who work there. I have an incredible sense of pride in these patriots. I wish more of my colleagues had the opportunity to visit them, to talk to them, and to get to know what great Americans they are. That's truly why I rise today. To make sure that the entire House, the collective representatives of his nation, know about the unique contributions of the men and women of Electric Boat. Our submarine force is often referred to as the "Silent Service." Nevertheless, if ever there was a time to set silence and modesty aside, it's to pay tribute to this great group of people on the occasion of the centennial of the company they have built.

Happy 100th Anniversary, Electric Boat!