from me and my community, as I learned so much from them. Perhaps the greatest thing I learned was to have goals and dreams for our families, and our communities. I applaud the members of the Russian delegation that visited my district for their dedication and loyalty to their nation, and I wish them well in their efforts to build stronger communities and homes for their families.

FEDERAL WILDLIFE AID

HON. BOB SCHAFFER
OF COLORADO
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 18, 1999

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, this legislative session, the House Resources Committee, of which I am a member, held three lengthy hearings on how the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has managed the Pittman-Robertson (PR) and Dingell-Johnson (DJ) funds. These funds are paid for through excise taxes collected on all fishing and hunting supplies and outdoor gear. Coloradans pay a disproportionate share of these taxes because of the number of sportsmen and women who live here. In addition, businesses in Colorado collect a large share of the taxes for the federal government because visitors come from all over and spend money to hunt and fish in our great state.

The Fish and Wildlife Service was instructed to distribute the PR-DJ money through the Federal Aid Program to the states to use for conservation and wildlife management. Coloradans pay these taxes without complaint because they are playing a part in improving wildlife and conservation in our state. This fund has helped target money to recover species in Colorado that would have otherwise been endangered without PR-DJ funds. The problem comes when Fish and Wildlife was allowed to use up to 6 percent of one fund and 8 percent of the other to cover administrative costs related to distributing money to the states. Whatever Fish and Wildlife did not use at the end of the year is supposed to go back to the states for more recovery programs.

In the hearings, we heard from the General Accounting Office (GAO), a non-partisan federal auditing agency that the Federal Aid Program within Fish and Wildlife is "one of the worst managed programs we've ever encountered." Fish and Wildlife has been caught red-handed spending Congress specifically designated to support conservation and wildlife management. We learned from GAO that rather than returning money to the States, over $30 million was spent on trips to Japan, expensive hotels and dinners, and other unauthorized expenses. They had at least separate slush funds within Fish and Wildlife used for pet projects never approved by Congress. In fact, some of these projects were specifically forbidden. Money was spent on "International Affairs, the Peoples Republic of China," "International Affairs, NAFTA," and other mysterious items unrelated to conservation. When the committee asked, Assistant Interior Secretary Donald Barry, and Director of Fish and Wildlife Service Jamie Clark could not provide an explanation on how this money was helping with conservation and wildlife management in the United States.

We learned that money was also used to fund bonuses for employees who weren't even working for Fish and Wildlife, and, in some cases, to people who weren't even working for the federal government. In addition, employees who have no authority were signing off travel well above the federal limits, on trips in excess of $75,000. Believe it or not, it gets worse. They tried to use these administrative funds, meant to pay a phone bill or buy a desk, to buy an island near Hawaii. The cost of this remote island was $30 million. Fish and Wildlife said it was important to ducks that the Island be preserved. When Congress looked into the island further we found a total of 10 ducks on the Island.

Unfortunately, this is just one program in one agency within the Department of Interior, and there are still other instances where Pittman-Robertson, Dingell-Johnson and Fish and Wildlife no one seems to know where it was spent. At the final hearing, I asked for an explanation on how this money was going and stop the waste and illegal spending. Rather than spending $3 million per duck in a remote duck hunter, Fish and Wildlife Service should let the people of Colorado use this money toward something that actually helps conservation and wildlife.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

November 19, 1999

HON. MARCY KAPTUR
OF OHIO
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. GILLMOR. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to pay special tribute to an outstanding individual from the Fifth Congressional District of Ohio. We are fortunate that Ben Richmond makes his home in our area and is able to share his artistic talents with us.

Ben Richmond is without question one of Ohio's premier artists. Concentrating on the rich heritage and natural surroundings of the Great Lakes, Ben Richmond seeks to combine feeling, personality, and clear relationships in each of his paintings. While his paintings and artistic creations are produced in wondrous fashion today, in his youth, art class was not at the top of Ben's priority list. However, with some guidance from his parents and one of his college professors, Ben embarked upon a remarkable career as an artist.

Mr. Speaker, after honing his skills as an artist, Ben graduated from college and went to work in the business world. But, business simply did not capture Ben's imagination and talents the way painting did. So, one weekend, while traveling through Marblehead with his wife, Wendy, they noticed the picturesque beauty of the Lake Erie region. In 1981, the Richmonds purchased a building in the village of Marblehead and turned it into an art gallery. Thus began the artistry of Ben Richmond.

Ben Richmond's myriad collection of works of art seems to have no end. From his signature painting of the Marblehead Lighthouse to the other limited edition paintings, posters, sculptures, and collectibles, the Richmond Galleries has become known as The Collectors Choice for custom artwork and framing. For his accomplishments, Ben Richmond's work has been featured at the Grand Central