

IN HONOR OF MR. WHIT CLARK

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 10, 1999

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Whit Clark the principal of Col. John Glenn School.

Whit Clark has been a very successful educator for 33 years and an effective principal at Col. John Glenn for the last 13 years. Whit Clark has done an outstanding job as an educator for the last 33 years. For his exceptional efforts, he received a commendation from Mayor Gerald Trafis.

He has been a wonderful example in his community for truly being a man for others. His dedication to his profession is something that sticks out and should be recognized. He has a love for his position unlike anyone I have ever seen. He will be greatly missed when he retires on June 6th of this year.

My fellow colleagues, please join me in honoring one of Cleveland's great educators Mr. Whit Clark.

**ROCKY MOUNTAIN NATIONAL
PARK WILDERNESS ACT OF 1999**

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 10, 1999

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing the Rocky Mountain National Park Wilderness Act of 1999. This legislation will provide important protection and management direction for some truly remarkable country, adding nearly 250,000 acres in the park to the National Wilderness Preservation System.

The bill is essentially identical to one my predecessor, Representative David Skaggs, introduced in October of last year, which in turn was based on similar measures he had proposed in the 103rd and 104th Congresses. It also reflects previous proposals by former Senator Bill Armstrong and others. I am grateful to have the opportunity to press forward in the effort to complete the work they began.

Over the last several years my predecessor worked with the National Park Service and others to refine the boundaries of the areas proposed for wilderness designation and consulted closely with many interested parties in Colorado, including local officials and both the Northern Colorado Water Conservancy District and the St. Vrain & Left Hand Ditch Water Conservancy District. These consultations provided the basis for many of his bill's provisions, particularly regarding the status of existing water facilities, and I have drawn on them in shaping the bill I am introducing today.

Covering 94 percent of the park, the new wilderness will include Longs Peaks and other major mountains along the Great Continental Divide, glacial cirques and snow fields, broad expanses of alpine tundra and wet meadows, old-growth forests, and hundreds of lakes and streams, all untrammelled by human structures or passage. Indeed, examples of all the natural ecosystems that make up the splendor of

Rocky Mountain National Park are included in this wilderness designation.

The features of these lands and waters that make Rocky Mountain National park a true gem in our national parks system also make it an outstanding wilderness candidate.

The wilderness boundaries are carefully located to assure continued access for use of existing roadways, buildings and developed areas; privately owned land, and areas where additional facilities and roadwork will improve park management and visitor services. In addition, specific provisions are included to assure that there will be no adverse effects on continued use of existing water facilities.

This bill is based on National Park Service recommendations, prepared 25 years ago and presented to Congress by President Nixon. It seems to me that, in that time, there has been sufficient study, consideration, and refinement of those recommendations so that Congress can proceed with this legislation. I believe that this bill constitutes a fair and complete proposal, sufficiently providing for the legitimate needs of the public at large and all interested groups, and deserves to be enacted in this form.

It took more than a decade before the Colorado delegation and the Congress were finally able, in 1993, to pass the most recent bill to designate additional wilderness in our state's national forests. We now must take up the urgent question of wilderness designations of lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management. And the time is ripe for finally resolving the status of the lands within Rocky Mountain National Park that are dealt with in this bill.

All Coloradans know that the question of possible impacts on water rights can be a primary point of contention in Congressional debates over designating wilderness areas. So, it's very important to understand that the question of water rights for Rocky Mountain National Park wilderness is entirely different from many considered before, and is far simpler.

To begin with, it has long been recognized under the laws of the United States and Colorado, including a decision of the Colorado Supreme Court, that Rocky Mountain National Park already has extensive federal reserved water rights arising from the creation of the national park itself.

Division One of the Colorado Water Court, which has jurisdiction over the portion of the park that is east of the continental divide, has already decided how extensive the water rights are in its portion of the park. In December, 1993, the court ruled that the park has reserved rights to all water within the park that was unappropriated at the time the park was created. As a result of this decision, in the eastern half of the park there literally is no more water for either the park or anybody else to claim. This is not, so far as I have been able to find out, a controversial decision, because there is a widespread consensus that there should be no new water projects developed within Rocky Mountain National Park. And, since the park sits astride the continental divide, there's no higher land around from which streams flow into the park, so there is no possibility of any upstream diversions.

As for the western side of the park, the water court has not yet ruled on the extent of

the park's existing water rights there, although it has affirmed that the park does have such rights. With all other rights to water arising in the park and flowing west already claimed, as a practical matter under Colorado water law, this wilderness designation will not restrict any new water claims.

And it's important to emphasize that any wilderness water rights amount only to guarantees that water will continue to flow through and out of the park as it always has. This preserves the natural environment of the park, but it doesn't affect downstream water use. Once water leaves the park, it will continue to be available for diversion and use under Colorado law regardless of whether or not lands within the park are designated as wilderness.

These legal and practical realities are reflected in my bill—as in my predecessor's—by inclusion of a finding that because the park already has these extensive reserved rights to water, there is no need for any additional reservation of such right, and an explicit disclaimer that the bill effects any such reservation.

Some may ask, why should we designate wilderness in a national park? Isn't park protection the same as wilderness, or at least as good? The answer is that the wilderness designation will give an important additional level of protection to most of the park. Our national park system was created, in part, to recognize and preserve prime examples of outstanding landscape. At Rocky Mountain National Park in particular, good Park Service management over the past 83 years has kept most of the park in a natural condition. And all the lands that are covered by this bill are currently being managed, in essence, to protect their wilderness character. Formal wilderness designation will no longer leave this question to the discretion of the Park Service, but will make it clear that within the designated areas there will never be roads, visitor facilities, or other man-made features that interfere with the spectacular natural beauty and wildness of the mountains.

This kind of protection is especially important for a park like Rocky Mountain, which is relatively small by western standards. As surrounding land development and alteration has accelerated in recent years, the pristine nature of the park's backcountry becomes an increasingly rare feature of Colorado's landscape.

Further, Rocky Mountain National Park's popularity demands definitive and permanent protection for wild areas against possible pressures for development within the park. While only about one tenth the size of Yellowstone National Park, Rocky Mountain sees nearly the same number of visitors each year as does our first national park.

At the same time, designating these carefully selected portions of Rocky Mountain as wilderness will make other areas, now restricted under interim wilderness protection management, available for overdue improvements to park roads and visitor facilities.

So, Mr. Speaker, this bill will protect some of our nation's finest wild lands. It will protect existing rights. It will not limit any existing opportunity for new water development. And it will affirm our commitment in Colorado to preserving the very features that make our State such a remarkable place to live. Thus, the bill deserves prompt enactment.

June 10, 1999

I am attaching a fact sheet giving more details about the bill:

ROCKY MOUNTAIN NATIONAL PARK
WILDERNESS ACT

1. ROCKY MOUNTAIN NATIONAL PARK

Rocky Mountain National Park, one of the nation's most visited parks, possesses some of the most pristine and striking alpine ecosystems and natural landscapes in the continental United States. This park straddles the Continental Divide along Colorado's northern Front Range. It contains high altitude lakes, herds of bighorn sheep and elk, glacial cirques and snow fields, broad expanses of alpine tundra, old-growth forests and thundering rivers. It also contains Longs Peak, one of Colorado's 54 fourteen thousand-foot peaks.

2. CONGRESSMAN UDALL'S ROCKY MOUNTAIN
NATIONAL PARK WILDERNESS PROPOSAL

Former Congressman David Skaggs from the Second District had been working for years to designate certain areas within the Park as wilderness. Congressman Skaggs introduced a bill last year, and this proposal by Congressman Udall is essentially identical.

The Udall proposal would designate nearly 250,000 acres within Rocky Mountain National Park, or about 94 percent of the Park, as wilderness, including Longs Peak—the areas included are based on the recommendations prepared over 24 years ago by President Nixon with some revisions in boundaries to reflect acquisitions and other changes since that recommendation was submitted; designate about 1,000 acres as wilderness when non-conforming structures are removed; and add non-federal inholdings within the wilderness boundaries to the wilderness if they are acquired by the United States.

The Udall proposal would NOT create a new federal reserved water right; instead, it includes a finding that the Park's existing federal reserved water rights, as decided by the Colorado courts, are sufficient, nor include certain lands in the Park as wilderness, including Trail Ridge and other roads used for motorized travel, water storage and conveyance structures, buildings, developed areas of the Park, and private inholdings.

3. EXISTING WATER FACILITIES

Boundaries for the wilderness areas are drawn to exclude: existing storage and conveyance structures, thereby assuring continued use of the Grand River Ditch and its right-of-way; the east and west portals of the Adams Tunnel and gauging stations of the Colorado-Big Thompson Project; Long Draw Reservoir; and lands owned by the St. Vrain & Left Hand Water Conservancy District, including Copeland Reservoir.

The bill includes provisions to make clear that its enactment will not impose new restrictions on already allowed activities for the operation, maintenance, repair, or reconstruction of the Adams Tunnel, which diverts water under Rocky Mountain National Park (including lands that would be designated by the bill), or other Colorado-Big Thompson Project facilities. Additional activities for these purposes will be allowed, subject to reasonable restrictions, should they be necessary to respond to emergencies.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RETURN OF VETERANS MEMORIAL
OBJECTS

HON. ROBERT A. UNDERWOOD

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 10, 1999

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, I would like to call your attention to an amendment to the Senate version of the FY2000 Defense Authorization Bill. Section 1066 of the Senate version prohibits the return of veterans memorial objects to foreign nations without specific authorization in law.

Although it might seem to be a well-intentioned attempt to protect veterans memorials, this amendment is, in fact, an underhanded attempt to infringe upon the chief executive's authority to, in good, return questionably acquired items to their rightful owners.

We all agree that this nation had been involved in a number of unjust conflicts. Regrettably, our troops have been involved in dubious actions, both here and in foreign lands. Without, taking dignity away from those who have fallen and those who followed orders, we should strive towards preserving our ability to right certain historical wrongs.

Under the cloak of protecting veterans memorials, this amendment is actually an attempt to impede the facilitation of a compromise between the United States and the Republic of the Philippines. F.E. Warren Air Force Base plays host to a memorial comprised of two church bells seized from the Philippines. As the bells are equally important to Filipinos, they have requested the repatriation of one.

I have worked in the last Congress to bring this compromise. Veterans groups, church officials, and members of this body have expressed support. Section 1066 of the Senate version is designed to undermine the progress we have made on this issue.

I urge the members of the conference committee to be mindful of this. Let us be straightforward and put the real issue on the table. I urge the members of the conference committee to act accordingly on this matter.

HONORING WILLIAM H. WALKER

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 10, 1999

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this time to honor an individual who served our great Nation in war time, and served our children in peace. William H. Walker not only served our Nation as one of the famed Tuskegee Airmen, but also served as an educator at Lincoln Elementary School in Centralia, Illinois.

The Illinois native from Carbondale passed away at age 83. During his life, he was a patriot and an inspiration to the civil rights movement, City of Centralia, and children of Lincoln Elementary School. Mr. Walker is also an inductee in the Centralia Historical Hall of Fame.

Dan Griffin, Superintendent of the Centralia City School District in which William Walker served said of Mr. Walker, "He was well-re-

12547

spected by the black community and white community alike, and by all educators. . . . The best way I can sum up Bill Walker is that he was a gentleman's gentleman."

I commend him on his life-time service to the Nation. His life should be a reminder to us all about what service to the Nation means.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION
ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2000

SPEECH OF

HON. MAXINE WATERS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 9, 1999

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1401) to authorize appropriations for fiscal years 2000 and 2001 for military activities of the Department of Defense, to prescribe military personnel strengths for fiscal years 2000 and 2001, and for other purposes:

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Chairman, I rise to speak in opposition to the Gilman-Goss amendment.

This foolish and dangerous amendment would prohibit the use of funds to maintain a U.S. military presence in Haiti after December 31 of this year. The effect of this amendment is to gut US Support Group Haiti, an important humanitarian, engineering and civic affairs operation, and deny our President the flexibility he needs to determine our nation's troop deployments.

Haiti is currently planning to hold elections later this year. This elections follow months of political instability. It is vital that the United States show our support for the democratic process in this country.

Unfortunately, this is not the first time that Members on the other side of the aisle have attempted to interfere in our nation's support for democracy in Haiti. Last month, Republicans led an effort to squash a human rights observation mission that represented the one credible human rights organization in Haiti during this difficult time.

Now, these same critics of our nation's policy toward Haiti are attempting to force our troops to leave at a time when their presence is especially important to support stability and aid in democratization efforts.

The people of Haiti are looking forward to having elections later this year. Requiring the courageous and dedicated men and women of our nation's armed forces to leave the country now would send a terrible message to the Haitian people about our willingness to support the democratic process in this country. Now is not the time to consider withdrawing these men and women at this critical point in Haiti's history.

I urge my colleagues to vote against the Gilman-Goss amendment.

IN HONOR OF CHARLES REYNOLDS

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 10, 1999

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Mr. Charles Reynolds for his