

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

INTRODUCTION OF THE CORAL REEF CONSERVATION AND RESTORATION PARTNERSHIP ACT OF 2000

HON. JIM SAXTON

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 14, 2000

Mr. SAXTON. Mr. Speaker, today I am pleased to introduce the Coral Reef Conservation and Restoration Partnership Act of 2000. I am joined in this effort by the distinguished gentleman from American Samoa, who is the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Fisheries Conservation, Wildlife and Oceans, along with 12 other bipartisan cosponsors.

Coral reefs support the economies of many local communities throughout the Atlantic Ocean, Caribbean Sea, and Pacific Ocean. Coral reefs provide important areas for tourism, diving, fishing, scientific research and offers potential life saving pharmaceutical advances to treat human diseases. Unfortunately, many of our coral reef areas are threatened by a variety of natural impacts and human activities including coral disease, hurricanes, destructive fishing practices, over fishing, pollution, and changing ocean conditions. Under ideal circumstances, coral reefs can take decades or more to recover, and it is critical that we address the most serious problems facing these valuable marine areas. In cases where damage has occurred, we need to develop the technologies to help repair and restore coral reefs. Further, we need to improve our abilities to recognize areas that are susceptible to coral reef loss. This requires developing comprehensive maps of U.S. coral reef resources using new remote as well as using satellite data to monitor coral reef change.

Last year, I introduced H.R. 2903, the Coral Reef Conservation and Restoration Act, which was based on a bill approved by the House of Representatives in the 105th Congress. The Subcommittee on Fisheries Conservation, Wildlife and Oceans held a hearing on H.R. 2903 on October 21, 1998. The bill I am introducing today replaces that legislation and incorporates suggestions from that hearing, as well as provisions from H.R. 3133, the Coral Reef Protection Act, which was introduced by my friend and colleague from American Samoa, ENI FALEOMAVAEGA. Over the last several months, I have worked closely with him to craft the Coral Reef Conservation and Restoration Partnership Act. This bill represents a major step forward in this nation's efforts to conserve valuable coral reef ecosystems.

The Coral Reef Conservation and Restoration Partnership Act represents a combination of the best ideas for enhancing and conserving coral reefs. The bill greatly assists ongoing efforts to understand, map and conserve U.S. coral reefs. Our bill authorizes \$15 million

per year for coral reef conservation, for a total of \$60 million over four years. This level of funding is consistent with the FY 2001 budget request of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

The bill establishes a grant program to provide funding for coral reef projects carried out in local communities, States and U.S. Insular Areas that have limited sources of funding. Eligible grantees include local and State governments, certain nonprofit groups and educational institutions. A grant partner can receive up to 50 percent Federal matching funds for a variety of projects, such as mapping, monitoring, assessment, restoration and law enforcement. The Secretary of Commerce is given flexibility in the match requirements for small projects carried out in the Insular Areas.

The bill also provides statutory authority for the Coral Reef Task Force, which was established by Presidential Executive Order 13089. The Departments of Interior and Commerce are the designated Task Force co-chairs. The co-chairs can jointly designate the governors of the States and Territories to serve on the Task Force. The Task Force is charged with coordinating Federal agency activities, establishing a national coral reef action strategy, developing a comprehensive mapping, monitoring and assessment program for U.S. coral reefs, and providing regular reports to Congress on activities to conserve coral reefs.

Finally, our bill authorizes the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to carry out a variety of coral reef-related conservation activities, including restoration, mapping, and monitoring. The proposed legislation recognizes NOAA's important role in managing coral reef resources, and authorizes ongoing activities consistent with the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, the Coastal Zone Management Act and the National Marine Sanctuaries Act.

Sine the Year of the Reef in 1997, I have been working to enact legislation that would focus the necessary resources to protect and restore coral reefs. I believe that the Coral Reef Conservation and Restoration Partnership Act will accomplish this goal, and I intend to work to ensure that this bill is signed into law. It is essential that we work to conserve our coral reef ecosystems for future generations. These ecosystems are the marine equivalent of the rain forest, rich in biological diversity and they provide innumerable benefits to the Nation.

I urge my colleagues to join with us by cosponsoring this important measure.

ROBERT "BAT" BATINOVICH HONORED WITH SAN FRANCISCO CATHOLIC CHARITIES' LOAVES AND FISHES AWARD

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 14, 2000

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, it is my great privilege today to call to the attention of my colleagues in the Congress the extraordinary accomplishments of Mr. Robert "Bat" Batinovich of San Mateo, California. Bat brings the same extraordinary leadership qualities and generosity of spirit to his charitable contributions that he does to his entrepreneurial enterprises.

A shining example in the business community of the possibilities for philanthropic contribution, Bat Batinovich has for years made quiet contributions to causes ranging from women's athletics to services for homeless families. This Saturday, March 18, 2000, the Catholic Charities of San Francisco will honor Mr. Batinovich with its annual Loaves and Fishes Award for outstanding service to the community. This award recognizes the distinguished charitable efforts of individuals and organizations, and Mr. Batinovich reflects perfectly the spirit of commitment and service that define the work of Catholic Charities.

Robert Batinovich is Chairman and CEO of Glenborough Realty Trust, a San Mateo-based real estate investment trust. He is a self-made man whose drive has taken him from tuna-fishing on the high seas to chairing the California Public Utilities Commission during the energy crisis. His passion and vivacity have marked every step along the way with *joie de vivre*. As a leader, Mr. Batinovich has gained the respect and affection of our entire community. His reputation for honesty and tenaciousness is unassailable, but Bat's most admirable quality is his discernment that true success extends beyond the business arena and necessarily includes one's relationship to one's family, friends and community.

I invite my colleagues to join me and the Catholic Charities of San Francisco in honoring the remarkable accomplishments of the benevolent Robert "Bat" Batinovich in business, in life and in our community.

CONGRATULATIONS TO MISSOURI SPORTS HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE TOM HENKE

HON. IKE SKELTON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 14, 2000

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, it has come to my attention that retired major league baseball

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pitcher Tom Henke, of Taos, Missouri, was inducted into the Missouri Sports Hall of Fame on February 6, 2000.

Tom began his major league baseball career with the Texas Rangers in 1982, then continued with the Toronto Blue Jays in 1985. He became the Blue Jays career leader with 217 saves during his eight years in Toronto, including a save during the 1992 World Series. In 1993, Tom returned to the Rangers and recorded a career-high 40 saves. He spent the final year of his sterling career pitching for the St. Louis Cardinals, the team he cheered for while growing up in Missouri. His 1995 season was one of the finest of his 15-year professional career. Tom was named to the National League All-Star team, was voted the Cardinals Player of the Year and won the Rolands National League Relief Man Award. He donated the \$25,000 award to the Taos Parks and Recreation Board and St. Francis Xavier School, and now devotes a portion of his time to helping local high school baseball programs.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to extend my congratulations to Tom Henke for his most deserved induction into the Missouri Sports Hall of Fame.

THE IMPORTANCE OF RURAL EDUCATION

HON. BILL BARRETT

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 14, 2000

Mr. BARRETT of Nebraska. Mr. Speaker, as a member of the Rural Caucus, I would like to share my strong support for one of the most vibrant sectors of rural America—our rural schools. Out in my part of the country, schools, along with churches, are at the heart of a community. And, rural administrators, teachers, and school boards should be commended for the educational opportunities they work to offer rural school students.

Rural schools offer students the types of educational experiences we hope all students can have—small classes, quality basic academic programs, personal relationships with teachers and administrators, hands-on vocational education opportunities, and the chance to participate in a variety of quality extracurricular activities. In fact, more than 20 percent of students in this country attend small, rural schools. Rural schools in my district have done an exceptional job maximizing learning opportunities for their students by investing in distance learning technology, forming educational service units to offer special education and gifted and talented programs, and holding themselves accountable, not only to the federal government and to the state, but, most importantly, to parents.

When I consider excellent rural schools in my district, several examples come to mind. For instance, I think of the one-room Kindergarten through 6th grade Macon School in the tiny village of Macon, Nebraska, where students receive one-on-one attention in basic academic areas and the arts. From the first grade on, every student at the Macon School receives individual piano lessons from their

teacher, Mrs. Johnson; writes plays, songs, and poems; and performs original programs to packed houses of family and friends. There aren't too many one-room schools left, but the Macon School is an example of how tiny rural schools can offer their students more enriching experiences than larger schools may be able to offer.

Rural schools also work together to keep their standards high. Schools like Franklin and Hildreth, Nebraska, have invested in state-of-the-art distance learning facilities so foreign language, advanced math, and other advanced courses can be available to all students, regardless of the size of their school or the distance between the teacher and the students. This year, these schools banded together to hire an exchange teacher, Cristina Bermejo, from Spain to teach Spanish. This teacher is physically located in the Franklin school, but her courses are beamed via two-way audio-video connection to Hildreth.

Because of their size and location, many schools in our rural areas are able to reach out to underserved and at-risk populations, like the Santee School in Santee, Nebraska. Led by a dedicated superintendent, Chuck Squire, the Santee School works to empower children from the Santee tribe and helps them gain the skills they need for the 21st Century workplace.

These are just a few examples of the high quality educational experiences students in rural school districts benefit. But, while there are certainly many benefits to rural education, there are also some real challenges facing rural schools. One is the difficulty of attracting teachers to work in far-flung school districts, especially in fields like foreign language, music, advanced math, and science. Recently, many schools in Nebraska have started offering signing bonuses to draw teachers to their schools.

In addition to staffing issues, federal funding formulas have not addressed the unique funding needs of these districts. The problem is that not all schools are created equal. Bigger schools have an advantage when it comes to attracting federal funds and resources. By their very nature, small, rural schools have their own strong points, as I have mentioned, but they struggle, nearly always, for needed funding. All current federal education formula grants unintentionally ignore small, rural schools by not producing enough revenue for rural schools to carry out the program the grant is intended to fund. To address this problem, together with Mr. Pomeroy, I introduced a bill, H.R. 2725, the Rural Education Initiative Act, which was later incorporated into the reauthorization package for the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and passed by the House last October.

This program is completely optional, but if a school district chooses to participate, the rural provisions will allow a small, rural school district with fewer than 600 students and located in a community with a Beale Code of 6, 7, 8, or 9 (the Beale Code is a measure used by the USDA to determine ruralness) to combine its federal education dollars in selected programs.

Small schools qualifying for this program would have the option to apply for a flexible lump-sum in place of funds from federal edu-

cation formula grants. While federal education formula grants normally include strict rules for how they must be used, schools receiving the lump-sum grant could make their own decisions about how to use the money. For example, they could use the money to support local education and to improve student achievement or the quality of instruction. In exchange for this flexibility, school districts would have to meet high accountability standards.

When I've been in my congressional district, I have heard from many rural school administrators who have told me that this particular provision will help them serve their students even better. They can't wait for this provision to become law so rural America's students will be able to benefit from the same types of programs as their urban and suburban counterparts.

This provision has broad bipartisan support and more than 80 endorsements from education organizations across the country. It provides a commonsense approach to using federal dollars in the way Congress intended—to insure that all students, regardless of their background, have the opportunity to receive a high quality education.

As the ESEA reauthorization efforts continue during this session of Congress, I look forward to helping this provision and others designed to strengthen rural school districts become law. I am pleased that the Rural Caucus is taking a step forward to highlight some of the issues facing rural America, including rural education.

THE PASSING OF GOVERNOR MALCOLM WILSON

HON. BENJAMIN A. GILMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 14, 2000

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, it is with deep regret that I inform our colleagues of the passing of one of the outstanding political leaders of New York State over the past century.

Malcolm Wilson was first elected to our New York State Assembly in 1938, at the young age of 24, representing a portion of Westchester County. Throughout his 20 years as a member of that chamber, he earned a statewide reputation for his honesty, integrity, and for his thorough understanding of our legislative process.

Malcolm Wilson was known as a superb debater, a skill he honed during his years as a star member of the debate team at Fordham University in the Bronx.

In the years following World War II, I came to know Malcolm Wilson quite well, as he was the coordinator of our Young Republican organization for the 9th Judicial District of New York. In that position, he impressed us all with his leadership and organizational skills.

In 1958, many leaders throughout New York State considered Malcolm Wilson their logical choice for Governor. But the nomination that year was won instead by Nelson Rockefeller, who brought to his candidacy extensive experience in the business world and in the State Department, but none in the legislative process. Accordingly, Rockefeller recognized that