

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 FALOMAVAEGA. 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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