

Beginning in the Eightieth Congress, Speaker Albert spent the next thirty years representing the citizens of the Third Congressional District of Oklahoma in the U.S. Congress and helped create a new era of American opportunity. He supported civil rights and antipoverty legislation. Speaker Albert provided invaluable leadership to the House of Representatives as majority leader during the Eighty-seventh through Ninety-first Congresses. As leader of this legislative body during the Ninety-second through Ninety-fourth Congresses, Speaker Albert fostered a lasting legacy.

Speaker Albert successfully steered the nation through difficult times and ensured a fair forum for democratic discussion on issues ranging from the impeachment of President Richard Nixon to the war in Vietnam. He provided the nation with stability and security while he was first in line to succeed the President of the United States, in 1973 and again in 1974.

Speaker Albert personified great American values throughout his life. He rose from childhood poverty to become a Rhodes Scholar, winner of the Bronze Star, and a distinguished U.S. Congressman.

During a time when we sometimes let partisanship get the better of us, we should look at Carl Albert as a symbol of the most esteemed values of the U.S. Congress. I join the nation in paying tribute to an exemplary citizen, who was during his lifetime and continues to be an inspiration in the greatest traditions of domestic representation.

THE AFFORDABLE DRINKING WATER ACT OF 2000

HON. JOHN A. BOEHNER

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 14, 2000

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Affordable Drinking Water Act of 2000. This legislation provides a new and creative way to bring safe drinking water in a cost-effective manner to those rural Americans who will struggle to meet this most basic need.

Under the bill, the government, working in partnership with nonprofit entities, would assist low to moderate-income individuals secure financing for the installation or refurbishing of individual household water well systems. The legislation authorizes a public/private partnership that allows homeowners of modest means to bring old household water well systems up to current standards, replace systems that have met their expected life, or provide homeowners without a drinking water source with a new individual household water well system.

The Affordable Drinking Water Act is a targeted approach. Only low to moderate income Americans who request assistance with their drinking water needs are eligible. The traditional federally subsidized long-pipe water systems run water lines across the countryside in front of homes that are experiencing drinking water problems, but also homes that are not. The current system serves customers without

adequate financial means but also many that do not need financial help. This lack of targeting federal dollars is often a waste of scarce resources. This legislation creates a financing option to install individual wells where they make the most economic sense.

This bill also provides assistance to the drinking water delivery option many rural Americans prefer. In a recent national survey, more than 80% of well owners prefer their individual household water well systems to other drinking water delivery options. Only 8.3% said they would rather have their drinking water from a water utility company. This legislation gives consumers the ability to pay for new or refurbished individual household water well systems with convenient monthly payments, like other utility bills.

It is my understanding, Mr. Speaker, that organizations like the National Ground Water Association, a group that has a long and distinguished record preserving and protecting America's precious ground water resources, strongly endorses this legislation. It is my hope that other organizations and communities that support common sense, innovative approaches to providing affordable, safe water to rural Americans will also endorse the Affordable Drinking Water Act of 2000.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation that provides a cost-effective alternative to meeting the drinking water needs of rural America.

IVANPAH VALLEY AIRPORT PUBLIC LANDS TRANSFER ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. JIM GIBBONS

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 9, 2000

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1695) to provide for the conveyance of certain Federal public lands in the Ivanpah Valley, Nevada, to Clark County, Nevada, for the development of an airport facility, and for other purposes:

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Chairman, I include the following letters of support for H.R. 1695, the Ivanpah Valley Airport Public Lands Transfer Act.

AIRPORTS COUNCIL INTERNATIONAL,

Washington, DC, March 7, 2000.

DEAR MEMBER OF CONGRESS: Airports Council International-North America urges your strong support of H.R. 1695, the Ivanpah Valley Airport Public Lands Transfer Act. This legislation would enable the Clark County, Nevada Department of Aviation to buy 6,500 of federal land for a new airport to serve Las Vegas.

The number of air passengers traveling in the United States is expected to increase from less than 700 million to over a billion in just a few short years. We need to add airport capacity across the nation to accommodate this growth.

Air traffic at Las Vegas McCarran International airport grew 11 percent last year alone, creating the prospect of significant future delays if new runway and terminal facilities are not built. Las Vegas is currently

the tenth busiest airport in the nation with connections to over 50 other cities. Delays in Las Vegas will mean delays in other cities as well.

The FAA Reauthorization package agreed to by the conferees this week provides airports with much of the funding they require to meet tomorrow's needs. In order for this important work to be done, airports such as Las Vegas must be able to overcome the environmental opposition to their expansion projects. Existing airports all across the nation are facing congestion in terminals and on runways. New airport capacity is needed today.

We urge you to support H.R. 1695.

Sincerely,

JEFFREY GOODELL,
Vice President, Government Affairs.

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF AIRPORT EXECUTIVES,
Alexandria, VA, March 3, 2000.

Hon. JAMES GIBBONS,
U.S. Representative, Cannon House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE GIBBONS: The U.S. House of Representatives will shortly be considering H.R. 1695, which would permit Clark County, Nevada to purchase 6,500 acres of federal land in the Ivanpah Valley for a future commercial airport site. Your support, and that of your colleagues, is critical to ensuring the continued economic vitality of Southern Nevada well into the 21st Century.

Passenger traffic at McCarran International Airport has been increasing for the past 16 consecutive months. During that period, passenger enplanements have risen by over 11 percent. Continued growth, at even a moderate rate, will bring the Airport to its effective capacity by 2012. The Clark County Department of Aviation estimates it will take at least seven years to plan, design and construct the new airport. I think you will agree that prompt congressional action is critical.

The Ivanpah Valley is the best location for a future second airport to serve the Las Vegas metropolitan area. The proposed location is 35 miles from the heart of the Las Vegas valley, between Jean and Prim, Nevada. Also, it is bounded by Interstate Highway 15 and main line of the Union Pacific Railroad, giving the new airport excellent and essential multimodal/intermodal surface access opportunities.

Thank you again for your support and assistance. If further information is desired, please do not hesitate to contact Randall H. Walker, Director of Aviation at (702) 261-5150.

Sincerely yours,

TODD HAUPTLI,
Senior Vice President for Policy and Government Affairs.

LAS VEGAS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF IVANPAH AIRPORT LAND SALE

Whereas, visitors from outside the state directly and indirectly account for more than half the state's economic activity thereby constituting the economic lifeblood of Nevada; and

Whereas, airline passengers constitute nearly 50% of the visitors to the Las Vegas Valley and this percentage is likely to increase as Las Vegas adds to its presence as a gateway for international travelers; and

Whereas, McCarran International Airport has a capacity to handle 55 million passengers annually. In 1999, over 33.6 million

passengers used McCarran and growth projections indicated the Airport could reach its capacity by the end of this decade; and

Whereas, having explored numerous options, the Clark County Department of Aviation believes the Ivanpah Valley offers the only feasible location for a second airport to service commercial air cargo and passenger traffic; and

Whereas, the County has committed to pay the Bureau of Land Management fair market value for the property, conduct an airspace analysis to minimize overflights of the Mojave National Preserve, and draft a thorough Environmental Impact Statement prior to initiating construction of the Ivanpah Valley Airport; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, the Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce endorses and supports the Department of Aviation's efforts to acquire Ivanpah Valley land for an airport; and be it further

Resolved, that the Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce as the representative of more than 6,000 member businesses in Southern Nevada, encourages the House of Representatives to pass H.R. 1695, providing the Bureau of Land Management with the authority to sell the identified land in the Ivanpah Valley to Clark County; and be it further

Resolved, that copies of this Resolution be transmitted to Nevada's Congressional delegation.

DONALD L. "PAT" SHALMY,
President General Manager.

MIRAGE RESORTS,
Las Vegas, NV, March 1, 2000.

Hon. JAMES GIBBONS,
U.S. Representative, Cannon House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN GIBBONS: The U.S. House of Representatives will shortly be considering HR 1695 which would permit Clark County, Nevada to purchase 6,500 acres of federal land in the Ivanpah Valley for a future commercial airport site. Your support, and that of your colleagues, is critical to ensuring the continued economic vitality of Southern Nevada well into the 21st Century.

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Thank you again for your support and assistance. If further information is desired, please do not hesitate to contact Randall H. Walker, Director Aviation at (702) 261-5150.

Sincerely yours,

PUTNAM MATHUR.

MGM GRAND,
Las Vegas, NV, March 1, 2000.

Hon. JAMES GIBBONS,
U.S. Representative, Cannon House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN GIBBONS: The U.S. House of Representatives will shortly be con-

sidering HR 1695 which would permit Clark County, Nevada to purchase 6,500 acres of federal land in the Ivanpah Valley for a future commercial airport site. Your support, and that of your colleagues, is critical to ensuring the continued economic vitality of Southern Nevada well into the 21st Century.

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Thank you again for your support and assistance. If further information is desired, please do not hesitate to contact Randall H. Walker, Director of Aviation at (702) 261-5150.

Sincerely yours,

WILLIAM J. HORNBuckle,
President and Chief Operating Officer.

DEL WEBB CORPORATION,
Henderson, NV, March 1, 2000.

Hon. JAMES GIBBONS,
U.S. Representative, 100 Cannon House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN JIM GIBBONS: As you are well aware, the House of Representatives will shortly consider H.R. 1695, which will permit Clark County, Nevada to purchase 6,500 acres of federal land in the Ivanpah Valley for a future commercial airport site.

I'm writing to encourage your support, and that of your colleagues, for this important piece of legislation. It is our belief that this bill is critical in order to ensure the continued economic vitality of Southern Nevada for decades to come. In just the last 16 months McCarran International Airport has seen an 11% increase in passenger traffic and will reach its effective capacity by the year 2012. Given the time constraints and requirements to plan, design and construct such a complex structure, the ability to acquire the site through immediate passage is crucial.

As a company that develops large tracts of land into master-planned communities, we're well acquainted with the limited land availability in the Las Vegas area and we believe the Ivanpah Valley is the best location for a future second airport. Also, immediate freeway access makes it an ideal location.

Additionally, we support the Clark County Department of Aviation's attempt to purchase these needed lands from the BLM. It is our understanding that they will pay for these lands at an agreed upon value based upon appraisals acceptable to both the BLM and the airport.

Therefore, we join with other community business leaders and agencies in encouraging your active support of this legislation. We are prepared to assist in moving this legislation forward.

I look forward to seeing you again in the near future.

Sincerely,

SCOTT HIGGINSON,
Vice President, Government Affairs.

THE CITY OF HENDERSON,
Henderson, NV, August 5, 1998.

Re S. 1964 and H.R. 3705.

Hon. JIM GIBBONS,
Longworth House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN GIBBONS: I would like to let you know that I am in full support of the above referenced legislation. As you know Henderson's Sky Harbor Airport currently is a reliever airport of small aircraft from the McCarran air space and air traffic. As this region continues to grow, our modes of effective and efficient transportation become an increasingly important part of maintaining and improving our economic strength.

The Clark County Department of Aviation staff has identified the Ivanpah Valley Airport as the prime location for future air transportation into this region. This new airport is absolutely critical for the Department of Aviation to fulfill its mission of never allowing the lack of airport infrastructure to be an impediment to people coming to visit Las Vegas, the Grand Canyon or other destinations in this region. I would like to thank you for your efforts to date regarding this legislation and would encourage you to continue to make every effort to seek passage this session.

Legislation of this type is visionary and will help ensure a bright future for Southern Nevada.

Sincerely,

JAMES B. GIBSON,
Mayor.

HOTEL EMPLOYEES & RESTAURANT
EMPLOYEES INTERNATIONAL UNION,
Washington, DC, March 7, 2000.

Hon. SHELLY BERKLEY,
Longworth House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSWOMAN BERKLEY: On behalf of the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees International Union I want to convey support for enactment of H.R. 1965, the Ivanpah Valley Airport Public Lands Transfer Act. This bill will facilitate the purchase of federal land approximately 35 miles south of Las Vegas for the construction of an additional airport to serve southern Nevada. The phenomenal growth of the Las Vegas economy has in turn triggered double digit growth at McCarran International Airport.

It is vitally important that the transportation infrastructure be able to keep pace with growth in the hotel industry. This bill is important if the tourist based economy of Las Vegas is expected to continue to provide good paying employment opportunities. I urge you and your colleagues in the Congress to enact H.R. 1965 without amendment to pave the way for a second airport for southern Nevada.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

JOHN W. WILHELM,
General President.

NEVADA SERVICE
EMPLOYEES UNION,
Las Vegas, NV, March 3, 2000.

Hon. JAMES GIBBONS,
U.S. Representative, Cannon House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN GIBBONS: On behalf of Nevada Service Employees Union, SEIU, Local 1107, we are writing to communicate our support for the enactment of H.R. 1965, the Ivanpah Valley Airport Public Lands Transfer Act.

This bill is of extreme importance to the community and is strongly supported by the membership of NSEU, SEIU, Local 1107.

It is our belief that the Ivanpah Valley is the best location for a second airport to serve the Las Vegas metropolitan area.

It is our further belief that the construction of this additional facility is critical with respect to ensuring the continued economic growth of Southern Nevada in that the additional airport will be able to accommodate the needs of Southern Nevada's vital industries.

Accordingly, we urge your colleagues to enact H.R. 1965.

Thank you in advance for your attention in this matter.

Sincerely,

VICKY HEDDERMAN,
President.

THOMAS M. BEATTY,
Executive Director.

SOUTHERN NEVADA BUILDING &
CONSTRUCTION TRADES COUNCIL,
Las Vegas, NV, March 2, 2000.

Hon. JAMES GIBBONS,
U.S. Representative, Cannon House Office
Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN GIBBONS: The U.S. House of Representatives will shortly be considering HR1695 which would permit Clark County, Nevada to purchase 6,500 acres of federal land in the Ivanpah Valley for a future commercial airport site. Your support, and that of your colleagues, is critical to ensuring the continued economic vitality of Southern Nevada well into the 21st Century.

This bill is very important to the construction industry and is strongly supported by the Southern Nevada Building and Construction Trades.

Passenger traffic at McCarran International Airport has been increasing for the past 16 consecutive months. During that period, passenger traffic has risen by over 11%. Continued growth, at even a moderate rate, will bring the Airport to its effective capacity by 2012. The Clark County Department of Aviation estimates it will take at least seven years to plan, design and construct the new airport. I think you will agree that prompt congressional action is critical.

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Thank you again for your support and assistance. If further information is desired, please do not hesitate to contact Randall H. Walker, Director Aviation at (702) 261-5150.

Sincerely yours,

JACK JEFFREY.

INTRODUCTION OF CORAL REEF
CONSERVATION LEGISLATION

HON. ENI F.H. FALEOMAVAEGA

OF AMERICAN SAMOA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 14, 2000

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today with my good friend from New Jersey, the Chairman of the Fisheries

Conservation, Wildlife and Oceans Subcommittee, Mr. SAXTON, to introduce bipartisan legislation to authorize a coral reef conservation program.

For many people, coral reefs are distant marine environments that they might never come in contact with unless they are fortunate enough to go on a tropical vacation. For too long now, as a Nation we have enjoyed the biological wealth provided by coral reefs, but failed in our obligations to devote the resources necessary to protect these vital treasures. While these precious ecosystems appeared to be in balance until not long ago, today human activities have significantly altered that balance—much to the detriment of the corals, and much to the demise of people who depend on coral reefs to sustain their communities and economies.

Unlike many other members of Congress, I come from a place where the coral reefs are essential to the very fabric of everyday life. Until recently, those of us from the Pacific islands have literally lived off our reefs and the surrounding local lands. We have recognized for generations that coral reefs form the fundamental building block of an intricate marine food chain, providing nutrients, food and habitats for a tremendous diversity of fish and other marine animals. And intuitively, we have all come to appreciate that without healthy coral reefs, our abundance of marine resources might soon come to a sudden end.

Unfortunately, the sad reality is that we have discovered that the coral reefs we depend on are under numerous threats. These threats come from many sources, including polluted run off, increased siltation, mining, and destructive fishing practices, notably the use of dynamite and cyanide, to name only a few. We have even come to appreciate that the decline in coral health could be linked to global climate change, and events such as El Nino.

But with recognition of the problem, and with increased resources to address it, we can begin to reverse the degradation of our coral reefs and achieve a sustainable balance towards the long-term conservation of these important marine ecosystems. Several recent activities, including the initiation of the International Coral Reef Initiative, the development of U.S. Coral Reef Initiative and the International Year of the Coral Reef, were all good beginnings. And just last week, the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force published a national action plan to conserve coral reefs. It is vital that we continue this positive momentum.

As the Senior Democrat on the Subcommittee on Fishery Conservation, Wildlife and Oceans, I have enjoyed working collaboratively with Chairman SAXTON and his able staff to address my concerns and issues raised by other Democrats in order to develop this consensus legislation.

The legislation we introduce today addresses many of the priorities I consider essential to any comprehensive coral reef conservation bill. Perhaps most significant, the legislation would codify the Coral Reef Task Force established under Executive Order 13089 to give this panel the authority it needs to address the myriad of problems confronting coral reefs today.

Importantly, this legislation would require the Task Force to initiate fundamental baseline re-

search and management activities, most notably, the mapping of all coral reef resources in the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). The bill would provide to the Task Force, through a National Program coordinated by the Department of Commerce, up to \$5 million per year for 4 years to initiate this and other baseline activities, especially the development of comprehensive coral reef monitoring and assessment programs. It is expected that scientists and resource managers will gain from this previously unavailable information new insights regarding how human activities and other environmental factors are contributing to the degradation of coral reef ecosystems, and optimistically, how this degradation might be reversed. To ensure the continued comment from a broad range of interests involved in the management of coral reefs, it is anticipated that those Regional Fishery Management Councils established under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act which have corals within their jurisdiction, would be involved.

Of equal significance, this legislation would also authorize a coral reef conservation grant program to assist States and local communities in the protection, conservation and sustainable use of their coral reef resources. The bill would provide up to \$10 million per year for 4 years for coral reef conservation grants and it is expected that these grants will help improve local capabilities, raise local public awareness, and promote the long-term conservation and restoration of coral reef ecosystems. I am also pleased that this legislation would ensure the equitable distribution of grant funds to applicants in the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans, the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean Sea.

Allow me to close by simply saying that while this bill is not perfect, it is a fair and honorable compromise. The bill would establish a targeted, focused and locally-driven coral reef conservation program; importantly, a program grounded in science and built upon the ground-breaking and successful work of the Coral Reef Task Force. I commend Chairman SAXTON for his leadership and commitment to coral reef protection, and I thank my Democratic colleagues on the Fisheries Subcommittee who have worked with me throughout these negotiations.

A TRIBUTE—GARFIELD COUNTY
1999 EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 14, 2000

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I wanted to take this moment to recognize the career of one of Garfield County's community leaders, and recipient of the Garfield County 1999 Employee of the Year Award, Judy Blakeslee. In doing so, I would like to honor this individual who, for many years, has exhibited dedication and experience to the Sheriff's Department of Garfield County.

As a Civil Deputy for the last 18 years, Judy handles restraining orders, evictions, garnishment of wages and custody orders in the