

We are calling our bill the NRG, the National Resources Governance Act of the year 2000. NRG. Energy. Energy. Do my colleagues get it? Energy, our own energy, so that we can propel our own automobiles, our own farm equipment, our own airplanes, our own machinery of all types so that we can continue to lead the world in the development of technology and telecommunications and all the other aspects of our society in which we lead the world.

But we cannot do that by placing our hands across the ocean and saying, please send us more energy, please do not raise the prices, please do not cut your production.

I, as an American, cannot any longer stand that. And I believe that a majority of the American citizens in our country feel the same way. We want to end our enslavement to foreign imports of energy. We want to declare independence for our country on the basic needs of our society to move at will, to produce at will, to provide for all our citizens as we want to provide, and actually to help the world as the superpower by creating our own ability to produce the energy necessary to fire the engine of our Nation towards even greater prosperity.

REDUCING SEDIMENT AND NUTRIENT LOSSES IN UPPER MISSISSIPPI RIVER BASIN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. KIND) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing an important bill aimed at reducing sediment and nutrient losses in the Upper Mississippi River Basin.

Over the last 6 months, I have worked closely with many of my colleagues here in the House, farmers, the navigation industry, sporting groups, conservation groups, and government agencies, to come up with an effective, basin-wide, and non-regulatory approach to dealing with this increasingly serious problem in our Nation's heartland.

Why is this important? Run-off from the land represents one of the greatest environmental threats to the Mississippi River. Huge quantities of sediment and nutrients flow into the river, filling in backwaters, degrading the wetland habitat on the river, and cutting off vital lifelines for a wide variety of wildlife.

The Upper Mississippi River Basin is North America's largest migratory route, with more than 40 percent of the waterfowl using this area as a flyway.

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Ongoing habitat loss and degradation threatens the river's \$1.2 billion recreation and \$6.6 billion tourism industry, and the river is the primary water drinking source for over 22 million Americans.

Impacts on the commercial navigation industry are severe, with barge traffic impeded by sediment buildup and the Corps of Engineers spending over \$100 million each year on dredging to maintain a navigable channel in the main stem of the river.

Soil erosion reduces the long-term sustainability of family farms with farmers losing more than \$300 million annually in applied nitrogen. This affects farm income at a time when we have a crisis in rural America.

As lawmakers, we must move beyond our current after-the-fact damage repair efforts and instead pass legislation that targets cost-effective measures to reduce sediment and nutrients from entering the river basin in the first place.

In order to reduce sediment and nutrient losses from the landscape, it is imperative that we develop sound scientific information from which to make our conservation decisions. My bill calls for the creation of a basin-wide sediment and nutrient monitoring system and a state-of-the-art computer modeling program to identify hot spots in the basin.

Armed with this information, we will be able to better target landowner-friendly financial and technical assistance to areas where it is most needed.

My bill calls for an expansion of four highly successful USDA conservation programs; CRP, wetland reserve, EQIP and wildlife habitat incentives program.

In addition, the bill includes strong protections for the privacy of personal data collected in connection with monitoring, modeling and technical and financial assessment activities.

This legislation calls for a comprehensive consensus approach to reducing sediment and nutrient intake in order to prevent damage from occurring in the river system. This legislation is collaborative and brings together the relevant Federal agencies in a holistic and comprehensive manner.

This approach, I believe, will have the greatest positive effect for the environment, for our farmers and for our communities in the Upper Mississippi Basin and will do so without creating new Federal regulations.

In 1875, Mr. Speaker, Mark Twain wrote a series of essays that were collected and published under the title *Life on the Mississippi*. Reflecting on his experiences as a steamboat pilot, Twain penned the following words about his beloved Mississippi River, and I quote,

The face of the water in time became a wonderful book, a book that was a dead language to the uneducated passenger but which told its mind to me without reserve, delivering its most cherished secrets as clearly as if it uttered them with a voice. And it was not a book to be read once or thrown aside, for it had a new story to tell every day. Throughout the long 1,200 miles, there was never a page that was void of interest, never one that you could leave unread without

loss, never one that you would want to skip thinking you could find higher enjoyment in some other thing. There never was so wonderful a book by a man.

The book of the great Mississippi River is one that I have been fortunate enough to read and reread throughout my life based on personal experience growing up on the river. For the sake of our children and for future generations, we must take measures today to ensure that a healthy and beautiful Mississippi River will be there for them to read as well.

I ask my colleagues for their support of this important legislation, and I look forward to working in this body and with my friends here to ensure passage as soon as possible.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. STARK (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT) for today on account of personal business.

Mr. UNDERWOOD (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT) for today and through March 26 on account of official business.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. KIND) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. PALLONE, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. KIND, for 5 minutes, today.

Mrs. MALONEY of New York, for 5 minutes, today.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 6 o'clock and 33 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until Monday, March 20, 2000, at 2 p.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 8 of rule XII, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

6620. A letter from the Associate Administrator, Dairy Programs, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule—Milk in the Southern Illinois-Eastern Missouri Marketing Area; Suspension of Certain Provisions of the Order [DA-00-02] received January 7, 2000, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

6621. A letter from the Congressional Review Coordinator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final