

bill that both sides of the aisle can and should support.

I urge a "yes" vote.

Mr. DICKS. Mr. Speaker, this is a good bill, representing a fair compromise between the versions that were passed in each House. While I certainly would have preferred a higher level of funding in some of the key programs of this bill, I am encouraged by many elements of the compromise. The conference report represents a fair effort to provide the necessary funds to maintain the National Park System and our federal land management agencies, to address tribal needs through the Bureau of Indian Affairs, to increase wildfire readiness, to encourage important energy research and conservation programs, and to offer the small—but important—cultural funding through the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities.

One of the most important aspects of this bill and of the conference report, I believe, was the decision to honor the commitment we made last year when we enacted the Conservation Spending Trust Fund. I am extremely pleased that both the House and Senate bills contained full funding of \$1.32 billion for these conservation programs—a dramatic increase over the \$1.2 billion that was provided in the current year and \$637 million in Fiscal Year 2000. This six-year effort represents the most significant increase ever approved for conservation spending across federal environmental accounts that will boost land acquisition, maintenance and wildlife habitat protection in national parks, forests and refuge areas. This was an important step taken last year in the House, and I am proud that we have brought the final version of the Fiscal Year 2002 bill to the floor in a form that included all of the funding anticipated in the second year of this conservation spending agreement.

Despite an allocation in conference that was lower than many of us would have preferred, I am very pleased that this conference agreement funds several specific programs at adequate levels, including:

- \$85 million for State Wildlife Grants;
- \$140 million for stateside Land and Water Conservation Fund Grants;
- \$50 million for the new Land Owner Incentive Program;
- \$115 million for the National Endowment for the Arts;

- A 50 percent increase for the Weatherization program over last year's level;

- \$2.2 billion for National Fire Plan activities, \$300 million over the President's budget request.

As the Ranking Democratic Member of the Interior Subcommittee, I want to thank all of my colleagues in the House for the substantial input and advice you have given to me and to our staff, and I assure you that I have made a diligent effort to attempt to address as many of those concerns as possible within the limitations of our allocation. I also want to thank the professional staff of the Interior Subcommittee for the long hours and meticulous attention to detail that has characterized their work on this legislation. Every member of the Subcommittee—Democrats as well as Republicans—appreciates their hard work under tight deadlines.

So I urge my colleagues to approve this bill. I am convinced that it responds to the most urgent environmental needs of our nation at this time, and that it addresses the major priorities of the Interior Department and the related programs with the Departments of Agriculture and Energy.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I withdraw my reservation of objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New Mexico?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Both sides have yielded back all time for debate on the conference report.

Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the conference report.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the conference report.

Pursuant to clause 10 of rule XX, the yeas and nays are ordered.

Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on adoption of the conference report are postponed.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HOBSON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the conference report to accompany H.R. 2904, and that I may include tabular and extraneous material.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

#### CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 2904, MILITARY CONSTRUCTION APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2002

Mr. HOBSON. Mr. Speaker, I call up the conference report to accompany the bill (H.R. 2904) making appropriations for military construction, family housing, and base realignment and closure for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2002, and for other purposes, and ask unanimous consent for its immediate consideration in the House without intervention of any point of order.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

(For conference report and statement see proceedings of the House of Tuesday, October 6, 2001, at page H6831).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Ohio?

Mr. OLVER. Mr. Speaker, reserving the right to object, and I do not intend to object, but I have only reserved the right to object here in order to give the gentleman from Ohio an opportunity to explain what we are doing here.

Mr. HOBSON. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. OLVER. I yield to the gentleman from Ohio.

Mr. HOBSON. Mr. Speaker, as the manager of this conference agreement,

I do not intend to use any of the hour on general debate; however, I would like to have the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. KINGSTON) recognized.

Mr. OLVER. Mr. Speaker, continuing my reservation, I yield to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. KINGSTON).

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I too wanted to object with the reservation on this for the purpose of asking the chairman and the ranking member a few questions about the bill. But I also do not intend to object to the bill but I want to reserve the right to do that. So if it is appropriate on the gentleman's time frame, I would like to ask a couple of questions if the gentleman will continue to yield.

Mr. OLVER. Mr. Speaker, I continue to yield to the gentleman on my reservation.

Mr. KINGSTON. I thank both of the gentlemen and I want to say that my office and the gentleman's committee have worked very diligently for over a year now on a housing issue for Fort Stewart, Georgia and the City of Hinesville, Georgia, that I will not go into the details of. It is a project, as we know, that the staff on the committee is somewhat familiar with.

We have worked hard on this and have also had the honor of having the chairman of the committee come to our area and meet with several of the elected officials from Hinesville and Liberty County, Georgia, and I have been assured that we had this project under control and moving in the right direction.

Yesterday upon my return to Washington I was extremely shocked and extremely disappointed to find out that a problem had developed on this project, and even though it did pass the House, when this bill left the House it unfortunately disappeared in the conference committee. Maybe there was some lukewarm support or lukewarm objections from the Senate, but I also understand that there was a glitch with the authorizing committee, which I did not know about. So I wanted to express these concerns to the chairman and the ranking member and kind of flush it out for maybe next year if that is our only fallback position at this time.

Again, this was a very vital and important project for the folks in Hinesville, Georgia and Liberty County and Fort Stewart as well.

Mr. HOBSON. If I may respond, if the gentleman will continue to yield, first of all, I want my colleagues to know that I feel very badly about this because I have been to Hinesville and I have been involved in this project. I want to see this project succeed. This is a new type of situation that we really have not done before in the military, and that is one of the reasons I wanted to do it.

This helps the community, it helps the Army, and I think it helps the

mortgage holder of these properties to get out of the property at a better way than they could have before. This is also new for the community to do a project in this way. We thought we had it done. And I want to be very frank, I thought it was done. We put it into our bill. We got into conference where these things are checked again, and we found there were a couple of procedural problems which the gentleman alluded to or mentioned there that were raised.

It became a situation where we cannot overcome that in this conference at this time and get the authorization and the other things necessary to get it done. But I want to make a commitment that I am going to do everything I can to make sure that this project gets done because I think this is a good model. If we can get this done, this is not just good for Hinesville, but this is a good model that we can use elsewhere in the country. So it is very important that we do it correctly.

I want to assure the gentleman's constituents that the gentleman was very diligent on this. My colleague's staff was very diligent on this. This is just something that came up at the last moment.

Mr. KINGSTON. Will the gentleman from Massachusetts continue to yield?

Mr. OLVER. Under my reservation, I continue to yield to the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. KINGSTON. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I want to say I truly appreciate the personal attention that the gentleman has shown on this and I appreciate those words and I appreciate his recommendation for the year ahead.

Mr. HOBSON. I want to go down there and cut the ribbon on this one, I can assure the gentleman of that.

Mr. KINGSTON. I also wanted to say should there be a supplemental bill, there may be an opportunity.

Mr. HOBSON. If we can get the things done that are necessary to make it so, we can put it in a supplemental. We will certainly attempt to do that. I am sure the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. OLVER) will also be interested in doing that. But we have to get the things technically worked out to get it done because this is a good model, I think, for elsewhere in the country and it is important that we do it correctly and I think we want to do it correctly.

Mr. KINGSTON. I appreciate the gentleman and I will not ask him to speculate the likelihood of its passage next year. I certainly hope that it would be favorable, as I felt like we were so close this year.

Mr. HOBSON. I can make the gentleman from Georgia this assurance. I will make sure all the T's are crossed and the I's are dotted because I think this is a good model.

Mr. KINGSTON. Having said that, I certainly will not object to the bill and

the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. OLVER) has already held a reservation. I thank him for yielding to me, and I thank the gentleman as the ranking member for his support for this and thank the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. HOBSON).

Mr. OLVER. I have certainly carefully listened to the exchange between the gentleman from Georgia and the chairman of the subcommittee and we will work together on the points that have been raised.

Mr. KINGSTON. I thank the gentleman very much.

Mr. HOBSON. If the gentleman would yield further, I would like to make two other comments.

Mr. OLVER. I continue to yield under my reservation.

Mr. HOBSON. First of all, I would like to thank our staffs for working on the bill. I think they both did a great job, all the staff.

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I particularly want to thank Tom McNamara, who is the detailee from the Air Force. He has been particularly good and helped with the subcommittee staff, and we are going to miss him. I do not know if we can get him back next year, but we are sure going to try because he did a good job in facilitating this bill.

I think it is a good bill. I have a good partner in my ranking member. With that, I thank the gentleman for yielding to me.

Mr. OLVER. Mr. Speaker, continuing under my reservation, I want to commend the chairman, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. HOBSON), for his leadership in reaching this agreement. The two bills did contain substantial differences, and I believe that they have been resolved very fairly.

I also wish to thank the staffs, particularly Valerie Baldwin, Brian Potts, Tom McNamara, and Tom Forhan of the committee staff and Suzy Dumont from my own staff.

I think also the bill is a good bill. I hope we will have a resounding "yes" vote on the legislation.

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Conference Report on H.R. 2904, the Military Construction Appropriations Act for FY 02. I am particularly pleased that the conference agreement includes \$7.748 million for the continued construction of the Guam Army National Guard Readiness Center. Located in Barrigada, Guam this Readiness Center will serve to enhance the administrative functioning and training capabilities of the Guam Army National Guard. This is a critical and desperately needed project whose construction is timely considering the renewed emphasis and recently placed demands on our Guard units. For several weeks, Guam's Guardsmen and women having been working around the clock to provide for a secure and safe environment at the Antonio Won Pat International Airport on Guam. Adequate space to assemble and train with modern

equipment and facilities will strengthen their ability to respond when called to duty. This legislation provides Guam's National Guard with the infrastructure needed to meet future missions and increased demands with exceptional capability. I thank Chairman HOBSON and Ranking Member OLVER for their leadership in crafting this legislation and for their support of the Guam Army National Guard Readiness Center. I urge my colleagues to support the Conference Report as it is good for our nation's military infrastructure and supportive of our men and women in uniform.

Mr. OLVER. Mr. Speaker, I withdraw my reservation of objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. THORNBERRY). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Both sides have yielded back all time for debate on the conference report.

Without objection, the previous question is ordered.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the conference report.

Pursuant to clause 10 of rule XX, the yeas and nays are ordered.

Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on H.J. Res. 69, making further continuing appropriations for the fiscal year 2002, and for other purposes, and that I may include tabular and extraneous material.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

#### FURTHER CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS, FISCAL YEAR 2002

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Appropriations be discharged from further consideration of the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 69) making further continuing appropriations for the fiscal year 2002, and for other purposes, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the joint resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, reserving the right to object, and I do not intend to object, but I simply take this reservation in order to afford the gentleman the opportunity to explain to the House what it is we are doing.

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. OBEY. I yield to the gentleman from Florida.