

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. OLVER).

Mr. OLVER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1814, which authorizes the Department of Interior to conduct a feasibility study of the combined Metacomet-Monadnock-Sunapee-Mattabesett trails in Massachusetts and Connecticut for possible inclusion in the National Trail System.

Before I describe this project in my own words, I want to thank the chairman, the gentleman from California (Mr. RADANOVICH), and particularly the previous chairman, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. HEFLEY), and the ranking member, the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Mrs. CHRISTENSEN), of the Subcommittee on National Parks and Public Lands, and, of course, the chairman of the Committee on Resources, the gentleman from Utah (Mr. HANSEN), who happens to be in the Speaker's chair today, along with the ranking member, the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. RAHALL), along with all of the staff for the subcommittee and the full committee for so expeditiously bringing this legislation to the floor for action.

Mr. Speaker, these identified and potential trails begin with the Metacomet-Monadnock Trail at the Massachusetts/New Hampshire border and continue southward within the Connecticut River watershed along the Mt. Tom and Mt. Holyoke ranges through Massachusetts and Connecticut, then connect with Mattabesett Trail in Connecticut and eventually end at the shore of Long Island Sound.

Unique cultural, scenic, historic, and geological features of these New England trails distinguish them as worthy of this study and national recognition. The geological features are dominated by the steep volcanic trap-rock basalt ridges which rise more than 1,000 feet above the Connecticut River Valley floor in Massachusetts and Connecticut. These basalt ridges are the erosion-resistant remains of a 250 million-year-old volcanic activity. They define the route of the proposed National Scenic Trail and pass within just a few miles of major cities in Connecticut: New Haven, Meriden, New Britain, and Hartford; and in Massachusetts: Springfield, Holyoke, Westfield, and Amherst.

The trails provide over 180 miles of recreational hiking and backpacking for nearby residents of the Connecticut River Valley, including rural and major urban areas. In a region of increasing growth and sprawl, these trails also provide important open space and wildlife habitat.

Mr. Speaker, this bill has been co-sponsored by every Member of this House who has part of the trail passing

through their district and has the support of local communities, conservation groups, and constituents.

In Massachusetts, I would like to thank Pat Fletcher and Chris Ryan of Berkshire Chapter of the Appalachian Mountain Club and Peter Westover at the Amherst Conservation Commission for their dedication to the project. In Connecticut, I would like to recognize the work of Ann Colson and Patty Pentergast at the Connecticut Forest and Parks Association, which is the organization that runs all of the public trail system managed by the State of Connecticut.

Other groups that have supported this effort include the Nature Conservancy, the New England Wildflower Organization, the Trustees of Reservation in Massachusetts, and the Kestrel Trust in the Connecticut River Valley. These citizens and hundreds of other volunteers and paid staff work hard to maintain and protect these trails.

Through this legislation, I, and the other sponsors of the bill, hope to provide additional resources and opportunities for the good work that all of those citizens and volunteers and organizations do. I urge a yes vote on H.R. 1814.

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Mrs. JOHNSON).

Mrs. JOHNSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this bill that will provide the resources to enable us to study these trails, many of which go back hundreds of years, well before independence, and to study the possibilities they hold for future generations of preservation and restoration. It will be a great benefit to New England as well as to the whole country to be able to have the information to preserve these trails and to make sure that they will be there to serve future generations.

In New England, of course, it is a different matter than other parts of the country. These trails go in large measure through private lands and have a long tradition of being open and available to the public. So we look forward to the results of the study, and we thank the Speaker for considering this today.

I thank the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. OLVER) for his leadership in this matter. Without his personal involvement and the fact that he has hiked all these trails personally, I think this bill would not have moved along as rapidly as it has, and I thank the gentleman from Massachusetts for his leadership.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I, too, want to join in the commendation to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. OLVER). I said in the beginning he has walked this legislation along every step of the way. I did not realize he had walked every step of the

trail as well. So I commend him for his leadership and personal involvement on this issue.

Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HANSEN). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. RADANOVICH) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1814, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The title of the bill was amended so as to read: "A bill to amend the National Trails System Act to designate the Metacomet-Monadnock-Mattabesett Trail extending through western Massachusetts and central Connecticut for study for potential addition to the National Trails System."

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 4 o'clock and 25 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

□ 1800

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. SWEENEY) at 6 p.m.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A further message from the Senate by Mr. Monahan, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed a bill and a concurrent resolution of the following titles in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 838. An act to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to improve the safety and efficacy of pharmaceuticals for children.

S. Con. Res. 74. Concurrent resolution condemning bigotry and violence against Sikh-Americans in the wake of terrorist attacks in New York City and Washington, D.C. on September 11, 2001.

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER MEMORIAL COMMISSION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, and pursuant to section 8162(c)(3) of Public Law 106-79, the Chair announces the Speaker's appointment of the following Members of the House to the Dwight D. Eisenhower Memorial Commission: