

GILCREST) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1989, 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 was amended so as to read: "A bill to reauthorize various fishing conservation management programs, and for other purposes."

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GILCREST. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 2440 and H.R. 1989.

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

There was no objection.

#### LAND CONVEYANCE TO CHATHAM COUNTY, GEORGIA

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2595) to direct the Secretary of the Army to convey a parcel of land to Chatham County, Georgia, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 2595

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

#### SECTION 1. LAND CONVEYANCE TO CHATHAM COUNTY, GEORGIA.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the Army shall convey, by quitclaim deed and without consideration, to the Commissioners of Chatham County, Georgia, all right, title, and interest of the United States in and to the approximately 12-acre parcel of land located on Hutchinson Island, Georgia, adjacent to the Savannah Harbor Tide Gate structure.

(b) SURVEY TO OBTAIN LEGAL DESCRIPTION.—The exact acreage and the legal description of the parcel to be conveyed under subsection (a) shall be determined by a survey that is satisfactory to the Secretary.

#### (c) USE OF LAND.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The parcel conveyed under this section shall remain in public ownership and shall be managed in perpetuity for public recreational purposes or, in the alternative, the parcel may be exchanged for another parcel of equal appraised value that shall remain in public ownership and shall be managed in perpetuity for public recreational purposes.

(2) REVERSION.—If the Secretary determines that the parcel conveyed under this section is being used for purposes other than public recreational purposes, title to the parcel shall revert to the United States or, in the case of an exchange of parcels under paragraph (1), if the Secretary determines that the parcel received in the exchange is being used for purposes other than public recreational purposes title to that parcel shall revert to the United States.

#### (d) GENERAL PROVISIONS.—

(1) APPLICABILITY OF PROPERTY SCREENING PROVISIONS.—Section 2696 of title 10, United

States Code, shall not apply to the conveyance under this section.

(2) ADDITIONAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—The Secretary may require that the conveyance under this section be subject to such additional terms and conditions as the Secretary considers appropriate and necessary to protect the interests of the United States.

(3) COSTS OF CONVEYANCE.—The County shall be responsible for all reasonable and necessary costs, including real estate transaction and environmental compliance costs, associated with the conveyance.

(4) LIABILITY.—The County shall hold the United States harmless from any liability with respect to activities carried out, on or after the date of the conveyance, on the real property conveyed. The United States shall remain responsible for any liability with respect to activities carried out, before such date, on the real property conveyed.

(5) EASEMENTS.—The County shall provide to the Secretary all required rights of entry or easements necessary for utilities and for access to the Savannah Harbor Tide Gate structure and the dock located adjacent to the structure.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE) and the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. CLEMENT) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE).

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

Many years ago, Mr. Speaker, Chatham County, Georgia, donated approximately 12 acres of land on Hutchinson Island to the Federal Government so that the Corps of Engineers could build the Savannah River Tide Gate Structure. That project was closed in 1991 and the operational gates were removed. As a result, according to the Corps of Engineers, the Federal Government no longer needs this property.

Chatham County now would like to have this excess land returned to them so it could be used as part of an economic development project and a public recreational park. Without this legislation, the government has to follow a lengthy process for disposing of the property. This bill allows the property to go back to the county that gave up the land in the first place and will expedite an important local project that will benefit the public.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. KINGSTON), the author of the bill and, presumably, from Chatham County, Georgia, to explain it to us further.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time, and I thank the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. CLEMENT) for his indulgence.

This simply lets the Corps of Engineers get rid of some excess property they do not want anymore. It allows the county to take that property and trade it to a private developer, 12 acres; but in exchange, they are going to get 40 acres back. I know the gentleman

from Colorado will be interested to know that they are going to have a natural park in those 40 acres that is going to be ecologically sensitive, a passive park, which I know the gentleman from Boulder is familiar with.

So this is a very good piece of legislation with bipartisan support by the local folks and the Corps of Engineers.

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

Mr. Speaker, I know a comment was made a while ago about country music or country western music, and as the representative from Nashville, Tennessee, or Country Music USA, I appreciate the comments. I want my colleagues to know that the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DUNCAN) and myself and some others had the opportunity to sing on the Grand Ole Opry not long ago, which was an experience of a lifetime.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to support the bill H.R. 2595, a bill to convey a 12-acre parcel of land to Chatham County, Georgia, for public recreational purposes. This transfer will be accomplished without cost to the United States and for the benefit of the local citizens. The amended bill addresses a few issues from the original bill and should be supported by the House.

The land that would be transferred under this bill is not needed by the Corps of Engineers to carry out the purposes of the federally authorized project. The bill includes requirements to provide the Secretary of the Army rights of entry or easements so that the Corps can operate the project without hindrance.

Chatham County is responsible for all of the administrative costs of the land conveyance. In addition, the United States is protected from any environmental liability that may arise after the conveyance.

Mr. Speaker, I understand that the land that is being conveyed to the county will be exchanged for another parcel of land. The bill before us stipulates that the exchanged parcel will be kept in public ownership and used for public recreational purposes. The exchange will also be conducted on an equal-value basis. I urge an "aye" vote on this bill.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I would notify the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. CLEMENT) that I am sorry that I missed their performance on the Grand Old Opry; maybe on the return trip.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in support of H.R. 2595, a bill to authorize the Secretary of the Army to transfer land to Chatham County, GA, to enhance recreation opportunities in that locale.