EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HON. JIM SAXTON
OF NEW JERSEY
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, April 4, 2001

Mr. SAXTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce H.R. 1367, the Atlantic Highly Migratory Species Conservation Act of 2001. I am pleased to be here today to talk about such an important issue. We stand at an historic crossroads for the conservation of highly migratory species (HMS). The effective management of Atlantic HMS is one of the most complex and difficult challenges facing the National Marine Fisheries Service. These species range widely throughout international waters and the jurisdictions of many coastal nations with diverse political perspectives on how to properly utilize and manage this valuable resource.

The fishing practices and marketing strategies are equally diverse. Unlike most other domestic fisheries, effective multi-lateral management is the goal of our nation’s HMS policy. In fact, Congress placed Atlantic HMS management authority in the hands of the Secretary of Commerce instead of the Regional Fishery Management Councils. In theory, to ensure that our government maintains an Atlantic-wide perspective and vision. It is my firm belief that this Congress, together with thousands of concerned fisherman and conservationists, have a unique opportunity to work together to aggressively protect and rebuild stocks of HMS such as billfish, sharks and swordfish.

In August of 1999, I was approached by representatives of the longline industry and three recreation/conservation fishing organizations who suggested I sponsor legislation to: (1) permanently close an area of U.S. waters in the South Atlantic to pelagic longline fishing; (2) establish two time-area closures in the Gulf of Mexico to pelagic longlining; (3) reduce billfish bycatch and the harvesting of juvenile swordfish; and (4) provide affected fishermen a buyout to compensate them for the loss of fishing grounds and fishing opportunities. I remain a strong supporter of this concept.

I first began work on this important issue because I feel very strongly that a balance can be achieved. Prior to and following the introduction of H.R. 3331, my first bill targeting the rebuilding plan approved. I look forward to continuing to fight until this measure is passed and becomes law.

INTERNATIONAL ROMA DAY REVISITED

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH
OF NEW JERSEY
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, April 4, 2001

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, on International Roma Day last year, the OSCE High Commissioner for National Minorities released a detailed report on the situation of Roma in the OSCE region. Unfortunately, in the intervening months, relatively little progress has been made by government authorities in addressing the problems described.

The Helsinki Commission, which I co-chair, receives so many reports on an almost daily basis which demonstrate the magnitude of the problems Roma face. We receive reports of Roma who are denied access to public places, like the three Roma who were turned away from a Warsaw restaurant just before the OSCE convened its annual human rights meeting in that city. We receive reports of discrimination in housing, like the repeated cases of unlawful police raids in Hermanovce, Slovakia. We receive reports of discrimination in housing, like the repeated cases of unlawful police raids in Hermanovce, Slovakia.

In the beginning of this year, too, courts are part of the problem, not the solution. Rather than providing a remedy for victims, they compound the abuse. Take a recent case from the Czech Republic. The Czech Supreme Court issued a ruling that a violent attack on a Romani man in 1999 was premeditated and organized, and then remanded the case back to the district court in Jesenik for sentencing in accordance with that finding. But the district court simply ignored the Supreme Court’s finding and ordered four of the defendants released. I am hopeful that Slovak authorities will now weigh the fate of three of the defendants charged in last years brutal murder of Anastazia Balazova, will do a better job of bringing her murderers to justice.

In a few places, there are some glimmers of hope. In Viden, Bulgaria, for example, the Romani organization Drom has led a successful effort to bring 400 Romani children, who previously attended segregated schools, into the mainstream school system. In that instance, the cooperation of local and national authorities, governmental and non-governmental bodies, is paying off.

Unfortunately, too few government leaders demonstrate the courage necessary to address these issues. Some pass the buck, looking to the European Union or the Council of Europe to fix problems that must be tackled, first and foremost, through political leadership at home. Moreover, a number of EU countries have little to teach the applicant countries about tolerance towards Roma. Many OSCE countries—not just the former Communist states—are in need of comprehensive anti-discrimination laws, a priority recognized in the 1999 OSCE summit agreement and by the European Commission in the adoption of its “race directive” in June of last year. Regrettably, nearly two years after Bulgaria received praise from many quarters for agreeing to adopt such legislation, the government is no closer to fulfilling its commitment.

The Slovak Government’s human rights office, in contrast, has undertaken a serious study of legislative options and may soon have a draft ready for a vote. In addition, it is imperative that political and civic leaders condemn anti-Roma manifestations in clear and unequivocal terms.

Mr. Speaker, when the Mayor of Csor, Hungary—a publicly elected official—said “the Roma of Zamoly have no place among human beings; just as in the animal world, parasites must be expelled,” I believe it is the responsibility of Hungary’s political leadership to condemn these outrageous slurs. If more leadership was demonstrated, perhaps confidence would have been strengthened and maybe 5,772 Hungarian Roma would not have applied for asylum in Canada over the past three years.

When the Mayor of Usti nad Labem built a wall to segregate Roma from non-Roma, all members of the Czech parliament—not just a slender majority of 101 out of 200 MPs—should have voted to condemn it. And when Mayor Sechelariu of Bacau, Romania, announced plans to build a statue of Marshall Antonescu—the World War II dictator who deported 25,000 Roma to Transnistria, where some 19,000 of them perished—Romanian officials, who have pledged to the OSCE community to fight intolerance, should begin at home by ridding their country of every Antonescu statue built on public land.

IN SUPPORT OF LONG BEACH NAVY CREW MEMBER DETAINED IN CHINA

HON. STEPHEN HORN
OF CALIFORNIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, April 4, 2001

Mr. HORN. Mr. Speaker, I know my fellow Members of Congress join me in calling for the safe return home of the 24 American servicemen and women currently being detained in