

So, therefore, I ask my colleagues to support this legislation as, really, the first step in what will be many, many steps on the journey of the restoration of Haiti and the Haitian people. They are resilient. And I would like to thank the Haitian Americans and those who still struggle to survive, because it is still important for us to say we will not forget you.

□ 1610

Mr. POE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. FORTENBERRY), the sponsor of the original legislation, as much time as he wishes to consume.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Thank you, Judge POE, for the time. And I also wish to thank Chairman CONYERS as well as Chairwoman LOFGREN of the Immigration Subcommittee and LAMAR SMITH, the ranking member on the full committee, for your efforts in this regard, especially your diligence in getting this to the floor today.

I also, Madam Speaker, want to thank the many adoptive families, members of the international adoption community and others who have worked behind the scenes to spur action today. Thanks to this outreach of so many concerned Americans, Congress is finally doing the right thing here to help as many as 1,200 voiceless and vulnerable Haitian orphans and their adoptive American families. We can now give these new families, who have endured so much heartbreak and tragedy, the comfort of knowing that their children's legal status is now in good order.

Many of us received heartbreaking calls for help in the wake of the January 12 earthquake. American families in various stages, as we have heard, of adopting Haitian orphans feared for the safety and the security of their children. Extraordinary work was done swiftly to evacuate these children and unite them with their new families on U.S. soil. Yet instead of coming here as fully adopted U.S. citizens, these children arrived under a legal status known as humanitarian parole.

Due to a destructive, unpredictable act of nature, the normal process for international adoptions in Haiti was upended, and these American families were prohibited from finalizing the adoptions in Haitian courts. While their status remains in limbo, these vulnerable children have fewer legal protections, may not be eligible for critical resources, and potentially risk being forced to return to Haiti. With each passing day, some children are aging out of the international adoption system as well. Once a child turns 16, he or she may no longer gain U.S. citizenship through adoption.

So the urgency is clear. I recently spoke, Madam Speaker, with the mother of a Haitian orphan who just turned 16. We have to act. We need to pass this

bill today to give so much more security to these generous American families who have opened their hearts and homes to children in extraordinary need.

Again, I want to thank all of those who have been involved in helping get this important legislation to the floor today.

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, I now recognize the gentlewoman from Brooklyn, New York, YVETTE CLARKE, for as much time as she may consume. And I note that she has the second largest number of Haitians and Haitian Americans in her congressional district.

Ms. CLARKE. Let me thank you, Chairman CONYERS, for your conscientious in bringing this legislation to the floor. I rise today as a proud cosponsor of H.R. 5283, the Help HAITI Act of 2010, introduced by my colleague, Congressman JEFF FORTENBERRY. This bill normalizes the immigration procedures for certain adopted Haitian orphans that received humanitarian parole between January 18 of 2010 and April 15, 2010. It allows their adoptive families, who are U.S. citizens, to apply immediately on their behalf to become legal permanent residents and eventually qualify for citizenship.

As a representative of the second-largest population of first- and second-generation Haitian immigrants, Haiti has been at the core of my Caribbean agenda. That is why I'm extremely concerned that more than 1,000 paroled Haitian orphans being adopted by American families remain in immigration limbo due to a legal technicality. At least 50 orphans reside in my district alone.

It is alarming that these children have to wait 2 years before they are granted legal permanent residency. If this situation is not addressed, these children will remain in this country without certain legal protection and are in jeopardy of being separated from their adoptive family and deported back to Haiti, where they have no family.

The legal technicality that puts these children in such a precarious position is yet another example of why our Nation needs comprehensive immigration reform. That is why I'm committed to working with my colleagues to make immigration reform a reality as soon as possible. Our national security is at stake, our moral standing in the world depends upon it, and the American people, many of whom are first- and second-generation immigrants, demand it. I urge Congress to take a fresh look at the antiquated policies and bureaucratic backlog that tear families apart and devastate our communities.

Finally, I commend Congressman FORTENBERRY and Senator GILLIBRAND for addressing this issue and their continued support for the people of Haiti.

Mr. POE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I want to thank the chairman for bringing this legislation to the floor. It's very important to the Parker family in my district, the people that Mr. FORTENBERRY in Nebraska mentioned, and the 1,200 families and children that are going to now have a good Christmas because that legislation has passed in the House.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CONYERS. I yield back as well.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. MARKEY of Colorado). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) that the House suspend the rules and concur in the Senate amendment to the bill, H.R. 5283.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the Senate amendment was concurred in.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ASIAN CARP PREVENTION AND CONTROL ACT

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 1421) to amend section 42 of title 18, United States Code, to prohibit the importation and shipment of certain species of carp.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 1421

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Asian Carp Prevention and Control Act".

SEC. 2. ADDITION OF SPECIES OF CARP TO THE LIST OF INJURIOUS SPECIES THAT ARE PROHIBITED FROM BEING IMPORTED OR SHIPPED.

Section 42(a)(1) of title 18, United States Code, is amended by inserting "of the big-head carp of the species *Hypophthalmichthys nobilis*;" after "Dreissena polymorpha;".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker and Members of the House, S. 1421 prohibits importation and interstate shipment of certain species of carp and amends section 42 of

title 18 of the code to add the bighead variety of the species commonly known as Asian carp to the list of injurious species that are prohibited from being shipped in or imported into the United States.

Asian carp are a significant threat to the Great Lakes because they are large, extremely prolific, and consume vast amounts of food. They can grow to more than 6 feet in length and weigh in excess of 100 pounds, quickly dominating the waters they inhabit and eating as much as 40 percent of their body weight daily.

Researchers caution that these fish could pose a significant risk to the Great Lakes ecosystem by damaging habitats and disrupting the food chain that supports native fish. In the 1970s, two species of Asian carp, the bighead and silver, were imported by catfish farmers to remove algae and suspended matter from their ponds. During large floods in the early 1990s, many of the catfish ponds overflowed their banks, and the Asian carp were released into local waterways in the Mississippi River basin.

In an effort to prevent the carp from getting to the Great Lakes, a barrier was constructed in the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal which connects the Mississippi River to the Great Lakes. Unfortunately, the Asian carp are steadily making their way northward up the Mississippi, and Asian carp DNA has been discovered beyond the barrier.

If these carp reach Lake Michigan, they are likely to spread throughout the Great Lakes, where they would threaten the environment and the economy. The Great Lakes are some of the most unique bodies of water on the planet, and they would threaten not only the commercial but recreational fishing on the lakes, both of which are major contributors to the economies of Great Lakes States.

The Asian Carp Prevention and Control Act lists the bighead variety of the species called Asian carp as injurious to wildlife under the Lacey Act. And by including them in the Lacey Act, this bill will prohibit importation or interstate transportation of live Asian carp without a permit.

□ 1620

It is our hope that this will help deter further intentional or accidental introduction of the species into our waterways.

It should be noted that this legislation does not interfere with existing State regulations of Asian carp. In addition, permits to transport or purchase live Asian carp can still be issued for scientific, medical, or educational purposes.

I commend my colleagues, the senior Senator from Michigan, CARL LEVIN, and Senator GEORGE VOINOVICH, co-chairs of the Great Lakes Task Force,

for introducing this legislation, and hope it will be favorably considered in this body.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

S. 1421, the Asian Carp Prevention and Control Act, amends the Lacey Act to designate the "big head" species of Asian carp as injurious fish. This bill was introduced by Senator CARL LEVIN of Michigan and recently passed the Senate by unanimous consent. My colleague, Mrs. BIGGERT from Illinois, sponsored the House companion bill to this legislation, H.R. 3137, and has been a tireless champion of this legislation.

According to the Environmental Protection Agency, Asian carp were imported by catfish farmers in the 1970s to remove algae from their commercial ponds. During large floods in the early 1990s, many of the catfish farm ponds overflowed their banks and the Asian carp were released into local waterways in the Mississippi River basin.

The carp have steadily made their way north up the Mississippi, becoming the most abundant species in some areas of the river. Dubbed the "underwater lawn mower," these enormous fish have become a menace to native species and their habitats. Asian carp can grow to over 4 feet long and over 100 pounds in weight. These fish can consume nearly three times their body weight in food each day. As a result, Asian carp leave little food or no food supply for the other fish.

As the fish move upstream toward the Great Lakes, they threaten the food supply of sport fish such as the yellow perch, walleye, and small mouth bass. Carp are well-suited to the climate of the Great Lakes region, which is similar to their native Asian habitats.

To prevent the carp from entering the Great Lakes, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Environmental Protection Agency, the State of Illinois, the International Joint Commission, the Great Lakes Fishery Commission, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service are working together to install and maintain a permanent electric barrier between the fish and Lake Michigan.

This designation prohibits the importation and interstate shipment of Asian carp unless a permit is issued by the Secretary of the Interior. The penalty for illegally importing or shipping Asian carp is a fine or imprisonment up to 6 months. This bill is supported by Members from both sides of the aisle in both the House and the Senate. I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the author of this bill, the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. BIGGERT).

Mrs. BIGGERT. Madam Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to sup-

port Senate 1421, the Asian Carp Prevention and Control Act. This is the Senate companion to a bill I have sponsored in this House since 2007, and its passage will be a long overdue victory for wildlife preservation here in the United States.

As most of you know, those of us in the Illinois delegation have worked tirelessly to stem the spread of invasive species into the Great Lakes ecosystem for many years. Currently, Asian carp are the single greatest biological threat to that natural habitat, having traveled for the last four decades up the Mississippi River basin into the Illinois River, and now is close to the shipping and sanitary canals that connect our rivers to the freshwater lakes, particularly Lake Michigan. These ferocious fish prey on and compete with the native species for food and eat up to 40 percent of their body weight every day, as has been mentioned. And because they eat the natural plant life near the bottom of the food chain, they can quickly displace native species, destroy fishing habitats, and threaten maritime jobs.

The reason these fish came to become such a nuisance and cost taxpayers millions of dollars to combat is because they were imported into the U.S. by the southern fish farmers who used them to clean their breeding ponds. Subsequent flooding allowed them to escape into our river system and eventually travel up from the gulf towards Lake Michigan.

Madam Speaker, it is long past the time to recognize that these species do not belong in fish tanks—they certainly wouldn't fit because they grow so large—and domestic ponds where they could find their way into other fragile ecosystems.

In Illinois, we have spent an awful lot of time working on ways to keep those fish out of the Great Lakes. It is so important. The electric dispersal barriers, and there are now two that the Army Corps has put into the sanitary canal in my district, and we have had blockage of the tributaries of the river so even by flooding they cannot get into the canal. We have oxygenation. I have been at fish kills where they have actually made the water dead to kill the fish.

One of the things that is now taking place is certainly the fishing for these fish further down the river, and they are now sending the fish to China where they are turning them into food over there.

But the bill that we are considering today will add the big head species of the Asian carp to the list of injurious species under the Lacey Act and prevent their sale or importation into the United States. This ban would not apply to the dead fish that I was just talking about—they are caught and sent to China as dead fish—and includes only the species of the invasive

carp that the Federal wildlife managers found last June in Lake Calumet in Illinois.

With that, Madam Speaker, I would like to thank my good friend from Michigan, Senator LEVIN, who secured passage of this bill in the Senate and express my gratitude to all my colleagues from the Great Lakes States who have worked with us for many years to preserve our waters from the invasive species. This effort is not only about protecting our ecosystem, but also the billions in jobs and opportunities that our precious natural habitats and waterways provide to U.S. citizens every year. I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Ms. KAPTUR. I rise in support of S. 1421, the Asian Carp Prevention and Control Act.

For the last 2 decades the Federal Government has sat still. We have allowed numerous Asian Carp species to expand their range further and further North and today, Asian Carp are on the doorstep of the Great Lakes. With sustainable populations in Indiana and Illinois and the \$7 billion recreational fishery at stake, immediate action is needed.

This legislation takes an important step in restricting the transportation of the Big Head Asian Carp by listing it as an injurious species under the Lacey Act, prohibiting this fish from being shipped or imported into the United States.

Should the Asian Carp successfully invade the Great Lakes, they would likely breed and prosper in the shallow and warm waters along the 90 miles of Lake Erie coastline in the Ninth Congressional District. In areas that the Asian Carp have already invaded, Asian Carp have outcompeted local species, destroying habitat for many species.

With 328,000 anglers and an \$800 million economic impact from Lake Erie's recreational fishing industry, aggressive action is needed. My hope is that S. 1421 is just the start in a series of actions the House will take in the coming year. Congress must fund the protection efforts, ecologically separate the ecosystem and light a fire under the Federal and State agencies to protect one of our regions greatest economic resources.

On behalf of 20 percent of the worlds freshwater, the millions of great lakes anglers and towns both big and small that are dependent on the ecological resources of the Great Lakes, I urge my colleagues to support this critical legislation.

Mr. PETRI. Madam Speaker, as a representative from the Great Lakes region and a cosponsor of the House version of this bill, I support passage of S. 1421, the Asian Carp Prevention and Control Act. S. 1421 will explicitly ban Asian carp from being imported or shipped to the U.S.

Entry and proliferation of Asian carp into the Great Lakes would be ruinous to businesses, particularly commercial fishing and recreation, which rely on the Great Lakes for their livelihood, as well as to the ecology of the Great Lakes system as a whole.

This legislation is another necessary measure to ensure this damaging species is kept out of the Great Lakes. I am thankful that Congress has taken several steps so far, in-

cluding authorization and funding of the electrical barriers in the Chicago Ship and Sanitary Canal, and other measures.

We must continue to consider all options to keep Asian carp out of the Great Lakes, including closing the locks on the Chicago Ship and Sanitary Canal and examining the benefits and costs of pursuing long-term ecological separation between the Great Lakes and the Mississippi River basin to prevent carp and future invasive species from migrating through this pathway.

I look forward to continuing to work with my colleagues to find solutions to protect our Great Lakes from this continuing threat. I ask the House to join me in supporting S. 1421.

Mr. LEVIN. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of the Asian Carp Prevention and Control Act and urge the House to pass it today.

Bighead carp were first brought to the United States in the 1970s to control algae in aquaculture ponds. Unfortunately, bighead carp and other harmful species of non-native fish were released into the Mississippi River in the early 1990s during major flooding. Since then, the Asian carp have established themselves in the Mississippi River system. Asian carp are voracious eaters and the impact of the carp on native fish populations has been severe.

In the ensuing years, the Asian carp have made their way north and are now threatening to invade the Great Lakes. The Federal Government and the Great Lakes states are fighting a pitched battle against the carp to prevent them from becoming established in the Lakes. We must use every means available to stop this destructive fish from invading the Great Lakes.

We're already paying a heavy price for the decision to import these non-native carp into the United States. For many years, during both the Bush and Obama administrations, a number of us from the Great Lakes region have been urging the Fish and Wildlife Service to include bighead carp on the list of injurious species under the Lacey Act and so minimize the risk of further harm by prohibiting the importation and interstate transportation of live Asian carp without a permit.

The bill before the House today would list bighead carp as injurious under the Lacey Act. I commend Senator LEVIN for introducing this important legislation, which passed the Senate on November 17. Although it is too late to undo the damage that bighead carp are doing in the Mississippi River and its tributaries, we should do everything possible to prevent these invasive fish from harming other areas of the United States. I urge passage of S. 1421.

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of S. 1421, The Asian Carp Prevention and Control Act.

This bill bans the importation of bighead carp, more commonly known as "Asian carp." These fish have voracious appetites and can grow to weigh more than 100 pounds while eating everything in their path. Making them yet more dangerous is that when agitated by sounds such as boat engines, these fish leap out of the water and have been known to harm boat passengers, resulting in broken bones or worse.

The real nightmare, however, Madam Speaker, is the impending devastation these

fish can potentially wreak over the Great Lakes fishery. Asian carp eat up to 40 percent of their body weight every day, and would likely out-compete native species in this \$7 billion fishery. This would result in the decimation of recreational and commercial fishing in the Great Lakes, which is currently known worldwide for its plentiful perch, walleye, whitefish, salmon, and much more.

While I'm happy to vote today in favor of S. 1421 to prevent more Asian carp from being imported into the country it will do nothing to stop the carp already here from entering the Great Lakes.

The fact of the matter is that the Federal Government's response to Asian carp has been woefully inadequate. What is really necessary is an ecological separation of the Great Lakes from the Chicago Waterway System, which is the waterway by which bighead carp are making their way toward the Great Lakes. Bighead carp DNA has already been found in Lake Michigan, and this separation must occur before it's too late and the fish get into the lake and take hold. I urge the President to move faster to address this threat as well as passage of more comprehensive legislation that would do more to prevent this dangerous invasive species from entering the Great Lakes.

The bills I sincerely wish we were voting on today, H.R. 4472: Close All Routes and Prevent Asian Carp Today Act of 2010 and H.R. 5625 Permanent Prevention of Asian Carp Act of 2010, both sponsored by my colleague from Michigan, DAVE CAMP, and of which I am a proud co-sponsor, which would enact a much stronger attack against the Asian carp which poses an imminent threat to our magnificent Great Lakes.

I urge passage of the Asian Carp Prevention and Control Act.

Mr. POE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 1421.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

□ 1630

AUTHORIZING USE OF CAPITOL ROTUNDA FOR 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF KENNEDY INAUGURAL ADDRESS

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and concur in the concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 75) authorizing the use of the rotunda of the Capitol for an event marking the 50th anniversary of the inaugural address of President John F. Kennedy.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.