

coordinate their investments in Internet infrastructure. This is a common-sense approach that we should implement now.

The Digital GAP Act also expresses the sense of Congress that the State Department should elevate and reform its efforts to address cyberspace policy internationally. As technological policy issues multiply and as they become more complex, it is important to identify clear lines of responsibility at the State Department so that problems do not fall between the cracks of the many different offices that touch on these issues now. Cybersecurity, Internet freedom, and Internet access are now core parts of our national security agenda and need to be treated as such by the State Department.

Lastly, I will simply close by again recognizing the work of Nilmini Rubin on this legislation. She has been with the committee for over 3 years. She has done outstanding work on technology and trade and other issues promoting development worldwide. Nilmini will be leaving us and will be greatly missed, but she will be continuing to do impressive and important things, improving lives overseas and improving the welfare of Americans.

Thank you, Nilmini.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HILL). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5537, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

AGOA ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2015

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2845) to promote access to benefits under the African Growth and Opportunity Act, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2845

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 "AGOA Enhancement Act of 2015".

SEC. 2. STATEMENT OF POLICY.

It is the policy of the United States to support efforts to—

(1) improve the rule of law, promote free and fair elections, strengthen and expand the private sector, and fight corruption in sub-Saharan Africa; and

(2) promote the role of women in social, political, and economic development in sub-Saharan Africa.

SEC. 3. ACTIVITIES IN SUPPORT OF TRANSPARENCY.

(a) AGOA WEBSITE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The President shall establish a website for the collection and dissemi-

nation of information regarding the African Growth and Opportunity Act (in this section referred to as the "AGOA website").

(2) CONTENTS.—The President shall publish on the AGOA website the information described in paragraph (1), including—

(A) information and technical assistance provided at United States Agency for International Development regional trade hubs; and

(B) a link to websites of United States embassies located in eligible sub-Saharan African countries.

(3) ACTIONS BY UNITED STATES EMBASSIES.—The Secretary of State should direct United States embassies located in eligible sub-Saharan African countries to—

(A) promote the use by such countries of the benefits available under the African Growth and Opportunity Act; and

(B) include on a publicly available Internet website of such diplomatic missions a link to the AGOA website.

(b) AGOA FORUM.—The President should, after each meeting of the United States-Sub-Saharan Africa Trade and Economic Cooperation Forum, publish on the AGOA website established under subsection (a) the following:

(1) All outcomes of the meeting of the Forum, including any commitments made by member countries and the private sector.

(2) An assessment of progress made with respect to any commitments made by member countries and the private sector from the previous meeting of the Forum.

(c) OTHER INFORMATION.—The President should disseminate information required by this section in a digital format to the public and publish such information on the AGOA website established under subsection (a).

(d) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term "eligible sub-Saharan African country" means a country that the President has determined meets the eligibility requirements set forth in section 104 of the African Growth and Opportunity Act.

SEC. 4. ACTIVITIES IN SUPPORT OF TRADE CAPACITY BUILDING.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The President should take the following actions:

(1) Develop and implement policies to—

(A) encourage and facilitate trans-boundary cooperation among eligible sub-Saharan African countries in order to facilitate trade; and

(B) encourage the provision of technical assistance to eligible sub-Saharan African countries to establish and sustain adequate trade capacity development.

(2) Provide specific training for business in eligible sub-Saharan African countries and government trade officials of eligible sub-Saharan African countries on utilizing access to the benefits of the African Growth and Opportunity Act and other trade preference programs.

(3) Provide capacity building for African entrepreneurs and trade associations on production strategies, quality standards, formation of cooperatives, and market research and market development.

(4) Provide capacity building training to promote diversification of African products and value-added processing.

(5) Provide capacity building and technical assistance funding for African businesses and institutions to help such businesses and institutions comply with United States counter-terrorism initiatives and policies.

(b) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term "eligible sub-Saharan African country" means a country that the President has determined meets the eligibility requirements set forth in section 104 of the African Growth and Opportunity Act.

SEC. 5. CONCURRENT COMPACTS UNDER THE MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE ACT OF 2003.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 609 of the Millennium Challenge Act of 2003 (22 U.S.C. 7708) is amended—

(1) by striking the first sentence of subsection (k);

(2) by redesignating subsection (k) (as so amended) as subsection (l); and

(3) by inserting after subsection (j) the following:

"(k) CONCURRENT COMPACTS.—An eligible country that has entered into and has in effect a Compact under this section may enter into and have in effect at the same time not more than one additional Compact in accordance with the requirements of this title if—

"(1) one or both of the Compacts are or will be for purposes of regional economic integration, increased regional trade, or cross-border collaborations; and

"(2) the Board determines that the country is making considerable and demonstrable progress in implementing the terms of the existing Compact and supplementary agreements thereto."

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 613(b)(2)(A) of such Act (22 U.S.C. 7712(b)(2)(A)) is amended by striking "the" before "Compact" and inserting "any".

(c) APPLICABILITY.—The amendments made by this section apply with respect to Compacts entered into between the United States and an eligible country under the Millennium Challenge Act of 2003 before, on, or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) and the gentleman from California (Ms. BASS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on this measure.

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

There was no objection.

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

I would just begin by thanking Congresswoman BASS for her important work on this initiative. I am proud to have been part of the African Growth and Opportunity Act coalition. I have been part of that coalition since 2000, when we wrote the original bill.

I would also just recognize Tom Sheehy for his contribution on this, our professional staff member.

But AGOA allows African countries that respect the rule of law and respect free market principles to export many goods to the United States on a duty-free basis. The program has boosted Africa's economic growth, and especially benefiting women.

I can tell you from my trips there and seeing the results, it has strengthened the trade relationship between the United States and Africa, which is several multiples today of what it was when the bill was originally passed.

When Congress reauthorized AGOA earlier this year, I successfully pressed, along with my colleague Congresswoman KAREN BASS, for a 10-year extension; and this extension will provide

U.S. and African businesses the certainty needed to build supply chains and deepen their strong trade relationships.

□ 1745

I also championed, as well as KAREN BASS, the inclusion of country strategies in AGOA's reauthorization so that African countries could identify and make policy reforms to help them boost trade and take advantage of AGOA's provisions.

This bill, the AGOA Enhancement Act, includes important measures that seek, thus, to improve trade capacity building, to increase the ability of African companies to export to the United States and improve trade facilitation, to help remove the bureaucratic barriers and the needless red tape that thwarts trade.

So this bill would, first, grant more flexibility to the Millennium Challenge Corporation—a U.S. development agency—to support regional efforts to bolster trade; leveraging the Internet so that companies on both sides of the Atlantic can learn about how to utilize AGOA; and foster U.S.-African private sector engagement. It will put the trade hubs online, giving African businesses that are not near the existing trade hubs the information that they need to send their exports to the United States. And, lastly, this bill will increase transparency of the pledges and results made by the U.S. and African leaders at the AGOA Forum, an annual meeting of government and business leaders looking to increase U.S.-Africa trade.

So with these measures, we can help African countries and businesses fully utilize the benefits offered through AGOA.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC, September 2, 2016.

Hon. KEVIN BRADY,
Chairman, Committee on Ways and Means,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you for consulting with the Committee on Foreign Affairs on H.R. 2845, the AGOA Enhancement Act, and for deciding to forgo a sequential referral request on that bill.

I agree that your forgoing further action on this measure does not in any way diminish or alter the jurisdiction of your Committee, or prejudice its jurisdictional prerogatives on this bill or similar legislation in the future. I would support your effort to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees to any House-Senate conference involving this legislation.

I will seek to place our letters on H.R. 2845 into the Congressional Record during floor consideration of the bill. I appreciate your cooperation regarding this legislation and look forward to continuing to work with your Committee as this measure moves through the legislative process.

Sincerely,

EDWARD R. ROYCE,
Chairman.

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS,
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, September 6, 2016.

Hon. EDWARD R. ROYCE,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Affairs,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN ROYCE, I am writing with respect to H.R. 2845, the "AGOA Enhancement Act of 2015." As a result of your having consulted with us on this legislation, I agree not to request a sequential referral on this bill so that it may proceed expeditiously to the House floor.

The Committee on Ways and Means takes this action with the mutual understanding that by forgoing formal consideration of H.R. 2845, we do not waive any jurisdiction over the subject matter contained in this or similar legislation, and the Committee will be appropriately consulted and involved as the bill or similar legislation moves forward so that we may address any remaining issues that fall within our Rule X jurisdiction. The Committee also reserves the right to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees to any House-Senate conference involving this or similar legislation, and requests your support for such request.

Finally, I would appreciate your response to this letter confirming this understanding, and would ask that a copy of our exchange of letters on this matter be included in the Congressional Record during floor consideration thereof.

Sincerely,

KEVIN BRADY,
Chairman.

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

I rise in support of H.R. 2845, the AGOA Enhancement Act of 2015. This critical bill complements, supports, and empowers the reauthorized African Growth and Opportunity Act that was passed into law last June.

I want to thank Ranking Member ENGEL, Chairman ROYCE, and Speaker RYAN for their leadership on this.

I also believe in the last piece of legislation I heard the chairman say that Nilmini Rubin is leaving us. I am very disappointed to hear that, but I do want to really compliment her for all of her efforts not just on AGOA, but also on the piece of legislation that we just passed. She will be sorely missed.

I also want to compliment Margot Sullivan, who worked many, many, many hours on AGOA that we reauthorized as well as the AGOA Enhancement Act.

By way of background, AGOA is the foundation of the U.S.-Africa economic platform. AGOA, a trade preference program, can help to grow and stabilize jobs in eligible participating countries throughout Sub-Saharan Africa and in the U.S. AGOA has definitely helped to increase African exports to the U.S., and it has also helped to raise Africa's economic profile in this country.

Further, AGOA has helped maintain and increase employment, generating approximately 350,000 direct jobs and 1 million indirect jobs in Sub-Saharan Africa and approximately 100,000 jobs in the U.S.

With the tremendous potential of a growing middle class in several African countries, plus the growth of regional economic communities on the continent, Africa has become one of the

most dynamic global marketplaces. Why? Because each of these regional economic communities encompasses a number of countries that are evolving into regional economic powerhouses with huge markets of millions of upwardly mobile populations interested in quality goods and services.

This is why Sub-Saharan Africa is currently one of the most dynamic global marketplaces. Countries such as China, India, Turkey, and the European Union recognize that doing business with Africa is increasingly critical and good for their bottom lines.

Ironically, most African countries look to the U.S. to play a leading role in trade and investment with Sub-Saharan Africa, yet we hear repeatedly from officials, business people, and academics from the region, that while several African countries do considerable business with other countries, they do so because these countries are seeking to do business with Africa. These same observers note candidly that U.S. products, maintenance arrangements, and capacity building opportunities are by far more superior.

It is with these experiences in mind that AGOA stakeholders in the House under the leadership of Chairman ROYCE and others supported the reauthorization of AGOA last year. This is also why the passage of the AGOA Enhancement Act—which strongly complements reauthorized AGOA—is equally as important.

While the reauthorization is for 10 years, this was a giant step in the right direction. AGOA cannot live up to its full potential or be implemented as effectively as it must be without complementary legislation. AGOA will benefit from this complementary legislation as it has benefited from a host of initiatives such as the administration's signature Power Africa initiative and Feed the Future initiative, just to name a few.

Arguably, AGOA cannot be fully effective without an increase in access to electricity in Sub-Saharan Africa. Chairman ROYCE led the effort to pass Electrify Africa and proactively called for a multi-year strategy to assist countries in Sub-Saharan Africa address the power deficit. Africa's expanding cities and rural areas need access to considerable and reliable sources of electricity.

Feed the Future is also central to building opportunity and development throughout the region. This innovative program helps to support critical food security in several nations by supporting family enterprises and by supporting smallholder farmers. Local farmers are able to lower risks to their farms, increasing yield and productivity and address threats posed by droughts, floods, and other natural disasters.

The AGOA Enhancement Act helps to implement a more effective AGOA as it calls for the administration to establish an AGOA Web site to inform eligible AGOA-participating countries

about critical information and technical assistance. H.R. 2845 also encourages the administration to support regional trade development in Sub-Saharan Africa by facilitating trans-boundary trade and providing crucial capacity building skills for entrepreneurs.

One of the most important aspects of H.R. 2845 was originally a separate piece of legislation that I authored and is now included that enables eligible countries with Millennium Challenge Corporation compacts in good standing to enter simultaneously into one additional compact if the country is making considerable progress toward implementing the terms of the existing compacts. The other piece of this is that compacts can be used for regional economic integration.

An example of MCC projects, I was recently in Liberia, and Liberia has an energy project that totals \$201 million that will provide a new hydropower turbine to an existing facility, provide training to Liberia Economic Corporation employees, and help establish an independent regulator.

In summary, by the establishment of an AGOA Web site, the prioritization of capacity training, and by encouraging greater regional economic integration, H.R. 2845 helps to promote and develop a stronger economic relationship between Sub-Saharan Africa and the United States, creating increased jobs and a win-win for both.

Once again, I thank Chairman ROYCE for his distinguished leadership on this crucial issue.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I see the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL) on the floor, also one of the original authors of the African Growth and Opportunity Act, along with Chairman CHRIS SMITH and Ranking Member KAREN BASS, one of the most engaged on initiatives to put Africa on the map for U.S. trade and investment.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH), chairman of the Africa, Global Health, Global Human Right, and International Organizations Subcommittee, and I thank him for his assistance with this legislation.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman ROYCE for his leadership on AGOA in general. I thank KAREN BASS, who has worked doggedly for years, last year for the reauthorization. I see Mr. MCDERMOTT, who has also been so active over the years on this and critical to its passage at the beginning.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 2845, the AGOA Enhancement Act. When the African Growth and Opportunity Act was enacted into law in May of 2000, it was intended to help eligible Sub-Saharan African countries increase economic growth by providing duty-free, quota-free access to U.S. markets for more than 6,400 items from meats to textiles and apparel, to petroleum, to leather goods. Because there

were issues that needed to be addressed to enable AGOA to be more effective as intended, Congress has fine-tuned this important legislation since then and made adjustments several times to facilitate African exports to the United States.

H.R. 2845 is the latest noble effort to make AGOA work for more African producers primarily by enhancing the technical assistance and information provided to African producers, including the establishment of a Web site to provide this information. People need to know what is available and how they can access this important treaty and its subsidies.

The bill further allows for countries with the Millennium Challenge account grants to foster regional economic integration. It also targets inter-Africa trade, which is still less than 10 percent of all Africa international trade.

My colleagues have explained other aspects of the bill in great detail, so I won't be redundant. But extending AGOA as we did in the last Congress was a laudable achievement but will not have the full intended effect if African producers have limited information or abilities to effectively take advantage of international trade opportunity. This is a job creator both in Africa and in the United States.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for his authorship.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I also wanted to recognize the gentleman from Washington (Mr. MCDERMOTT). Mr. JIM MCDERMOTT was also one of the original authors of the AGOA legislation. He worked for many, many years to see it come to fruition.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. BASS. Mr. Speaker, I have to say that Mr. RANGEL is one of the lions in this House. I have had the honor of serving with him for the last 6 years. He knows I am upset with him because he is choosing to retire. When I came here and really wanted to work on African issues, I sought out those two gentlemen, both Mr. RANGEL and Mr. MCDERMOTT. I knew of their legacy. I knew of the work that they had done. I went to Mr. RANGEL, and I told him I wanted to get involved in the reauthorization of AGOA and would he help me. We sat on the floor over there. He called over a bunch of Members and told them what I wanted to do, and the gentleman ordered them all to help me. We worked on it and were able to get it done.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL).

(Mr. RANGEL asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, as I spend my final hours in this august body, I think of all of the fond memories that I have enjoyed. I guess during these political times, one of the things that I am enjoying the most today is

shattering the myth that Republicans and Democrats really can't work with each other.

Chairman ROYCE has indicated a concern for the world and the country, which shatters the myth that parties can't work together for the good of the United States of America. Certainly my colleague from New York, ELIOT ENGEL, and the chairman have proven that in working together.

Yes, when Ms. BASS first came to the Congress, she didn't come as an ordinary freshman. She had earned her stripes in the legislature of California, indeed was the speaker. I was a little shocked when she was trying to get support for her legislative committees that her interests would be foster care and Africa. That is unusual, but it is an indication of a person who comes here to this body with the type of commitment that makes you proud to be a Member of Congress and more proud even to be an American. There could be some connection between foster care and Africa because if there was any continent that has been treated as a foster child, it has been the developing countries in Africa.

Of course, I see an old-timer sitting there with his white hair, JIM MCDERMOTT. I can wonder whether or not as a Peace Corps volunteer in Africa, whether among his fondest dreams, that he would be a Member of the House and creating a climate where people have dignity and pride and be able to be a part of the world rather than just being a resource for stronger countries.

□ 1800

I can think of nobody that has brought more to the committee than Mr. WILLIAMS and Rosa Whitfield in working with Mr. Gingrich, in working with Mr. Crane, in working with Republicans, and how the leadership not only was able to get their sides but to see how the African Diplomatic Corps actually became the strongest lobbying force that we have had in the Congress as they found themselves pioneers in dealing with our great country that they loved so much and really had no understanding of why they didn't seem to be on our agenda.

With AGOA, we knew it was just the beginning, we knew it was an opportunity. We take pride in the success that it has had, but we also know how far they had to come from behind.

This enhancement piece of legislation has a lot of fancy words, but it sends out words to our embassies that this is American foreign policy. You don't just read the words. Make it work. Whether it is with the Millennium Challenge Corporation, whether it is with AID, whether it is giving information, whether it is helping them out, whether it is teaching them to learn, it is bringing them into the international trade.

And what does it do? Is this a bill that just helped people in Africa escape poverty and disease? No. It helps the

United States, and it helps the world. It helps people to be able to trade with each other, to talk with each other, to understand each other, and have compassion for each other. What a wonderful opportunity it is for the United States of America to look at a country that is struggling to enjoy the things that we believe in, to find out that now they don't have to lobby for it. Republicans and Democrats want what is best for the United States of America, and the developing countries in Africa need us so badly.

There are a lot of reasons why I regret that I have to leave the Congress and retire to go back home, but knowing that I leave behind such people who are so dedicated, that are willing to go to the other party and give up a lot of their capital to make certain that the small countries in Africa appreciate the fact that we consider them an important part not only of our trade policy, our foreign policy, but, indeed, the policy of the United States of America.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Ms. BASS for the opportunity to express myself on this most important issue. And I thank JIM McDERMOTT, who will be leaving—I don't know whether he is going back to Africa, but he won't be going back as a Peace Corps volunteer, I will tell you that. I thank him for his friendship.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. BASS. Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned before, I have had the honor of serving with Mr. McDERMOTT for the last 6 years, knowing that he was a Peace Corps volunteer in Africa. He was the one that led the effort around conflict minerals, something many people were concerned about in the country. They even made movies about the subject and all of the havoc that was wrought in many African countries because of conflict minerals. And also my work with him on child welfare issues and his legacy on both of those issues.

I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. McDERMOTT).

(Mr. McDERMOTT asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, it is kind of awesome to become a myth in your own time. I was not a Peace Corps volunteer. I was in Africa in 1961 before the Peace Corps ever existed. When we were in Ghana in 1961, the first Peace Corps volunteers arrived, so I was there when it all started.

I also want to remind you—when you know the history of something, it is kind of interesting to listen to it—this started in 1995. We put a bill in and, actually, Speaker Gingrich got it out of the House. It passed the House in 2000. We couldn't get it through the Senate. It had to come back under Mr. Bush. Then we finally got it through the House and the Senate, and it became law.

It has been an issue that everyone recognizes something needs to be done.

As I look at this bill today, I read some of the language that the President is directed to provide training for business and government trade officials, provide capacity building for entrepreneurs and trade associations, and promote diversification of African products.

Now, I don't know how many bills I have seen that in. What is missing here, unfortunately, in my view—I am going to support the bill, and the ideas of it are great, but what has been missing ever since 1995 or 2000 has been a commitment of the resources to actually help the Africans figure out how to use our system.

I can give you one example. There are shrimp all over the coastline. Now, why don't shrimp from Africa come into the United States? Because they can't pass the phytosanitary rules of our government. We won't let food come into this country that we think will be problematic for our people. So if we are going to actually help the Africans—we tried several times to get the Department of Agriculture to base people in some of the places along the coast, Senegal and some other places, in order to give them the instructions necessary to be able to bring those products in. What I hope will happen—and CHARLIE RANGEL and I are going to leave the scene, and we did everything we could during the time we were here—for the rest of you, you have got to put some money in, put some money down on the ground.

I had a project in one of the bills. Lions are a huge issue in Africa. If you want to have lions, and you want to have people go out and hunt them, well, if you kill a lion, it is only worth \$300. But if you leave a lion there for tourism purposes, it is worth \$50,000. So we have encouraged these countries to get the poachers to become game wardens and the women to run B&Bs out there, so we would have tourism which would bring foreign exchange into Africa to give them the ability to invest and do more.

An epidemic of tuberculosis occurred in the African lions. There were only two people in all of Africa who had ever dealt with a big game animal, so we thought, let's start a school; we will start a veterinary school. We couldn't get the money. There are a lot of things that we could do with very small amounts of money in terms of helping them develop the capacity because the bill is filled with this capacity building. Give them the opportunity to develop capacity.

But sometimes it takes a small investment on our part, and that is really what I hope will come. Maybe the bill will pass and then we can get a little bit of money into the Foreign Operations appropriations act and use it for that kind of program.

I think this is a work in progress. It won't be done when I leave and CHARLIE leaves. I remember the first meeting CHARLIE and I had with the ambassadors from all of Africa. Nobody

thought that it would ever happen. So we called them all up and said: Do you want to trade or do you want aid?

They said: We want trade.

We said: Okay. Come in here, in the office, and sign a paper.

We got them to sign a paper where they all asked the President of the United States to give them a trade act. That is the only time it has ever occurred around here that I know of.

So it has been there, and it has gradually developed, but more slowly than it could have. I hope that we will pass it and the message will get to the appropriators that a little bit of money could make this go a long way.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. BASS. Mr. Speaker, as Mr. McDERMOTT leaves, I will take his comments as my marching orders for what I am supposed to do in the next session, so I thank him very much.

I would urge my colleagues to support H.R. 2845.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

In closing, I have been to the factories across Africa, and I have seen the women employed. I have seen how AGOA is improving economies in Africa. AGOA is making a difference and could have even more impact on the continent if the measures included in this AGOA Enhancement Act are implemented.

This bill improves how we offer assistance through the Millennium Challenge Corporation to increase the ability of people in Africa to trade, and helping cut the bureaucratic barriers and needless red tape that thwarts trade.

This bill helps unlock the potential of AGOA so that people in Africa can strengthen their markets, and so Americans can improve trade relationships with countries in Africa. And yes, it has been slow going, slow progress. We have gotten a few more staffed positions from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, a few more ag inspectors positioned there. And JIM McDERMOTT is right, we need to do more. We have been slow going, but we have more foreign commercial service officers now in these positions in AGOA.

In 2 weeks' time, we will have the AGOA forum. We will again be bringing these issues up. In the following session, the effort will continue, as JIM McDERMOTT laid it out, to see this through and to try to make AGOA as effective as we possibly can. In the interim, this legislation is a big step in the right direction.

I really want to thank not only Congresswoman KAREN BASS, but also my colleagues from their original efforts, CHARLIE RANGEL and JIM McDERMOTT, and urge a unanimous vote, again, in support of the extension of AGOA.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr.

ROYCE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2845, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE DEMOCRATIC LEADER

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Honorable NANCY PELOSI, Democratic Leader:

SEPTEMBER 7, 2016.

Hon. PAUL D. RYAN,
*Speaker of the House, United States Capitol,
Washington, DC.*

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to Section 4(a) of the John F. Kennedy Centennial Commission Act (P.L. 114-215), I am pleased to appoint The Honorable Joseph P. Kennedy III of Massachusetts to the John F. Kennedy Centennial Commission.

Thank you for your consideration of this recommendation.

Best regards,

NANCY PELOSI,
Democratic Leader.

□ 1815

FEDERAL LANDS POLICY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, our Natural Resources Committee—and great work from the Natural Resources Committee's staff—has been trying to get a handle on just how much land the United States—the Federal Government—has taken over.

West of the Mississippi, it is absolutely extraordinary. Now, we have heard in recent months and over the last few years of incidents in which landowners, according to the media, just went off and did something crazy, overreacted—maybe had a gun—but it bears looking into what the Federal Government has been doing to the landowners, to the local governments, to the State governments in the Western United States. Our committee has been able to pull together maps that show just how much Federal Government property we have.

On this, we have the Bureau of Indian Affairs showing in these burgundy, or maroon, areas. These are areas in the West that the Bureau of Indian Affairs is in charge of.

When we look at the next map here, added to that of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, we have the Bureau of Land Management. Those are these areas here, the pale color, the soft orange. It is 247.3 million acres. That would be larger than Arizona, plus Iowa, plus Colorado, plus Nevada all put together that is owned by the Bureau of Land

Management—those are all of these kind of light orange areas—all the way up here, into Montana. It is just extraordinary, when you look at Nevada, how much land the State of Nevada and the citizens of Nevada control and how much the Bureau of Land Management controls. Absolutely extraordinary. We run into the same thing here just north of California and getting into Oregon and over into Idaho, Colorado, Wyoming. It is just incredible.

Then the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service gets some of their land in here. Then you also have the United States Forest Service. Those are these green areas. They have got a lot of California, a lot of Oregon, Washington, Idaho. You have got Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, right on down. You have got even Arizona and New Mexico. Extraordinary. That is this light green area. Then you have the national parks.

Oh, by the way, the Forest Service has 197.1 million acres. Twice the size of Montana is what the U.S. Forest Service has. The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service has 89.1 million acres. That is larger than Utah and North Carolina put together. The national parks have 84 million acres. That is larger than New Mexico and New Hampshire put together. Then there are other agencies. We add on the Department of Energy, the Department of Transportation, the TVA, the Bureau of Reclamation—extraordinary.

When you look at how much land is white—meaning that belongs to State, local, or private owners—and how much is owned by the Federal Government, you begin to think, perhaps, the Soviet Union didn't disappear and that the Soviet Union is now in the Western United States when a government controls that much of what used to be private property, much of it.

We look at the next map, and we are adding on another overlay. With this one, we have the endangered species' critical habitat. That is for 704 species of plants and animals. I know, in my district, we have two plants that grow wild, and they are all over the place. They were notified that they are now listed as threatened, and my local governments are already suffering because of the Federal land, the national forests. They get no tax money. They are not getting revenue. The Federal Government is not producing the renewable resource of timber off of them anymore. Then they get notified that they have got a couple of threatened plants with critical habitats there.

The local government was saying: Wait a minute. These things are everywhere. These plants are all over the place. Look, we have got pictures. They are all over the place. You can find them anywhere.

What does the Federal Government say?

Yes, but we have a scientific study that says they are threatened. We don't care if you have got pictures that show they are everywhere. That is not sci-

entific, because we had somebody in a cubicle in a little office, who never went to those areas, and he says they are threatened, so we are going to say they are threatened. You people who live in that area and who took pictures of them everywhere must not know what you are talking about.

Wilderness areas, we have got 765 wilderness areas on Federal land. That is 109 million acres in 44 States. Then we have the Clean Air Act and Class I areas also added in here.

Then, on our last map here, we have added on the wetlands—110.1 million acres are subject to section 404 regulations of the Clean Water Act—and marine protected areas. There are 13 marine sanctuary areas in more than 170,000 square miles of waters. Then you have got the Outer Continental Shelf at 1.712 billion acres.

We will add this additional map. We have added Wild and Scenic Rivers. There are 12,709 miles of 208 rivers—amazing—that are managed by BLM, the National Park Service, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, and the Forest Service. Then we have 49 heritage areas in 32 States. It is absolutely extraordinary. When you look at all of the overlays of federally owned controlled land, there is just not much left there.

Now, I love the idea that our chairman, ROB BISHOP, had for a bill. How about if we don't allow the Federal Government to get any more land—to take over any more land—west of the Mississippi until 10 percent of all of the land east of Mississippi is owned by the Federal Government? That might slow things down with the people who are east of the Mississippi starting to have to lose their private property as the Federal Government takes up more and more.

I am pleased to be joined by the gentleman from California. He knows California as well as anybody in the country, certainly better, probably, than the current Governor. I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK).

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I particularly want to thank Congressman GOHMERT for organizing this discussion on Federal lands policy and for his highlighting of the Federal Footprint Map.

You can find that at naturalresources.house.gov/federalfootprint or just Google "Federal Footprint." When you do, you will have a complete picture of how much land the Federal Government owns and how much of your State and your community is affected. It may surprise you.

For example, the Federal Government owns just seven-tenths of 1 percent of the entire State of New York. It owns just 1.1 percent of the State of Illinois. It owns just 1.8 percent of the State of Texas; but then go further west, and you will see the reason for the Western revolt. The Federal Government owns and controls 62 percent of the State of Alaska. It owns and