

agree on the problem and the goal, that is a step forward, and I appreciate at least that we have that common agreement.

Yes, we do have disagreements in terms of the exact way to approach this; specifically, which Federal agency should actually have the con on this. We have outlined our arguments here and elsewhere, and we have a disagreement, and that is part of the democratic process. We believe we have the better view of that, given the Fish and Wildlife Service's focus.

I do want to take issue with his comment that it took 2 days to debate this bill in the Natural Resources Committee. Actually, the debate having to do with this particular issue in the Natural Resources Committee was far less than 2 days. In fact, I didn't add it up. It probably amounted to 2 hours of those 2 days. The rest of it was really debating other issues in the context of this bill.

So this is not a particularly complicated problem to grasp from the law enforcement, from public safety, from an animal welfare perspective, and it is not a particularly difficult problem to identify very concise options and to make a decision on those. Those things were vetted in the Natural Resources Committee and are being vetted on the floor here. But to say that this took 2 days, in all due respect, is not accurate.

I do want to comment briefly on the comment having to do with State laws are already handling this. Yes, of course, this is always an issue that we have in determining whether, in the context of our work here, we should have the Federal Government apply standards or leave it to the States.

In this particular case, we have the worst of all worlds. We have differing State laws in terms of the private ownership and exploitation of big cats; and we also have both Federal and State laws that both preempt and leave it to the States.

But I would submit that the Captive Wildlife Safety Act, which is where we started on this almost 20 years ago, a Federal law that said that we were going to, as a country, state that you can no longer import these big cats from their homes; thus, decimating their populations where they came from, and encouraging a trade that has led them to the brink of extinction in most cases. We said that that is a Federal matter, and that is what we are trying to follow.

This is only an extension of that particular act. So I think it is a particularly worthwhile area for us to develop Federal standards and end a lot of doubt among the States and among the Federal Government and the States collectively and get on with the goal of protecting our people, protecting our animals, and protecting our law enforcement.

I urge adoption of this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired.

The Chair understands that the amendment printed in part A of House Report 117-444 will not be offered.

The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on passage of the bill.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Byrd, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed without amendment bills of the House of the following titles:

H.R. 1057. An act to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the National World War II Memorial in Washington, DC, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1842. An act to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint commemorative coins in recognition of the Bicentennial of Harriet Tubman's birth.

The message also announced that the Senate has passed with an amendment in which the concurrence of the House is requested, a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 7776. An act to provide for improvements to the rivers and harbors of the United States, to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the Senate has passed bills of the following titles in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 3742. An act to establish a pilot grant program to improve recycling accessibility, and for other purposes.

S. 3743. An act to require the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to carry out certain activities to improve recycling and composting programs in the United States, and for other purposes.

S. 4359. An act to designate the regional office of the Department of Veterans Affairs in metropolitan Atlanta as the "Senator Johnny Isakson Department of Veterans Affairs Atlanta Regional Office", and for other purposes.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which the yeas and nays are ordered.

The House will resume proceedings on postponed questions at a later time.

SAFEGUARDING TREATMENT FOR THE RESTORATION OF ECOSYSTEMS FROM ABANDONED MINES ACT

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 7283) to amend the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act to make certain activities eligible for grants from the Abandoned Mine Reclamation Fund, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 7283

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 "Safeguarding Treatment for the Restoration of Ecosystems from Abandoned Mines Act" or the "STREAM Act".

SEC. 2. ACTIVITIES THAT ARE ELIGIBLE FOR GRANTS FROM THE ABANDONED MINE RECLAMATION FUND.

Section 40701(c) of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (30 U.S.C. 1231a(c)) is amended—

(1) by striking "Grants under" and inserting the following:

"(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), grants under"; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

"(2) ACID MINE DRAINAGE ABATEMENT AND TREATMENT.—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—Not more than 30 percent of the total amount of a grant made annually under subsection (b)(1) may be retained by the recipient of the grant, if those amounts are deposited into an acid mine drainage abatement and treatment fund established under State law, from which amounts (together with all interest earned on the amounts) are expended by the State for the abatement of the causes and the treatment of the effects of acid mine drainage resulting from coal mining practices, including for the costs of building, operating, maintaining, and rehabilitating acid mine drainage treatment systems.

"(B) REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.—Each recipient of a grant under subsection (b)(1) that deposits grant amounts into an acid mine drainage abatement and treatment fund under subparagraph (A) shall—

"(i) offer amendments to the inventory maintained under section 403(c) of the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 (30 U.S.C. 1233(c)) to reflect the use of the amounts for acid mine drainage abatement and treatment; and

"(ii) include in the annual grant report of the recipient information on the status and balance of amounts in the acid mine drainage abatement and treatment fund.

"(C) TERM.—Amounts retained under subparagraph (A) shall not be subject to—

"(i) subsection (d)(4)(B); or

"(ii) any other limitation on the length of the term of an annual grant under subsection (b)(1)."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. LOWENTHAL) and the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in

which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the measure under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 7283, the Safeguarding Treatment for the Restoration of Ecosystems from Abandoned Mines Act, or the STREAM Act, introduced by our colleague, Representative CARTWRIGHT of Pennsylvania.

The STREAM Act makes a technical correction to existing Federal law so that States and Tribes can use a portion of the \$11.3 billion that Congress has already appropriated for abandoned coal mine cleanup to restore streams that are polluted by acid mine drainage.

Acid mine drainage is heavily polluted water that flows out of abandoned coal mines into streams, making them toxic to all wildlife and often turning them a bright and unnatural orange.

Acid mine drainage renders streams biologically dead. They become unusable, undrinkable, unfishable, and unswimmable. It also severely limits a region's potential economic growth.

□ 1615

Thankfully, we know how to clean up this type of mining pollution, and we know that doing so will bring enormous benefits to impacted communities.

Investments made by existing Federal law for cleaning up abandoned coal mines are expected to create over 4,000 jobs a year over the next 15 years. That is 60,000 new, good-paying jobs in communities left behind by the coal industry.

Cleaning up acid mine drainage also restores natural areas and brings back wildlife. Under the existing Abandoned Mine Land Program run by the Department of the Interior, eligible States and Tribes can set aside 30 percent of their annual funding allocations to cover the long-term costs of operating acid mine drainage treatment facilities.

Unfortunately, newer Federal law passed in this Congress does not currently give States and Tribes the same authority for the \$11.3 billion in supplemental funds.

The STREAM Act corrects this situation, giving States and Tribes the same flexibility to treat this devastating issue with legislation that has been passed in this Congress that they have had under the standard program for years.

I want to emphasize that this legislation does not—I repeat, does not—affect funding levels for any State. It simply changes the way that States may choose to use funds, depending on their individual needs when it comes to acid mine drainage.

The STREAM Act has strong bipartisan support. This legislation passed out of committee with strong bipartisan support and is endorsed by Governors, environmental groups, and the Interstate Mining Compact Commission.

I include in the RECORD some testimony in support of the STREAM Act from the Interstate Mining Compact Commission and letters of support from Governor Mike DeWine of Ohio, Governor Jim Justice of West Virginia, the Maryland Department of the Environment, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, and Trout Unlimited.

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR,
Columbus, OH, April 25, 2022.

HON. RAÚL M. GRIJALVA,
Chair, Natural Resources Committee,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

HON. BRUCE WESTERMAN,
Ranking Member, House Natural Resources
Committee, House of Representatives, Washington DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN GRIJALVA AND RANKING MEMBER WESTERMAN: I am writing to ask for your support of H.R. 7283, the Safeguarding Treatment for the Restoration of Ecosystems from Abandoned Mines Act (STREAMS), and its companion bill, S. 3957. These bills clarify that states with acid mine drainage (AMD) set-aside programs can deposit a portion of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) Abandoned Mine Land (AML) grant funds into AMD set-aside accounts. The authority to do so will improve our nation's water quality.

Ohio has a rich history of mining that began more than 200 years ago when the state was still a territory. It is, in part, thanks to Ohio's miners and coal resources that the industrial revolution grew. During the 19th and 20th Centuries, more than 3.6 billion tons of coal were extracted from Ohio, and, while mining has been an integral part of Ohio's past economic prosperity, the after-effects of coal production still endure.

Although laws and regulations on proper mining practices and reclamation exist today, that wasn't the case for the first 100 years of coal mining. Prior to the enactment of our nation's first mining laws in 1977, mines were often left abandoned and unreclaimed as mining companies moved on to the next site. Thousands of abandoned underground mines exist in Ohio and pose significant geologic hazards, as the acids that discharge from mined rock leech into our streams and other waterways.

Thankfully, funding mechanisms have been put in place to confront this challenge. The IIJA includes \$11.3 billion in new funding for AML reclamation. These funds will significantly increase states' ability to address legacy safety and environmental hazards of coal mining.

An important aspect of restoring abandoned mine lands is remediating acid mine drainage (AMD), which is caused by surface water flowing over or through mined rock, making the water highly acidic. AMD is addressed by building water treatment systems to neutralize acidic water and remove dissolved metals that harm water quality in streams and rivers.

However, addressing AMD is different than the safety hazards caused by AML, because a safety hazard can be effectively eliminated through a one-time construction project, but AMD requires a treatment system to be operated, maintained, and rehabilitated in perpetuity for it to remain effective. Accordingly, each AMD treatment system that a state builds represents a long-term liability that must be funded.

Ohio currently operates and maintains 33 treatment systems with plans to establish more, and unfortunately, the IIJA does not provide the ability to set aside a portion of the funds made available for ongoing AMD remediation. Without this authority, it will be extremely difficult to responsibly build the treatment systems necessary to make significant improvements in water quality that has been harmed by abandoned coal mines.

H.R. 7283 and S. 3957 would clarify that states with approved AMD set-aside programs can deposit up to 30% of annual IIJA grant funds into the AMD set-aside account. This legislation is imperative to Ohio, along with 10 other states in the Appalachian and the Midwest regions who are committed to addressing the legacy safety and environmental hazards of coal mining.

As the 2021 Chair of the Interstate Mining Compact Commission and former co-chair of the Appalachian Regional Commission, I can attest to the importance of this legislation in addressing water quality issues resulting from abandoned mines in Ohio. The legislation provides the flexibility and long-term financial stability necessary to plan, design, build, operate and maintain critical acid mine drainage treatment systems.

Again, I ask for your support of this important legislation. Thank you for your attention to this issue.

Very respectfully yours,

MIKE DEWINE,
Governor.

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR,
Charleston, WV, May 31, 2022.

Hon. JOE MANCHIN III,

U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

Hon. SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

Hon. DAVID MCKINLEY,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

Hon. ALEX MOONEY,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

Hon. CAROL MILLER,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MEMBERS OF CONGRESS: I am writing to you today on a matter that urgently needs your attention. As many of you know, the recently adopted Bipartisan Infrastructure Law transfers \$11.3 billion from the federal treasury to the Abandoned Mine Lands (AML) trust fund. State AML programs use this fund to address the adverse impacts from the centuries of unregulated coal mining that took place prior to the adoption of the federal Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act in 1977. This additional money will be monumental to West Virginia's AML program, and AML programs across the country, as we work together to eliminate safety and environmental hazards caused by abandoned mines.

While we applaud the passage of the historic Infrastructure Law, we want to call on our congressional leaders to pass the recently introduced legislation that will allow states to move a portion of the treasury funds into their Acid Mine Drainage (AMD) Set Aside funds. This authority will provide West Virginia and other states with even more resources to address the impacts from mining's early years.

A key component in addressing AML sites in West Virginia and the surrounding region has been building water treatment systems to remediate AMD. Treating AMD presents a bigger challenge than addressing safety hazards, which can often be eliminated through

one-time construction projects. Once an AMD treatment system is built, additional funding is needed for operations and maintenance, so it remains effective. The expenses of this work go on in perpetuity.

Historically, state AML programs have been funded through grants from the AML trust fund and fees collected from coal production. The federal AML program allows states to set aside 30 percent of its grant funding into an interest-bearing account to cover the long-term cost of treating AMD. Although the Infrastructure Law authorizes continuation of collection of AML fees on coal production and the authority to set aside 30 percent of grant funds, it does not allow states to set aside a portion of the treasury funds. The ability to use these funds to cover the long-term costs of treating AMD will be vital to keeping that burden off future generations.

Much like traditional AML projects, treating AMD benefits both the environment and the economy. Building and operating AMD treatment systems helps facilitate the creation of permanent jobs while cleaning up our rivers and streams—a true win-win for all West Virginians.

Over the past four years, people from across the country and all over the world have finally discovered what a great place West Virginia is to live, work, and play. They want to kayak and fish in our pristine waters and hike in our beautiful mountains.

Passing this legislation will ensure that West Virginia's resources will be protected and enjoyed by all citizens for years to come.

Sincerely,

JIM JUSTICE,
Governor.

MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF
THE ENVIRONMENT,
Baltimore, MD, May 10, 2022.

Hon. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR VAN HOLLEN: I am writing to ask for your support of S. 3957, the Safeguarding Treatment for the Restoration of Ecosystems from Abandoned Mines Act (STREAMS), and its companion bill, H.R. 7283. These bills clarify that states with acid mine drainage (AMD) set-aside programs, like Maryland, can deposit a portion of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), Abandoned Mine Land (AML) grant funds into state's AMD set-aside accounts. This authority will improve our nation's water quality by providing funding for AMD treatment projects as well as the long-term operation and maintenance of treatment systems.

Western Maryland has a rich history of coal mining that began more than 250 years ago and helped fuel the industrial revolution. Hundreds of millions of tons of coal were mined prior to the passage of state and federal laws requiring land and water reclamation. The Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act (SMCRA or the Act) of 1977 instituted national mining and reclamation standards that have reduced environmental impacts from modern coal mining. SMCRA also created the Abandoned Mine Reclamation Fund, by taxing coal production, to address the legacy of health, safety, and environmental hazards that existed prior to passage of the Act.

The IIJA has significantly increased funding available for AML programs by depositing \$11.3 billion into the Abandoned Mine Reclamation Fund to address the myriad of legacy health, safety, and environmental hazards of coal mining.

An important aspect to restoring abandoned mines is remediating AMD, which is

caused by groundwater and surface water flowing through abandoned deep mines and surface mines resulting in very acidic water with high concentrations of dissolved metals. Maryland currently has 60 AMD treatment systems that have improved or restored over 100 miles of stream, but hundreds of miles of streams remain degraded. Treating AMD is costly and requires long-term funding for operation and maintenance of the treatment systems. Without continued funding for operation and maintenance, the improvements will quickly be lost as the streams revert to their pretreatment status.

S. 3957 and H.R. 7283 would clarify that states with approved AMD set-aside programs can deposit up to 30% of annual IIJA grant funds into the AMD set-aside account. This legislation is imperative to Maryland, along with 10 other states in the Appalachian and the Midwest regions who are committed to addressing the legacy of coal mining. The legislation provides the flexibility and long-term financial stability necessary to plan, design, build, operate, and maintain critical acid mine drainage treatment systems.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue of improving water quality in Maryland and ask for your support of this legislation.

Sincerely,

TYLER ABBOTT,
Chief of Staff.

ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES,
Springfield, Illinois, April 21, 2022.

Hon. RICHARD DURBIN,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR DURBIN: The Abandoned Mine Land (AML) program for the state of Illinois is under the purview of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. I am writing to express our continuing strong support for the AML program under the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 (SMCRA).

As you may know, Section 40701 of the recently adopted Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) transfers funds to the Illinois Abandoned Mine Lands (AML) Division for use in addressing the adverse impacts of coal mining that preceded SMCRA. An important aspect of the work is the remediation of acid mine drainage (AMD). Treatment of AMD requires the construction, operation, maintenance and rehabilitation of a treatment system to remain effective, resulting in a long-term liability. The historic fee-based AML program allows up to 30 percent of its annual AML grant in an interest-bearing account to cover the long-term costs of AMD. However, the BIL does not confer parallel authority. Without this authority, the amount available for long-term liabilities will dwindle, thereby limiting AMD treatment.

Therefore, I am requesting your support for S. 3957, to amend the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act to make certain activities eligible for grants from the Abandoned Mine Reclamation Fund, which was introduced by Senator Bob Casey and Senator Mike Braun to allow not more than 30 percent of the total amount of the BIL grant to be deposited into an AMD fund.

I have attached a summary about the importance of the AMD Set Aside Authority and S. 3957, STREAM Act. Should you have any questions or require additional information about the valuable work our state has undertaken, please contact Lance Range, Acting Manager of the Division of AML.

Thank you for your consideration of this request to protect the physical, environ-

mental, and economic health of the people of Illinois.

Sincerely,

COLLEEN CALLAHAN,
Director.

TROUT UNLIMITED,
Arlington, VA, June 8, 2022.

Re Trout Unlimited supports H.R. 7283, Safeguarding Treatment for the Restoration of Ecosystems from Abandoned Mines Act (the STREAM Act).

Hon. ALAN LOWENTHAL,
Chair, House Natural Resources Committee, Environment and Mineral Resources Subcommittee.

Hon. PETE STAUBER,
Ranking Member, House Natural Resources Committee, Environment and Mineral Resources Subcommittee.

CHAIR LOWENTHAL, RANKING MEMBER STAUBER AND MEMBERS OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE: On behalf of our 300,000 members and supporters nationwide, Trout Unlimited (TU) writes in support of the bipartisan Safeguarding Treatment for the Restoration of Ecosystems from Abandoned Mines Act (STREAM Act) to finance long term cleanup of abandoned coal mines. This bill will help finance and sustain the outstanding work that is happening in coal country to clean up pernicious pollution from abandoned coal mines. It will extend and enhance the great value of the AML provisions of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) by assuring projects completed using those funds will continue to provide restoration in perpetuity.

Abandoned Mine Drainage (AMO) treatment is often addressed by building water treatment systems, which result in ongoing Operation Maintenance and Replacement (OMR) costs that endure in perpetuity. However, states often lack the financial ability to support these types of long-term liabilities. If enacted, H.R. 7283 would allow for up to 30 percent of a state's annual allocation for Abandoned Mine Land (AML) reclamation under IIJA to be deposited into an interest-bearing account to provide for the perpetual OMR expenses of facilities to treat AMO. This language mirrors the authority of current state programs that allow a 30 percent set-aside from the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act's (SMCRA) AML Trust Fund. This approach will help to ensure that projects funded by the IIJA will have funds for this necessary long-term OM&R expense, thereby sustaining long term the thousands of stream miles that will be restored by AMO treatment.

A recent study by TU demonstrated the long-term benefits of ongoing cleanup work funded by SMCRA's AML Fund, recently reauthorized and expanded substantially by the IIJA. On the West Branch of the Susquehanna River in Pennsylvania, thanks to AML funding and well-crafted projects by watershed groups, the state, and Trout Unlimited, we are seeing watershed scale benefits—hundreds of miles of stream and mainstem river restored, recreation rejuvenated, jobs created, and watersheds made more resilient and better able to withstand the impacts of a changing climate. And this is but one example of this restoration occurring throughout Appalachia, much of it in areas rendered dead by mining that occurred decades to over a hundred years ago.

Without the authority to set aside IIJA monies for the perpetual Operation Maintenance and Replacement of these facilities, communities and ecosystems impacted by legacy mining issues are given the gift of restoration with no certainty that it will continue in perpetuity. This legislation provides a critical piece of the puzzle assuring

that future generations will continue to reap these benefits.

Thank you for taking up this important legislation and for considering our views. We look forward to working with bill sponsors and members of the committee to advance this bill into law.

Sincerely,

STEVE MOYER,
Vice President of Government Affairs.

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague, Representative CARTWRIGHT, for introducing this important bipartisan legislation and working to build such an impressive coalition of support. I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on H.R. 7283, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I, too, rise in support of H.R. 7283, the Safeguarding Treatment for the Restoration of Ecosystems from Abandoned Mines Act, also known as the STREAM Act.

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act appropriated \$11.3 billion to the Abandoned Mine Lands, or the AML, trust fund. This money is for use by State AML programs to address abandoned mine lands created before enactment of the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977.

This historic, fee-based AML program allows a State to set aside up to 30 percent of its annual AML grant in an interest-bearing account to cover the long-term costs of acid mine drainage, or AMD, facilities, which are often needed to address water treatment in historic coal mining states.

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act reauthorizes the collection of the AML fee at a reduced rate, as well as a 30 percent set-aside authority for States. However, the IIJA neglected to grant parallel set-aside authority for the newly authorized \$11.3 billion in Treasury funds for AML projects.

This is one of the many areas Congress will need to correct in the hastily passed IIJA bill, and it goes to show why we need to have regular order, why we need to have committee hearings, and why we need to take our time on these large bills.

That large IIJA bill never went through a committee in the House. It was sent over from the Senate, hastily adopted, and here we are today, trying to fix it. I am sure it won't be the last time.

The STREAM Act is a bipartisan bill that will make a technical fix to IIJA, clarifying that States receiving newly authorized funds for AML cleanup have the authority to set aside a portion of those funds for AMD cleanup purposes consistent with existing law. This will allow States to utilize AML funds according to their specific needs.

That said, the Department of the Interior recently released final guidance for States applying to receive funds authorized for AML cleanup that includes requirements over and above the letter of the law. DOI should allow States to make decisions on prioritizing AML

sites and refrain from imposing unauthorized and heavy-handed requirements.

Mr. Speaker, I urge adoption of this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. CARTWRIGHT).

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California for yielding time.

I am addressing H.R. 7283, the Safeguarding Treatment for the Restoration of Ecosystems from Abandoned Mines Act, or the STREAM Act. It has been accurately described up to now as a responsible, commonsense, technical fix to the Department of the Interior's Abandoned Mine Lands Reclamation Program. It is a small change, but it will have a large, long-lasting, positive effect on State efforts to clean up legacy pollution from coal mining.

Specifically, the bill allows States to hold back 30 percent of existing allocations for long-term operating and maintenance costs of abandoned mine land reclamation.

When rainwater and river water runs over oxidized pyrite in abandoned coal mines, it turns color, and the whole area becomes toxic. The damage can last for hundreds or even thousands of years if nothing is done to fix it.

In my beautiful State of Pennsylvania, acid mine drainage, or AMD, affects over 5,000 miles of waterways. No one wants to live or work near these dead zones in rivers and streams.

The Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission estimates an annual loss of \$29 million in revenue from recreational fishing in such areas.

We know how to fix the problem. Cleaning up acid mine drainage always creates jobs, brings back recreation opportunities, boosts local economies, and makes communities healthier and stronger and much more attractive to visitors and new investments.

Acid mine drainage requires costly, ongoing maintenance, and H.R. 7283 helps pay for that ongoing maintenance. It is not a new idea. The legacy Abandoned Mine Land Reclamation Program, which has been on the books for years, currently allows States to set aside up to 30 percent of their annual regular abandoned mine lands allocation to cover the long-term costs of operating AMD treatment facilities and maintaining them over the long term.

It is optional, and States have to enact their own programs to engage in the program. Eleven States have done so, so far. Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Kentucky, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, Maryland, Virginia, Tennessee, and Alabama have chosen to do so.

H.R. 7283 opens the innovation door by making up to 30 percent of all AML funds available for such acid mine drainage projects if States want to go that way.

There is no mandate here. It is their choice. Nothing in current law or the

STREAM Act is mandatory, and nothing in the bill raises or authorizes any additional Federal spending for abandoned mine land or acid mine drainage work.

What it gives States is the important option of restoring waterways and maintaining those restoration projects for many years to come.

It is a responsible way to spend this money by extending it out over time so that we don't blow it all at once and then let existing mine reclamation areas fall apart. The STREAM Act can take existing Federal allocations for AML cleanup and make it last a very long time.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the ranking member for his support. I thank Representative MCKINLEY, to be sure, for his leadership in the House on this effort, and I thank all the other bipartisan cosponsors of this bill. Mr. Speaker, I urge all Members to support the bill.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MCKINLEY), who is the Republican lead on this legislation and who is also a fellow engineer and knows a lot about coal mining.

Mr. MCKINLEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman-in-waiting for the opportunity to address this.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the STREAM Act. Over the last century, American companies have mined coal in at least 26 States across the country. Over that same period of time, thousands of these mines have ceased operation.

Abandoned mines produce acid drainage that, unfortunately, flows into our streams and is toxic. As a result, tens of thousands of miles of streams and waterways across America are being poisoned.

West Virginia alone, according to the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection, has indicated that we have 1,500 miles of streams that are toxic in West Virginia.

The STREAM Act ensures States have the flexibility to use these federally allocated funds for acid mine drainage cleanup and provides long-term maintenance of these cleanup projects. The bill preserves the use of important guidelines already in place, as you have heard, and simply extends them to recently approved new funding measures.

Making our streams safe is not a partisan issue. Mr. Speaker, as chairman of the Congressional Coal Caucus, I am proud to be leading the Republican effort, in conjunction with Representative CARTWRIGHT, to pass this bipartisan legislation.

For anyone who has never seen these orange, poisoned streams, they will never understand the gravity of the situation. But for those of us that have seen and lived with this devastation that will last for years, decades, into the future, the time to vote "yes" is now.

Mr. Speaker, I urge support of the STREAM Act, and I encourage a "yes" vote.

□ 1630

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests at this time. I am prepared to close, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I have no other speakers. I urge adoption of the bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the legislation, and 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. LOWENTHAL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 7283, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. NORMAN. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

WIND RIVER ADMINISTRATIVE SITE CONVEYANCE ACT

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5093) to direct the Secretary of Agriculture to transfer certain National Forest System land in the State of Washington to Skamania County, Washington, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5093

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 “Wind River Administrative Site Conveyance Act”.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) COUNTY.—The term “County” means the Skamania County, Washington.

(2) MAP.—The term “map” means the map entitled “Wind River Administrative Site Conveyance Proposal” and dated July 7, 2020.

(3) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the Chief of the Forest Service.

SEC. 3. CONVEYANCE OF LAND AND IMPROVEMENTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—If the County submits a written request to the Secretary not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall, not later than 24 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, convey to the County all right, title, and interest of the United States in and to the approximately 23.4 acres of National Forest System land, related infrastructure, and all improvements, as generally depicted as “proposed conveyance” on the map.

(b) MAP.—

(1) AVAILABILITY OF MAP.—The map shall be kept on file and available for public inspection in the appropriate office of the Forest Service.

(2) CORRECTION OF ERRORS.—The Secretary may correct minor errors in the map.

(c) TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—The conveyance under subsection (a) shall be—

(1) subject to valid existing rights;

(2) notwithstanding any other provision of law, made without consideration;

(3) made by quitclaim deed;

(4) subject to a right-of-way and restrictive easement reservation of a width to be determined by the Secretary, for the protection of the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail;

(5) completed in accordance with the Forest Service Facility Realignment and Enhancement Act of 2005 (16 U.S.C. 580d et seq.), except that section 504(b) and (c) of that Act shall not apply;

(6) subject to right-of-way reservations made pursuant to section 507 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1767); and

(7) subject to any other terms and conditions as the Secretary determines appropriate.

(d) FEDERAL PROPERTY DISPOSAL.—Chapter 5 of subtitle I of title 40, United States Code, shall not apply to the conveyance under subsection (a).

(e) HAZARDOUS MATERIALS.—With respect to the conveyance under subsection (a), the Secretary—

(1) shall meet disclosure requirements for hazardous substances, pollutants, or contaminants under section 120(h) of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 (42 U.S.C. 9620(h)); and

(2) shall not otherwise be required to remediate or abate the hazardous substances, pollutants, or contaminants disclosed pursuant to paragraph (1).

(f) CLOSING COSTS.—As a condition for the conveyance under subsection (a), the County shall pay all closing costs associated with the conveyance, including for—

(1) title insurance and title search; and

(2) any applicable inspection fees, escrow fees, attorneys fees, and recording fees.

(g) SURVEY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The exact acreage and legal description of the National Forest System land to be conveyed under subsection (a) shall be determined by a survey satisfactory to the Secretary.

(2) COSTS OF SURVEY.—The Secretary shall bear all costs associated with the survey under paragraph (1).

(h) USE OF LAND.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The lands and related infrastructure conveyed under subsection (a) shall be maintained by the County pursuant to standards established by the Secretary of the Interior under section 306101 of title 54, United States Code.

(2) REVERSION.—If any portion of the land conveyed under subsection (a) is used in a manner that is inconsistent with the use described in paragraph (1), the land shall, at the discretion of the Secretary, revert to the United States.

SEC. 4. DETERMINATION OF BUDGETARY EFFECTS.

The budgetary effects of this Act, for the purpose of complying with the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010, shall be determined by reference to the latest statement titled “Budgetary Effects of PAYGO Legislation” for this Act, submitted for printing in the Congressional Record by the Chairman of the House Budget Committee, provided that such statement has been submitted prior to the vote on passage.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. LOWENTHAL) and the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the measure under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 5093, the Wind River Administrative Site Conveyance Act. This bill would authorize the U.S. Forest Service to convey a 23.4-acre portion of the Wind River Nursery to Skamania County, Washington.

Congress authorized a land exchange that included a large portion of the Wind River Nursery in 2001. The conveyance authorized by this legislation will complete the transfer and place the entire Wind River property under the stewardship of the county.

This legislation will allow the Skamania County Board of Commissioners to continue rehabilitation of the buildings and the grounds in the Wind River Historic District.

The bill also includes important and routine safeguards so the property will continue to be managed in a manner that ensures the preservation of its historic characteristics.

I thank the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER) for introducing this important legislation and championing this bill on behalf of her constituents.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote “yes” on this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I, too, rise in support of H.R. 5093, sponsored by the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER). This is a good bill, and I commend her for her leadership on this effort.

Skamania County in Representative HERRERA BEUTLER’s district is almost 77 percent federally owned. Unfortunately, because of the large number of public lands in the county, less than 2 percent of the county’s land base can be taxed at full market value.

The presence of a large Federal estate is shared by many other rural counties in the West, and it makes it very difficult for communities to generate revenue needed to fund schools, roads, and vital public services, such as police and fire departments.

H.R. 5093 would transfer ownership of approximately 23 acres of the former Wind River Nursery from the Forest Service to the county to expand uses that will draw in tourism, provide economic opportunities, and create additional tax revenue for the county. The county estimates that this conveyance will ultimately lead to an additional \$600,000 in revenue each year.