

PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL UNDER CHAPTER 8 OF TITLE 5, UNITED STATES CODE, OF THE RULE SUBMITTED BY THE UNITED STATES FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE RELATING TO “ENDANGERED AND THREATENED WILDLIFE AND PLANTS; LESSER PRAIRIE-CHICKEN; THREATENED STATUS WITH SECTION 4(D) RULE FOR THE NORTHERN DISTINCT POPULATION SEGMENT AND ENDANGERED STATUS FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTINCT POPULATION SEGMENT”

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 614, I call up the joint resolution (S.J. Res. 9) providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service relating to “Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Lesser Prairie-Chicken; Threatened Status With Section 4(d) Rule for the Northern Distinct Population Segment and Endangered Status for the Southern Distinct Population Segment”, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the joint resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 614, the joint resolution is considered read.

The text of the joint resolution is as follows:

S.J. RES. 9

*Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That Congress disapproves the rule submitted by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service relating to “Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Lesser Prairie-Chicken; Threatened Status With Section 4(d) Rule for the Northern Distinct Population Segment and Endangered Status for the Southern Distinct Population Segment” (87 Fed. Reg. 72674 (November 25, 2022)), and such rule shall have no force or effect.*

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The joint resolution shall be debatable for 1 hour, equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Natural Resources or their respective designees.

The gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) and the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GRIJALVA), each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on S.J. Res. 9.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S.J. Res. 9, sponsored by Senator MARSHALL of Kansas. This bipartisan resolution will protect voluntary conservation while eliminating the litigation-driven listing of the lesser prairie-chicken.

Last year, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service published a final rule listing the lesser prairie-chicken as an endangered species. The rule created two distinct population segments. In the northern segment, which covers Colorado, Kansas, Oklahoma, and the Texas panhandle, the lesser prairie-chicken will be considered threatened in that area, while in the southern segment, which covers New Mexico and west Texas, it would be considered endangered.

The lesser prairie-chicken is a boom-and-bust species that is extremely susceptible to precipitation in its native range. Simply put, when it rains the lesser prairie-chicken populations grow, and in droughts their populations often shrink.

To ensure a healthy lesser prairie-chicken population, a private, voluntary conservation effort, known as the range-wide plan, was developed and implemented in 2013. At the time, the Fish and Wildlife Service declared that the voluntary conservation efforts being undertaken to be an unprecedented collaborative effort that produced a sound conservation plan for the lesser prairie-chicken.

As part of the range-wide plan, voluntary conservation agreements were formed that allow private landowners and businesses who operate on Federal lands to implement voluntary measures to conserve habitat. These programs have proven to be successful with private industry investing \$65 million into species conservation and nearly 6 million acres of habitat conserved for the lesser prairie-chicken.

These investments have produced results. They have resulted in population growth from less than 20,000 birds in 2013 to more than 35,000 birds in 2020. However, the listing puts all of the volunteer conservation efforts to date in jeopardy.

The unavoidable truth about the ESA is that a listing means less private investment which harms conservation efforts.

Mr. Speaker, some people might ask why is it so important that we talk about the lesser prairie-chicken on the House floor?

Some people might say: Why on Earth would the Fish and Wildlife Service move a species from threatened to endangered that went from 20,000 to 35,000 in its population in less than 10 years because of conservation efforts?

What would inspire the Fish and Wildlife Service to do such a thing?

Mr. Speaker, you would think that if a species were increasing, they wouldn't go from threatened to endangered, they would go the other way. However, I think this map behind me tells the motivation behind the Biden administration and the motivation be-

hind this U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to make the lesser prairie-chicken not threatened but endangered.

Mr. Speaker, you see the two ranges here, the northern range where they would remain threatened and the southern range where they would be listed as endangered.

So what is so unique about these areas?

It happens to be where the largest production of oil and gas in America is located. The area that this Fish and Wildlife Service decided to make the lesser prairie-chicken endangered is in the Permian Basin—not just the Permian Basin, but the Delaware Basin and the Permian Basin. It is the richest deposit of oil in our country.

So this is just a tool for the Fish and Wildlife Service to go implement the Biden administration's none-of-the-above energy policy, except their hand-picked energy policies, and it is another attack on low-cost energy for the American taxpayer. It is an attack on jobs in America, and at the same time it is weakening our national security. It is making us more dependent on member countries of OPEC, on Russia, and on OPEC+, like Venezuela, all because this administration is using every tool in the tool pouch to stop oil and gas and low-cost energy and safe energy production on U.S. lands and waters.

We just had a hearing this morning in the Natural Resources Committee about how BOEM has delayed the 5-year plan in the Gulf of Mexico and the earliest we could get a new sale in the Gulf of Mexico is 2026. That is the result of this Biden administration energy policy.

The ESA should be about protecting endangered species and about restoring habitat for endangered species. It shouldn't be something used that is going to attack the very heart of our economy and our energy production, that is going to harm our national security, and that at the end of the day it is just going to make prices higher for Americans.

That is why it is important to talk about something like the lesser prairie-chicken on the House floor because this administration made a rule—Congress didn't make a rule—this administration made a rule that said they are going to list the species as endangered that has shown dramatic increases in population.

Voluntary conservation is working, and this listing puts that at risk. That is why repealing the Biden administration's listing of the prairie-chicken is crucial.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this resolution, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, today, I rise in opposition to this resolution. There was a lot I could say and thought about saying about this resolution and the one that we will see after it. I could talk about

how badly these two measures undermine conservation efforts for species that are endangered and threatened across our Nation and across the globe.

I could talk about how these resolutions give industry and not science the upper hand in making decisions about our endangered species.

I could talk about how this latest offering from team extreme takes the GOP's vendetta against the Endangered Species Act to a level that should offend us all.

Nevertheless, as I thought about it, I realized that what is more offensive than these resolutions themselves is the fact that these resolutions are on the floor right now today.

We are about to leave the House for 6 weeks. By the time we come back, summer will be nearly over. If the current temperatures stay on track, it will have been one of the most brutal summers in this country's recorded history.

In my home State of Arizona, Phoenix has now broken records with what is now a 27-day streak of more than 110-degree heat. In Florida, the ocean heat wave has warmed the waters to 5 to 7 degrees above normal. That level of heat is a disaster for corals, marine life, and all the local businesses and economies that depend on them.

Tragically, last month a heat wave in Texas was so oppressive it claimed 13 lives. That also happened to be the same month that was awarded the grim honor of being the hottest June ever on record. July isn't looking any different.

Climate change isn't about some distant warning about melting ice caps in the far-off future. The climate crisis is here. It is now. People are suffering, and people are dying, and the GOP isn't doing anything about it.

This year, in the Natural Resources Committee, the Republican majority has had zero hearings on climate change. They have introduced zero bills to seriously address climate change. They have introduced zero bills to help communities being hurt by climate change, and they have accepted zero Democratic amendments to include climate change in any of their legislation.

Today, Republicans have decided that the most important thing they could do before we leave for 6 weeks would be a couple of resolutions to kill off the lesser prairie-chicken and the northern long-eared bat.

We are about to go back to our districts where our constituents will have questions about what we are doing to protect their homes, their businesses, and their livelihoods from the increasing threat of climate change.

I have to wonder if my Republican colleagues think that bullying chickens and bats would be a sufficient answer. I don't agree, and I am certain our constituents won't agree either.

Fortunately for Democrats, we can assure our constituents that we passed the country's biggest ever investment in climate and clean energy through

the Inflation Reduction Act last year and that the Biden administration is working to get that funding out the door as quickly and as equitably as possible against ongoing efforts in appropriations to defund those initiatives and to dismantle, as we see today, existing environmental protections.

Unfortunately, the Big Gas and Big Oil industry in this country is making Americans more and more dependent on fossil fuels as their source of energy and thus increasing the climate crisis that we are experiencing now.

Common sense says that the new party in charge of the House would want to keep that historic momentum going, but sometimes common sense ain't that common.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on this resolution. I urge my Republican colleagues to come back in September with a better plan to help the American people than a couple of go-nowhere resolutions that beat up on bats and chickens, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I would say the only science that went into this decision by Fish and Wildlife was political science. It is all about this administration's attack on American energy.

People all around the world are going to die as a result of food shortages from this administration's attack on natural gas. Natural gas is the main ingredient in fertilizer, and fertilizer is the main ingredient in agriculture.

These are serious problems that have huge impacts to society. That is why it is important that we push back on these ridiculous rules that the administration makes.

Do you think we enjoy coming out on the House floor and speaking about prairie-chickens and bats?

Not necessarily, but when an administration uses that for a weapon against the energy production in this country, then somebody has to speak out against it and has to speak out for the rural communities and the workers across this country.

□ 1230

Mr. DUARTE. Mr. Speaker, today, I stand before you to express my support for S.J. Res. 9. My colleagues and I have deep concerns about the harms of listing the lesser prairie-chicken under the Endangered Species Act. While the intent of this act is to protect vulnerable species, we must carefully consider the consequences of such a decision.

Listing the lesser prairie-chicken as endangered will have far-reaching negative impacts on rural communities, working families, and conservation efforts, all while ignoring the best available science.

First and foremost, this action will place more red tape on farmers, ranchers, and small businesses, leading to more Federal control and less personal freedom. Rural America already faces significant challenges, and more Fed-

eral red tape will only limit job growth and crush rural communities.

Furthermore, listing the lesser prairie-chicken might not guarantee its recovery. The Endangered Species Act's track record has shown limited success in saving species from extinction, often requiring substantial amounts of taxpayer dollars and enormous economic impacts with minimal positive outcomes.

Instead, we should prioritize cooperative conservation efforts that involve collaboration between private landowners and government agencies to ensure a more holistic, sustainable approach.

Listing the lesser prairie-chicken will divert attention and resources away from other critical conservation priorities. We need a comprehensive strategy that addresses broader ecological challenges and the conservation of multiple species, not just focusing on a single one.

Let us not rush into listing the lesser prairie-chicken without carefully evaluating the potential harms and exploring alternative conservation measures. Effective conservation requires a balanced approach that protects both our natural heritage and the livelihoods of working families throughout rural America.

Together, we can find innovative solutions to preserve the species while promoting responsible economic growth and safeguarding our environment for generations to come.

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

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, again, this move by Fish and Wildlife is actually going to hurt the population of the lesser prairie-chicken because it is going to disincentivize private investment that is shown to work.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. JACKSON).

Mr. JACKSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I strongly support S.J. Res. 9, which disapproves of the disastrous rule submitted by the Biden administration to re-list the lesser prairie-chicken under the Endangered Species Act.

This is another example of the Biden administration's blatant disregard for rural America in order to push Green New Deal initiatives and appease the radical environmentalists.

For nearly a decade, the lesser prairie-chicken population has been on the rebound due to voluntary conservation efforts of farmers and ranchers in the Texas panhandle. This new rule disregards these efforts and empowers bureaucrats, who have no local knowledge of farming or ranching, to micro-manage the grazing plans of responsible landowners in my district.

This listing is a shortsighted effort that will have little benefit in increasing the lesser prairie-chicken population but will have a devastating effect on my district, our Nation's energy production, and the agricultural industry as a whole.

Make no mistake, this effort by the Biden administration is about destroying the agriculture industry and the livelihoods of those who depend on it.

It is time we stopped this destructive overreach by the Federal Government and protect our farmers and ranchers.

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

Mr. Speaker, during the markup of this particular bill, the chair of the Natural Resources Committee agreed with the Democrats that these CRA resolutions are extreme. He said:

The CRA process is an extreme process because it does take that ability away from a Federal agency, and if we enact this resolution, the agency can't take those steps again.

That was repeated right now by my colleague who spoke.

I ask my colleagues on the other side of the aisle who are taking this extreme step what their plan is. When the lesser prairie-chicken or the northern long-eared bat slips closer to extinction, what is the backup?

There is no backup. The CRA is permanent, and extinction then becomes the only avenue and the only probability.

Mr. Speaker, I suggest that 99 percent of the species that have been listed on the Endangered Species Act continue to exist. That is the track record that should be highlighted, and that is the track record, on this 50-year anniversary of the Endangered Species Act, that we should all be proud of.

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

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, when an administration takes bad actions, then Congress has to take extreme measures to pull back the power that has been granted to the administration.

I gladly stand behind the statement that it is time for Congress to reel back that power that the administration is abusing.

It is not just me saying that. It is also a Democrat-controlled Senate that sent this bill to the House with Democratic votes in the Senate.

We need to put it on President Biden's desk and let him answer to the American people on what he is going to do about truly protecting endangered species and what he is going to do about energy production in America.

Speaking of energy production in America and agriculture in America, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. LUCAS), who knows a lot about both.

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this resolution. I thank my fellow chairman and my fellow Member from the adjoining State of Arkansas for yielding time to me to speak on this important piece of legislation.

Oklahomans and those who call the West home are proud conservationists and great stewards of our land. Sustainable, healthy land is the lifeblood of our rural communities, and no one understands that better than the farm-

ers, ranchers, and landowners themselves.

When we work with and not against producers, we have seen the impossible accomplished. For years, landowners have partnered with local and State government and industry to increase the production of energy and agricultural goods. They were able to do this all while improving soil health and wildlife habitats, creating an environment and an economy that is beneficial to both wildlife and the residents of rural America.

My father used to say there is a fine line between doing something for people and doing something to people. Let me be clear: Listing the lesser prairie-chicken under the Endangered Species Act is government doing something to people, not for them.

This listing creates unnecessary and burdensome restrictions on Oklahoma's agriculture and oil and gas industries and limits our ability as a country to provide for ourselves and the world. That is why I support this resolution before us today.

This resolution ensures that U.S. Fish and Wildlife regulations do not infringe on the property owners who live and work their land every day.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

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

Mr. Speaker, oil and gas companies raked in record profits last year, but it appears that House Republicans aren't done trying to give them handout after handout.

This week, they are trying to give them a free pass to avoid conserving the lesser prairie-chicken and the Endangered Species Act in and of itself.

H.R. 1, their top priority, the polluters over people act, lays out a blueprint on exactly how to reward the industry, how to make those handouts permanent, how to undermine and dismantle protections and laws that have been put in place for 50-plus years in reaction to the need to conserve species and, more importantly, to protect the American people and their health.

Going forward, we have to understand that while these two resolutions we are dealing with today are part of it, there is a bigger agenda, a bigger blueprint, that talks about turning over the public policy and legislative arm of Congress to the oil and gas companies, to the big corporate interests that are raking in profits, ensuring that we continue to be dependent on their source of energy and not develop the renewable and clean energy the American people need and want and that is cheaper and will create jobs. That is what is on the agenda, as well.

As we debate these two particular resolutions, let's not forget or ignore the underlying reality of what we are talking about in terms of energy policy, period, in this country.

Let's not forget that, during the hostage taking on the debt ceiling, the principal point and the principal at-

tack was against those fundamental environmental laws, again moving us in a direction that increases dependence on polluting industries and lessens our ability to respond to what the American people need, and that is a safe, secure environment for themselves and their families.

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

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MANN).

Mr. MANN. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend, the chairman from Arkansas, for his leadership on this effort and for the time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss the importance of this resolution, which pushes back on unnecessary and burdensome regulation that threatens the livelihoods of people throughout rural America. I introduced the House version earlier this year, and I am proud to see the Senate version passed the Senate earlier, and we are finally now coming to the House today.

The designation of the lesser prairie-chicken as "threatened" in places like Kansas is unacceptable, and this rule should have no force or effect until Congress is consulted.

Farmers, ranchers, and agriculture producers are American heroes. They are the backbone of America, and they are working tirelessly every day to keep us all fed while dealing with the burdens of inflation, drought, and market fluctuations. The last thing they need is the Federal Government handcuffing them with senseless red tape.

One southwest Kansas rancher recently told me that he spotted a lesser prairie-chicken on one of his pastures where his cattle were grazing. He did the right thing and reported that, and then he had to move all the cattle from not only that pasture but the adjoining pastures adjacent to it, just because U.S. Fish and Wildlife recorded that bird.

The truth is, Kansas producers have voluntarily conserved more than 40,000 acres of habitat for the lesser prairie-chicken through both private investment and conservation programs at the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The population of the lesser prairie-chicken rises and falls with rainfall, not the normal activity of farmers and ranchers.

Last year, we were in a historic drought throughout the Great Plains. It is obviously affecting the lesser prairie-chicken population and also the wheat harvest, which was devastatingly small this year.

Big Government doesn't need to step in and force farmers and ranchers to upend their operations for the sake of this bird, whose population is predicted to bounce back on its own with rainfall as it did in 2016 after another devastating drought in 2013.

Make no mistake, the lesser prairie-chicken is being used as a proxy in the administration's war on fossil fuel and production agriculture.

With this vote today, we can either stand for Big Government overregulation that puts producers out of business, or we can stand with producers' rights to private property and self-determination.

Mr. Speaker, I know where I stand, and I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Speaker, 1 million species globally are at risk of extinction, and one of the main drivers is climate change. Let's stop picking on these species and instead start addressing the real issue of climate change.

E.O. Wilson, the father of modern biodiversity, estimated the world is losing three species per hour. We have a biodiversity crisis on our hands, and we have a climate crisis on our hands, but House Republicans decided this week is a good time to legislate the extinction of a couple of species.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BEYER), my good friend.

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Speaker, I stand in steadfast opposition to both S.J. Res. 9 and S.J. Res. 24. These resolutions represent a deeply concerning, misguided attempt to undermine the Endangered Species Act. These partisan resolutions are also out of step with what Americans care about.

Our constituents are looking for us to lead, to take action to restore a healthy, biodiverse, and climate-stable planet. We took important actions in the last Congress, and we are seeing the results now—funding for cities like Alexandria to transition to electric schoolbuses that are healthier for kids, creating jobs for climate-ready coasts so these communities are resilient to extreme weather, new clean energy manufacturing so that people have jobs and healthier workspaces for a healthier planet for us all.

These resolutions are part of an agenda that puts polluters over people. Americans don't want to see politicians interfering to reverse science-based endangered species protections, cementing a species' path to extinction, just like they don't want to see us cementing the country on a path of more fossil fuel pollution, causing extreme weather and the overheating that is destroying the country right now.

My colleagues on the other side of the aisle spent 2 years shouting about things like inflation and public safety, but now, in power, they are heading into a 6-week recess focused on stripping protections from bats and lesser prairie-chickens.

How does this help inflation? How does it help make people safer? It doesn't.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to see that these resolutions are misguided, even silly, and vote "no."

□ 1245

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

Mr. Speaker, let's talk about inflation a little bit. My colleagues across the aisle want to talk about inflation. They know a lot about it because they passed laws that put inflation on a steady increase here in our country.

This so-called Inflation Reduction Act, which around D.C. is called the Green New Deal, put money into the economy to push their agenda that has caused prices to increase across the country. Now the administration is doing things like listing species that shouldn't be listed so they can attack American energy even more and drive up inflation even more.

America needs energy. The world needs energy. Attacking domestic energy doesn't mean that the demand for energy is going away. It just means somebody else in the world is going to produce it.

Through their great idea of the Inflation Reduction Act to build a lot of windmills and solar farms, they are now taking American wealth and exporting it to China so we can buy those solar panels and windmills and the components.

China has hoarded the world's resources on minerals and rare earth elements which go into all of this technology. We have that here in America, but it is a not-in-my-backyard policy that my friends across the aisle want to implement. They turn a blind eye to what goes on in the rest of the world that affects the climate and want to put all of the burden on America and on American taxpayers when America is leading the world in reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARRINGTON), who knows just how devastating rules like this can be to the fine people that he represents in west Texas.

Mr. ARRINGTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the Biden administration's listing of the lesser prairie-chicken, and I rise in support of the prairie people in rural America who provide the food, fuel, and fiber for this great Nation.

Mr. Speaker, we wouldn't have the luxury of energy independence or food security if it wasn't for the hardworking, God-fearing, freedom-loving people in rural America. This CRA would put some common sense into this matter of conserving our natural resources.

By the way, no one conserves natural resources better than those who make a living off of the natural resources, so our ag and energy producers are our best stewards. As such, when they did their voluntary public-private partnership program of conservation for the lesser prairie-chicken, the lesser prairie-chicken increased 50 percent.

It is actually hard to even say this without laughing because we are talking about the lesser prairie-chicken, which has expanded under their voluntary efforts, and we are talking about a threat to American energy independence.

This isn't about the lesser prairie-chicken. This is about political chickens who pander to the left's extreme climate agenda. As a result, we are compromising not only our economic strength and our national security but America's leadership in the world. This is insane.

By the way, examples of this abound. It is not just the prairie-chicken. It is canceling pipelines, a moratorium on oil and gas leases on public lands, the signing of the Paris climate agreement, giving China and Russia a pass, delaying 4,800 drilling permits, depleting the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, and other more covert actions by the SEC and the ESG that run amok throughout every appendage of this Federal Government because it is a whole-of-government assault on the oil and gas industry, our fossil fuels, and our energy producers who have blessed this great Nation of ours.

My God, I cannot believe that we are having this debate, Mr. Speaker, but I appeal to the common sense of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to do what is best for our country and not put the lesser prairie-chicken over the prairie people who bless this great land.

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

Mr. Speaker, with regard to rural America and the important role that they play in this great Nation of ours, I am patiently waiting with, I hope, good expectations that if the agriculture appropriations bill ever gets done that it will reflect that commitment to rural America, that electric co-ops will continue to function, that nutrition will continue to be important in this America, that women and children will receive the nutrition that they need, and that the loan program for rural America's small farmers continues to be intact. Let's see. Sometimes pronouncements that are not followed with action are just that, political banter.

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

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. ESTES), who lives right in the heart of lesser prairie-chicken country.

Mr. ESTES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of Kansas farmers, ranchers, and energy producers who take it upon themselves to conserve the land and vulnerable species in rural Kansas each and every day.

In recent months, these Kansans have felt the Biden administration's massive overreach as D.C. bureaucrats use the Federal Government to overregulate hardworking Americans a thousand miles from the swamp.

In 2015, the Fish and Wildlife Service listed the lesser prairie-chicken as endangered, only to delist it a year later as their analysis was flawed. Despite losing a court case and seeing an actual increase in the lesser prairie-chicken population, they are now classified as threatened and endangered in

two distinct population segments in the United States.

Kansas farmers, ranchers, and energy producers, those closer to the lesser prairie-chicken habitat, are excellent stewards of natural resources. They have repeatedly demonstrated responsible actions as they tend the land that feeds and fuels the world. What they don't need is a heavy-handed government approach to land management, especially when those mandates are unfounded and not based on actual science.

Today, we can correct this mistaken classification with a Congressional Review Act. Even in a divided Senate, the CRA resolution passed with bipartisan support.

Successful, voluntary, public-private conservation practices have prompted the lesser prairie-chicken population to nearly double through 2021, with a statistically insignificant decrease between 2021 and 2022. Federal and State governments have spent millions of dollars to determine the population is stable, yet the Biden administration is engaging in insidious actions like creating the north and south regions to help prop up their narrative that the lesser prairie-chicken population was declining.

While it may seem extreme to squawk about a single species, it is representative of the tone of the Biden administration—force unworkable mandates on hardworking Kansans to appease bureaucrats and elitists who aren't impacted by their decisions. They have used this playbook before, and this encroachment on private property rights will be replicated in State after State across the country.

Today, as we vote on this Congressional Review Act, it is critical that we hold the line and prevent the Biden administration from pursuing this hostile land grab. Kansas agriculture and energy producers are doing their part, and millions of taxpayer dollars have confirmed that the current conservation plan is working.

Mr. Speaker, this humble bird has benefited through Kansans' voluntarily conserving its habitat, and today we have an opportunity to put an end to the Biden administration's attack on rural Americans through this common-sense CRA.

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

Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that this resolution and the other resolution to follow will be the last items, as was predicted, that this Congress does before it goes on recess for 6 weeks.

The agriculture appropriations legislation is not done yet, and so rural America can hold its breath until the Republican majority satisfies an extreme agenda on the part of their Members, and we all wait.

However, we are going to vote on these two resolutions, resolutions that are not necessary, minor, almost petty, while the American people wait for

some real solutions and some real actions on the part of the Republican majority.

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

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time and am prepared to close. I continue to reserve.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time to close. To be clear, I agree that the lesser prairie-chicken is important. All threatened and endangered species are important. We are in the midst of a biodiversity crisis, as we speak.

What I find patently unimportant is this resolution that doesn't respect the science, doesn't respect our imperative to protect biodiversity and slow down climate change, and certainly doesn't respect the important things that the American people have sent us here to do that are not being done.

This resolution is a polluter-requested, partisan attack that my Republican colleagues seem to be able to defend only with opinions, anecdotes, and industry talking points. I will remind us all; it will go nowhere. Good policy is not built solely on opinions. It is built on science, facts, and the needs of the American people.

The fact is that climate change, not the chicken, is killing Americans and costing us hundreds of billions of dollars each year. I urge my colleagues to oppose S.J. Res. 9.

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

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time. Republicans care about the environment. The word "conservation" is derived from the word "conservative," and a true conservative is one who is a good steward of the environment and takes care of what we have got so it will be better in the future.

This rule by the Fish and Wildlife Service listing the lesser prairie-chicken is not about conservation. It is about moving a political agenda.

I had the great opportunity to study forestry at—Yale School of the Environment, as it is now called—Yale Forest School. There was somebody who went through that program decades before I did. His name was Aldo Leopold. He is quoted probably as often as anybody in the world of conservation. One of my favorite quotes of his is: "There are two spiritual dangers in not owning a farm. One is the danger of supposing that breakfast comes from the grocery, and the other that heat comes from the furnace."

How applicable that is today in the world that we live in where you have got an urban America that doesn't realize what rural America provides for the rest of the country. They really think food comes from the grocery store and energy comes from the plug-in or heat comes from the furnace without giving any thought to where that comes from.

When you keep attacking the very people who are providing the food and

the energy for this country, some day you are going to go to the grocery store and there is not going to be food there. You are going to try to flip on the light switch, and the lights aren't going to come on. You are going to be in a cold winter, and there is not going to be heat. Ask people in Europe who got dependent on Russia for their energy about what it means to have energy shortages. This is serious business.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to think about the American farmer and rancher and the oil and gas worker who are living in this species' range. They are people who wake up before dawn and go to bed late at night, working to provide food and energy for the American people, who have likely made substantial investments to modify their operations to benefit the lesser prairie-chicken and has contributed to the successful recovery of the species; somebody who does the right thing—they do it day in and day out—yet the Federal Government comes in and says: That is not good enough.

To the extremist environmental community, it does not matter that the lesser prairie-chicken numbers are increasing and millions of acres and hard-earned dollars have been voluntarily contributed toward benefiting the species. They pay no mind to the conservation efforts of these hard-working men and women. Instead, they seek to wield the ESA as a hammer to separate the people from the land and their way of life.

The ESA hammer has come down, and flexibility is gone. That is both unfair and unjust, and at the end of the day, it is going to hurt the very people who are pushing these rules, who think, again, that breakfast comes from the grocery and heat comes from the furnace. They are putting so many burdens on the men and women of this country who provide those things. These are the men and women who didn't work from home during COVID. They went to their job every day so that the world could keep going around, yet they are highly unappreciated and are attacked every day in this country.

This bipartisan CRA, which again was passed by the Senate and sent here, will put an end to the Biden administration's unjust listing decision. I ask my colleagues to support this resolution and return sanity to the ESA decisionmaking process.

Let's make the ESA something that is really about restoring habitat and helping endangered species, not using animals as a tool to move political agendas.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage support of the CRA, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak in opposition to S.J. Res. 9, a resolution that provides for congressional disapproval to legislatively de-list the lesser prairie-chicken from protection under the Endangered Species Act.

Specifically, this bill calls on Congress to disapprove the rules submitted by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service relating to protections for endangered and threatened wildlife and plants.

The population and habitat of the lesser prairie-chicken, an endangered southwestern prairie grouse, is under growing threat.

Originally numbering in the millions, the population of this bird has decreased by as much as 97 percent and it now only inhabits 16 percent of its former habitat.

Aerial survey results from 2012 through 2022 estimate a five-year average lesser prairie-chicken population of 32,210 across the five-state region in Oklahoma, Kansas, Colorado, New Mexico, as well as my state of Texas.

The conversion of natural grasslands to agriculture, energy development, fire suppression, drought, and the use of herbicides to kill Shinnery Oak habitat are all ongoing challenges that cause habitat loss and fragmentation.

Additional harm is caused to these birds' habitats by fencing, power wires, and other tall structures that entice perching by predatory animals.

The lesser prairie-chicken is a sign of healthy prairies and grasslands because it requires huge, undamaged natural grassland parcels to support self-sustaining populations.

This makes them a crucial indicator of the general wellbeing of America's grasslands, a treasured and iconic terrain.

It is essential that we work together to uphold the Endangered Species Act (ESA), which is responsible for the recovery of iconic species like the Bald Eagle.

I urge my colleagues to support science-based decisions and join me in opposing this bill, S.J. Res. 9.

□ 1300

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KUSTOFF). All time for debate has expired.

Pursuant to the rule, the previous question is ordered on the joint resolution.

The question is on the third reading of the joint resolution.

The joint resolution was ordered to be read a third time, and was read the third time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on passage of the joint resolution.

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

Mr. GRIJALVA. 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.

## RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair

declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 1 o'clock and 1 minute p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1321

## AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. MILLER of Ohio) at 1 o'clock and 21 minutes p.m.

## ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on questions previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

The motion to recommit on H.R. 4366; Passage of H.R. 4366; and Passage of S.J. Res. 9.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, remaining electronic votes will be conducted as 5-minute votes.

## MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, VETERANS AFFAIRS, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2024

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the unfinished business is the vote on the motion to recommit on the bill (H.R. 4366) making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes, offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ), on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk will redesignate the motion.

The Clerk redesignated the motion.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to recommit.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 206, nays 219, not voting 9, as follows:

[Roll No. 379]

YEAS—206

Adams	Cárdenas	Craig
Aguilar	Carson	Crockett
Allred	Carter (LA)	Crow
Auchincloss	Cartwright	Cuellar
Balint	Casar	Davids (KS)
Barragán	Case	Davis (IL)
Beatty	Casten	Davis (NC)
Bera	Castor (FL)	Dean (PA)
Beyer	Castro (TX)	DeGette
Bishop (GA)	Cherfilus-	DeLauro
Blumenauer	McCormick	DeBene
Blunt Rochester	Chu	Deluzio
Bonamici	Clark (MA)	DeSaulnier
Bowman	Clarke (NY)	Dingell
Boyle (PA)	Cleaver	Escobar
Brown	Clyburn	Eshoo
Brownley	Cohen	Espallat
Budzinski	Connolly	Evans
Bush	Correa	Fletcher
Caraveo	Costa	Foster
Carbajal	Courtney	Foushee

Frankel, Lois	Manning	Sarbanes
Frost	Matsui	Scanlon
Garamendi	McBath	Schakowsky
Garcia (IL)	McClellan	Schiff
Garcia (TX)	McCollum	Schneider
Garcia, Robert	McGarvey	Scholten
Golden (ME)	McGovern	Schrier
Goldman (NY)	Meeks	Scott (VA)
Gomez	Menendez	Scott, David
Green, Al (TX)	Meng	Sewell
Grijalva	Mfume	Sherman
Harder (CA)	Moore (WI)	Sherrill
Hayes	Morelle	Slotkin
Higgins (NY)	Moskowitz	Smith (WA)
Himes	Moulton	Sorensen
Horsford	Mrvan	Soto
Houlahan	Mullin	Spanberger
Hoyer	Nadler	Stansbury
Hoyle (OR)	Napolitano	Stanton
Ivey	Neal	Stevens
Jackson (IL)	Neguse	Strickland
Jackson (NC)	Nickel	Swalwell
Jackson Lee	Norcross	Sykes
Jacobs	Ocasio-Cortez	Takano
Jayapal	Omar	Thamader
Jeffries	Pallone	Panetta
Johnson (GA)	Panetta	Pappas
Kamllager-Dove	Pappas	Pascrell
Kaptur	Pascrell	Payne
Keating	Payne	Pelosi
Kelly (IL)	Pelosi	Peltola
Khanna	Peltola	Perez
Kildee	Perez	Peters
Kilmer	Peters	Pettersen
Kim (NJ)	Pettersen	Phillips
Krishnamoorthi	Phillips	Pingree
Kuster	Pingree	Pocan
Landman	Pocan	Porter
Larsen (WA)	Porter	Pressley
Larson (CT)	Pressley	Quigley
Lee (CA)	Quigley	Ramirez
Lee (NV)	Ramirez	Raskin
Lee (PA)	Raskin	Ross
Leger Fernandez	Ross	Ruiz
Levin	Ruiz	Ruppersberger
Lieu	Ruppersberger	Ryan
Lofgren	Ryan	Salinas
Lynch	Salinas	Sánchez
Magaziner	Sánchez	

## NAYS—219

Aderholt	De La Cruz	Higgins (LA)
Alford	DesJarlais	Hill
Allen	Diaz-Balart	Hinson
Amodei	Donalds	Houchin
Armstrong	Duarte	Hudson
Arrington	Duncan	Huizenga
Babin	Dunn (FL)	Hunt
Bacon	Edwards	Issa
Baird	Ellzey	Jackson (TX)
Balderson	Emmer	James
Banks	Estes	Johnson (LA)
Barr	Ezell	Johnson (OH)
Bean (FL)	Fallon	Johnson (SD)
Bentz	Feenstra	Jordan
Bergman	Ferguson	Joyce (OH)
Bice	Finstad	Joyce (PA)
Biggs	Fischbach	Kean (NJ)
Bilirakis	Fitzgerald	Kelly (MS)
Bishop (NC)	Fitzpatrick	Kelly (PA)
Boebert	Fleischmann	Kiggans (VA)
Bost	Flood	Kiley
Brecheen	Fox	Kim (CA)
Buchanan	Franklin, C.	Kustoff
Buck	Scott	LaHood
Bucshon	Fry	LaLota
Burchett	Fulcher	LaMalfa
Burgess	Gaetz	Lamborn
Burlison	Gallagher	Langworthy
Calvert	Garbarino	Latta
Cammack	Garcia, Mike	LaTurner
Carey	Gimenez	Lawler
Carl	Gonzales, Tony	Lee (FL)
Carter (GA)	Good (VA)	Lesko
Carter (TX)	Gooden (TX)	Letlow
Chavez-DeRemer	Gosar	Loudermilk
Ciscomani	Granger	Lucas
Cline	Graves (LA)	Luetkemeyer
Cloud	Graves (MO)	Luna
Clyde	Green (TN)	Luttrell
Cole	Greene (GA)	Mace
Collins	Griffith	Malliotakis
Comer	Grothman	Mann
Crane	Guest	Massie
Crawford	Guthrie	Mast
Crenshaw	Hageman	McCarthy
Curtis	Harris	McCaul
D'Esposito	Harshbarger	McClain
Davidson	Hern	McClintock