

CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT TO SPECIFIED HARMFUL FOREIGN ACTIVITIES OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 118-130)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency with respect to specified harmful foreign activities of the Government of the Russian Federation declared in Executive Order 14024 of April 15, 2021, which was expanded in scope in Executive Order 14066 of March 8, 2022, and with respect to which additional steps were taken in Executive Order 14039 of August 20, 2021, Executive Order 14068 of March 11, 2022, Executive Order 14071 of April 6, 2022, and Executive Order 14114 of December 22, 2023, is to continue in effect beyond April 15, 2024.

Specified harmful foreign activities of the Government of the Russian Federation—in particular, efforts to undermine the conduct of free and fair democratic elections and democratic institutions in the United States and its allies and partners; to engage in and facilitate malicious cyber-enabled activities against the United States and its allies and partners; to foster and use transnational corruption to influence foreign governments; to pursue extraterritorial activities targeting dissidents or journalists; to undermine security in countries and regions important to United States national security; and to violate well-established principles of international law, including respect for the territorial integrity of states—continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States. Therefore, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared in Executive Order 14024 with respect to specified harmful foreign activities of the Government of the Russian Federation.

JOSEPH R. BIDEN, Jr.,
THE WHITE HOUSE, April 9, 2024.

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 2 o'clock and 11 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1503

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. SALAZAR) at 3 o'clock and 3 minutes p.m.

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 a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or votes objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

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

RIGHT-OF-WAY APPLICATION TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

Ms. HAGEMAN. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 6011) to direct the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture to notify applicants of the completion status of right-of-way applications under section 501 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 and section 28 of the Mineral Leasing Act, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 6011

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 "Right-Of-Way Application Transparency and Accountability Act" or the "ROWATA Act".

SEC. 2. DETERMINATION REGARDING RIGHTS-OF-WAY.

(a) NOTICE.—Not later than 90 days after the Secretary concerned receives an application to grant a right-of-way, the Secretary concerned shall—

(1) notify the applicant as to whether the application is complete; or

(2) notify the applicant that information is missing and specify any information that is required to be submitted for the application to be complete.

(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this Act:

(1) RIGHT-OF-WAY.—The term "right-of-way" means—

(A) a right-of-way issued, granted, or renewed under section 501 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1761); or

(B) a right-of-way granted under section 28 of the Mineral Leasing Act (30 U.S.C. 185).

(2) SECRETARY CONCERNED.—The term "Secretary concerned" means—

(A) with respect to public lands, the Secretary of the Interior; and

(B) with respect to National Forest System lands, the Secretary of Agriculture.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Wyoming (Ms. HAGEMAN) and the gentlewoman from New Mexico (Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Wyoming.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. HAGEMAN. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 6011, as amended, the bill now under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Wyoming?

There was no objection.

Ms. HAGEMAN. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 6011, the Right-of-Way Application Transparency and Accountability Act.

H.R. 6011, introduced by Congressman VALADAO, would expedite right-of-way applications on Federal lands for energy projects by requiring agencies to notify applicants within 90 days if the right-of-way application is complete or deficient.

The Department of the Interior and the U.S. Forest Service would both be required to meet this deadline and specify the information needed for applicants that are deemed deficient.

The Federal Land Policy Management Act, or FLPMA, authorizes the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture to grant rights-of-way on Federal lands for several activities that cause land disturbance. The Mineral Leasing Act of 1920 allows the respective Secretaries to issue rights-of-way for oil, natural gas, and refined product pipelines over Federal lands.

While both statutes include application requirements, neither includes timelines for the agencies to respond to applicants to tell them whether their applications are complete or deficient.

The lack of a timeline has created a bottleneck in the permitting process for energy projects that need a right-of-way to proceed, which is why this bill is needed.

During the Committee on Natural Resources' hearing on this bill, the American Clean Power Association testified in support of it and pointed out that the permitting system on Federal lands is overly burdensome and actively curtails investment.

Specifically, their testimony stated that "delays are largely due to procedural inefficiencies in processing permits and have ripple effects throughout the economy, throwing off project timelines, domestic supply chains, and the indirect jobs and economic activity that would otherwise occur. Without further permitting reform, the United States may not be able to meet our growing energy demand."

They also noted that the current average timeline for a project to obtain a right-of-way is often over 5 years, mainly due to the delays between filing an application and beginning the environmental review process.

That lag time, an unnecessary delay, is exactly what H.R. 6011 addresses.

This bill will also help expedite the process for rights-of-way for oil and gas gathering lines on Federal lands, which would help increase production while reducing emissions.

While this commonsense legislation is not a panacea for permitting on Federal lands, it does provide a meaningful step forward by allowing complete applications for energy projects to move forward and provide certainty to those with incomplete applications so that they can fix and resubmit those applications.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in support of H.R. 6011, and I reserve the balance of my time.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE,
Washington, DC, March 7, 2024.

Hon. BRUCE WESTERMAN,
Chairman, Committee on Natural Resources,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: This letter confirms our mutual understanding regarding H.R. 6011, the "Right-Of-Way Application Transparency and Accountability Act". Thank you for collaborating with the Committee on Agriculture on the matters within our jurisdiction.

The Committee on Agriculture will forego any further consideration of this bill. However, by foregoing consideration at this time, we do not waive any jurisdiction over any subject matter contained in this or similar legislation. The Committee on Agriculture also reserves the right to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees should it become necessary and ask that you support such a request.

We would appreciate a response to this letter confirming this understanding with respect to H.R. 6011 and request a copy of our letters on this matter be published in the Congressional Record during Floor consideration.

Sincerely,
GLENN "GT" THOMPSON,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES,
Washington, DC, March 7, 2024.

Hon. GLENN "GT" THOMPSON,
Chairman, Committee on Agriculture,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: I write regarding H.R. 6011, the "Right-Of-Way Application Transparency and Accountability Act," which was ordered reported by the Committee on Natural Resources on December 6, 2023.

I recognize that the bill contains provisions that fall within the jurisdiction of the Committee on Agriculture and appreciate your willingness to forgo any further consideration of this bill. I acknowledge that the Committee on Agriculture will not formally consider H.R. 6011 and agree that the inaction of your Committee with respect to the bill does not waive any jurisdiction over the subject matter contained therein.

I am pleased to support your request to name members of the Committee on Agriculture to any conference committee to consider such provisions. I will ensure that our

exchange of letters is included in the Congressional Record during floor consideration of the bill. I appreciate your cooperation regarding this legislation.

Sincerely,
BRUCE WESTERMAN,
Chairman,
Committee on Natural Resources.

Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 6011, the Right-of-Way Application Transparency and Accountability Act.

There is a rapidly growing demand for renewable energy across the country, and our Federal public lands have significant potential to support that growth. In fact, we are well on our way to developing 25 gigawatts of clean energy on public lands by 2025, the goal set in the Energy Act of 2020.

Right now, the Bureau of Land Management is processing 74 utility-scale onshore clean energy projects, including solar, wind, geothermal, and transmission lines, all of which are vital to the clean energy transition.

In order for solar, wind, and transmission to use our public lands, however, these renewable projects are required to secure a right-of-way any time a project will use or disturb public lands.

Also, the bipartisan infrastructure law and the Inflation Reduction Act have tremendous amount of potential on our public lands, as well as on Tribal lands. However, for example, when a Tribe, such as the Navajo Nation in my district, needs to repair a bridge, they must also secure a right-of-way. This can be an incredibly cumbersome process, especially when dealing with the checkerboard pattern of many Tribal areas that intersect with BLM land, Forest Service land, private land, allottee land, and land held in trust.

This legislation would, however, require that the Secretary of the Interior, with regard to Bureau lands, and the Secretary of Agriculture, with regard to National Forest System lands, to notify a right-of-way applicant within 90 days of applying as to whether the application is complete, or if it is not, to specify what information is missing.

I am grateful to my colleagues on the other side of the aisle for working with committee Democrats on compromise language to create these timelines while ensuring that they are workable for applicants and for our Federal agencies.

These clear requirements set out in this legislation will support the efficient and responsible deployment of clean energy on public lands. They will allow us to build those bridges, highways, and so much more that we authorized in the bipartisan infrastructure law.

I look forward to continuing to work with my colleagues on commonsense reforms to enhance clean energy deployment on public lands.

Madam Speaker, I urge support for this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. HAGEMAN. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. VALADAO).

Mr. VALADAO. Madam Speaker, I rise today to urge my colleagues to support my bill, the Right-of-Way Application and Transparency Accountability Act.

The bill makes a commonsense reform to our broken Federal permitting process. Right now, there is no required timeline for Federal agencies to respond to right-of-way applications of projects on Federal lands. That means hundreds of these applications are just stuck in permitting purgatory instead of moving forward.

The time spent waiting for answers on these applications is a significant and preventable bottleneck. This wasted time is hindering domestic energy production, rural development, new roads, and so much more.

My bill would fix this by requiring Federal agencies to notify right-of-way applicants if their application is complete within 90 days of receiving it.

Notifying applicants about their status of their right-of-way application in a timely manner is a very basic step that will make the permitting process more efficient and transparent.

We cannot continue to let permitting red tape kill these infrastructure projects. We must reform the Federal permitting process so we can better utilize our domestic energy resources, expand rural broadband, build roads, and ultimately create more jobs here at home.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this commonsense bill, and I thank the chairwomen for their support.

Ms. HAGEMAN. Madam Speaker, I have no further requests for time. I am prepared to close, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ. Madam Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time to close.

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of this bill. I do recognize the important work that Representative VALADAO has done working on this bill, and I appreciate the fact that he pointed out this bill would help with job creation.

As I noted earlier, the bipartisan infrastructure bill and the Inflation Reduction Act, these bills that we passed in the 117th Congress, brought resources into our communities to build what we need for America's future.

Repairing those roads that cross our rural areas are so essential for districts and States like Montana and New Mexico and across the West. I am very appreciative of this bill, and I urge support of this legislation.

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

Ms. HAGEMAN. Madam Speaker, I commend my colleague from California, Mr. VALADAO, for working across the aisle on this bipartisan, all-of-the-above energy bill.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 6011, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Wyoming (Ms. HAGEMAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 6011, 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.

Ms. HAGEMAN. Madam Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

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

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

□ 1515

MIGRATORY BIRDS OF THE AMERICAS CONSERVATION ENHANCEMENTS ACT OF 2023

Ms. HAGEMAN. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4389) to amend the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act to make improvements to that 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. 4389

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 “Migratory Birds of the Americas Conservation Enhancements Act of 2023”.

SEC. 2. NEOTROPICAL MIGRATORY BIRD CONSERVATION ACT AMENDMENTS.

(a) **FEDERAL SHARE.**—Section 5(e)(1) of the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act (16 U.S.C. 6104(e)(1)) is amended by striking “25 percent” and inserting “33.3 percent”.

(b) **COOPERATION.**—Section 7 of the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act (16 U.S.C. 6106) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(c) **REPORT TO CONGRESS.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of the Migratory Birds of the Americas Conservation Enhancements Act of 2023, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Environment and Public Works of the Senate and the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives a report describing the implementation of subsection (b) by the Secretary, which shall include, if applicable, a description of the composition of the advisory group convened under paragraph (1) of that subsection.”.

(c) **AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**—Section 10(a) of the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act (16 U.S.C. 6109(a)) is amended by striking “2023” and inserting “2028”.

(d) **TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS.**—

(1) **DEFINITIONS.**—Section 4 of the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act (16 U.S.C. 6103) is amended—

(A) by striking paragraph (1); and

(B) by redesignating paragraphs (2) through (5) as paragraphs (1) through (4), respectively.

(2) **COOPERATION.**—Section 7(b)(1) of the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act (16 U.S.C. 6106(b)(1)) is amended in the second sentence by adding a period at the end.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Wyoming (Ms. HAGEMAN) and the gentlewoman from New Mexico (Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Wyoming.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. HAGEMAN. 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 H.R. 4389, as amended, the bill now under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. VALADAO). Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Wyoming?

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4389, sponsored by Congresswoman SALAZAR from Florida. This legislation reauthorizes the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act, which includes a grant program and research efforts designed to help conserve nearly 400 different species of birds that migrate between North America in the summer months and Latin America and the Caribbean in the winter months.

Protecting the habitat of these species is not only a good conservation policy but also good for economic activity. A U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service study found that roughly 96 million people participated in bird-watching activities, including maintaining habitat to benefit bird species. This includes individuals who participate in these activities in their local communities and those who travel to do so.

Encouraging habitat conservation efforts, such as those reauthorized by this bill, is a win for the environment, recreational activity, and local economies.

I thank the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. SALAZAR) for her leadership on this important issue. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today also in support of H.R. 4389, the Migratory Birds of the Americas Conservation Enhancements Act, which would help ensure the long-term protection of neotropical migratory birds.

More than half of our Nation's birds travel thousands of miles to spend winters south of the tropics, but habitat destruction has led to the loss of more than one in four of these birds since 1970. Imagine, a quarter of these birds have been lost.

This bipartisan bill will protect habitats along these migratory routes by reauthorizing the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation program.

This program has already benefited 5 million acres of migratory bird habitat in over 40 countries, and this bill will

provide additional Federal support for these efforts.

This funding will facilitate multinational partnerships, conservation projects in habitat conservation, research, monitoring, and community outreach and education.

The bill will also address stakeholders' concerns and program inequities by easing matching requirements and enabling more high-quality projects to compete for grants.

These efforts will provide long-term protection for our beloved bird species and the habitats they rely on.

Our world is facing a biodiversity crisis with impacts that we are only just beginning to understand. I am pleased that we are working together across the aisle in a bipartisan manner today to address at least a part, but a very important part, of that serious challenge.

We all want to be able to continue to listen to the birdsong, to look up and marvel at the fact that these birds have traveled so far and are so essential to our entire habitat. I am very grateful for this bill.

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

Ms. HAGEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. SALAZAR).

Ms. SALAZAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge passage of H.R. 4389, the Migratory Birds of the Americas Conservation Enhancements Act of 2023.

Bird populations have declined by over 3 million since 1970, and the iconic birds that we know and love must be actively protected.

Birds like the Baltimore oriole, wood stork, great blue heron, and snowy egret are not just beautiful to look at, they are vital to our environment and our economy.

Many of the migratory birds we see at home spend their winter months in Latin America and the Caribbean, but they are threatened by habitat loss along their journey back and forth. Federal efforts like H.R. 4389 are key to conserving these species.

My bill reauthorizes and improves the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Grant program. These government programs provide competitive grants for them to find refuge along the way, and, thankfully, they are matched 2 to 1 by private-sector investments who also care about the environment. The good news is that they pay major dividends.

Over the last two decades, almost \$90 million invested by the United States in bird conservation produced almost \$350 million from other countries who were partners in the Western Hemisphere.

Since 2002, these programs have supported 700 projects across dozens of Latin American countries, benefiting more than 5 million acres of habitat.

Protecting these beautiful birds is also highly important for my constituents in the city of Miami. The Florida