

Now, I think that would be a worthwhile investment for wildfire risk reduction. These days the Freedom Caucus tends to call the shots on these matters, and they don't allow us to consider bills that authorize that kind of money without spending reductions elsewhere.

So what we have before us is a revised version of the bill, a workaround, that doesn't even authorize the reporting activities that it describes. It is right there on the last page of the bill in all caps: No additional funds authorized.

Madam Speaker, you will notice that the CBO score on this bill is now zero. That is because the revised bill doesn't actually do anything.

We need to do better than this. We have a serious, real fire crisis in front of us. We can't fight climate change with window dressing or thoughts and prayers. I am going to support this bill because it doesn't do any harm and it does bring attention to a good idea, but this is nowhere near enough.

I will point out that the Biden-Harris administration achieved record acres of annual forest treatments thanks to the investments secured by House Democrats in both the IIJA and the IRA. This includes vegetation management to reduce hazardous fuels and prescribed burns.

That is important work worth doing, and I look forward to continuing to work with the majority and the new administration if they are willing to make those investments. We have to ensure that agencies have resources so they can continue reporting back with record-breaking numbers that we achieved under the last administration.

Unfortunately, this bill and the so-called Fix Our Forests Act that we will be considering later this week simply fail to provide any resources. Team extreme might be unhappy with a bill that includes a price tag, but I guarantee that it would be far less than the cost of the mass destruction from fires that we are seeing in places like L.A., and it is certainly worth the lives that would be saved.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Madam Speaker, I thank my friends across the aisle, Mr. HUFFMAN and the minority, for supporting forestry bills both small and large. This is, I think, a small step in the right direction, and it shouldn't cost any more to report accurate data than to report inaccurate data.

I look forward to passing this bill as well as some larger bills like the Fix Our Forests Act that we hope to have before the body this week.

Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. TIFFANY), who is the lead sponsor of the bill.

Mr. TIFFANY. Madam Speaker, in spite of what was just said on the other side of the aisle, I want to invite the gentleman from California to Wisconsin. He can get some good fishing in

in northern Minnesota, good musky fishing, but if the gentleman wants the best, then come to northern Wisconsin. I have an invitation for my friend.

This bill will bring transparency, Mr. Speaker, to the misleading and inaccurate way hazardous fuels treatments are reported.

Decades of mismanagement of our Federal lands have left our forests overstocked with trees and created tinderbox conditions, and we have long known the reported pace and scale of forest management has been insufficient to truly address our catastrophic forest health crisis.

There is a better way to actively manage our public lands, and that starts with holding our Federal land management agencies accountable by requiring accurate reporting on the effectiveness of their work in fuel reduction.

According to troubling reports, the situation is even worse than we have been led to believe, as agencies have been overstating their treatments by over 20 percent. Accurate reporting is necessary to broadly track the progress made on our larger wildfire mitigation targets as well as individual projects.

The ACRES Act is a simple solution to hold our Federal agencies accountable to see the actual work they are doing to reduce the enormous risks of wildfire. American taxpayers deserve to know they are getting what they paid for. This bill will help ensure that happens.

Mr. Speaker, this is a small step in what needs to be a number of steps to get back to active forest management to protect the life and health of our forests and the people who live around them in the United States of America. I hope this incoming administration and this Congress are active in getting us back to active forest management here in America.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote "yes."

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Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I look forward to working with our friends across the aisle on the accounting issue that has been discussed here today. Obviously, we want to make sure that the Forest Service is not taking advance credit for phases of projects that haven't happened yet.

I think that is for the most part what has happened that the gentleman from Arkansas identified. I don't believe there has been any actual double or triple counting, but either way, we want it to be accurate. We all need good, accurate data on that reporting.

We will work together on that. In the meantime, I urge my colleagues to support this bill. I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, as we continue to pray for communities

across the Nation that have been impacted by wildfire, we do need to put feet to our prayers to ensure that our forests are being properly managed.

The ACRES Act is a step in the right direction and a commonsense solution to a problem that really shouldn't even exist in the first place.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BOST). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 204.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

WOUNDED KNEE MASSACRE MEMORIAL AND SACRED SITE ACT

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 165) to direct the Secretary of the Interior to complete all actions necessary for certain land to be held in restricted fee status by the Oglala Sioux Tribe and Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 165

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 "Wounded Knee Massacre Memorial and Sacred Site Act".

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) RESTRICTED FEE STATUS.—The term "restricted fee status" means a status in which the Tribal land—

(A) shall continue to be owned by the Tribes;

(B) shall be part of the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation and expressly made subject to the civil and criminal jurisdiction of the Oglala Sioux Tribe;

(C) shall not be transferred without the consent of Congress and the Tribes;

(D) shall not be subject to taxation by a State or local government; and

(E) shall not be subject to any provision of law providing for the review or approval by the Secretary of the Interior before the Tribes may use the land for any purpose as allowed by the document titled "Covenant Between the Oglala Sioux Tribe and the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe" and dated October 21, 2022, directly, or through agreement with another party.

(2) SECRETARY.—The term "Secretary" means the Secretary of the Interior.

(3) TRIBAL LAND.—The term "Tribal land" means the approximately 40 acres (including the surface and subsurface estate, and mineral estate, and any and all improvements, structures, and personal property on those acres) on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in Oglala Lakota County, at Rural County Road 4, Wounded Knee, South Dakota, and generally depicted as "Area of Interest" on the map entitled "Wounded Knee Sacred Site and Memorial Land" and dated October 26,

2022, which is a segment of the December 29, 1890, Wounded Knee Massacre site.

(4) **TRIBES.**—The term “Tribes” means the Oglala Sioux Tribe and Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe of the Cheyenne River Reservation, both tribes being among the constituent tribes of the Great Sioux Nation and signatories to the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1868 between the United States of America and the Great Sioux Nation, 15 Stat. 635.

SEC. 3. LAND HELD IN RESTRICTED FEE STATUS BY THE TRIBES.

(a) **ACTION BY SECRETARY.**—Not later than 365 days after enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall—

(1) complete all actions, including documentation and minor corrections to the survey and legal description of Tribal land, necessary for the Tribal land to be held by the Tribes in restricted fee status; and

(2) appropriately assign each applicable private and municipal utility and service right or agreement with regard to the Tribal land.

(b) **CONDITIONS.**—

(1) **FEDERAL LAWS RELATING TO INDIAN LAND.**—Except as otherwise provided in this Act, the Tribal land shall be subject to Federal laws relating to Indian country, as defined by section 1151 of title 18, United States Code and protected by the restriction against alienation in section 177 of title 25, United States Code.

(2) **USE OF LAND.**—The Tribal land shall be used for the purposes allowed by the document titled “Covenant Between the Oglala Sioux Tribe and the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe” and dated October 21, 2022.

(3) **ENCUMBRANCES AND AGREEMENTS.**—The Tribal land shall remain subject to any private or municipal encumbrance, right-of-way, restriction, easement of record, or utility service agreement in effect on the date of the enactment of this Act.

(4) **GAMING.**—Pursuant to the document titled “Covenant Between the Oglala Sioux Tribe and the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe” and dated October 21, 2022, the Tribal land shall not be used for gaming activity under the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (25 U.S.C. 2701 et seq.).

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arkansas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members are given 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 165, the bill now under consideration.

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.

H.R. 165, the Wounded Knee Massacre Memorial and Sacred Site Act, introduced by Congressman JOHNSON from South Dakota, would place approximately 40 acres of fee land within the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation into restricted fee status for the Oglala Sioux Tribe and Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe.

The land would be held as a memorial and as a sacred site in remembrance of the Indian people killed in the Wounded Knee Massacre in 1890.

During the mid and late 1800s, several armed conflicts occurred between Tribes, settlers, and U.S. military on the Great Plains in the Western United States.

This contributed to distrust, fear, and misconceptions between groups, and the Wounded Knee Massacre was a result of that atmosphere.

On December 29, 1890, a group of Lakota Indians led by Chief Spotted Elk made camp near Wounded Knee Creek on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota. The U.S. Army’s 7th Cavalry were sent to disarm the Lakota.

A struggle occurred between the U.S. Army and some of Chief Spotted Elk’s Band, a majority of which consisted of women and children.

A shot rang out, and the U.S. Army opened fire on the largely unarmed group. At the time, it was estimated that approximately 300 Indian people were killed.

In September 2022, the Oglala Sioux Tribe and Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe jointly purchased 40 acres of land where an old trading post was located. The piece of land also contains a portion of the area where the Wounded Knee Massacre took place.

On October 21, 2022, both Tribes signed a covenant stating that this property shall be held and maintained as a memorial and sacred site without any economic development and prohibited any gaming on the land.

I applaud the gentleman from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON) for working collaboratively with both Tribes to develop H.R. 165, which would place the 40 acres into restricted fee status held jointly by both Tribes and memorialize their covenant.

Restricted fee land contains the same restrictions against alienation and taxation as land held in trust, but the Federal Government does not hold title. Instead, it will be held by the Oglala Sioux and Cheyenne River Sioux Tribes.

This legislation and the land it sets aside will memorialize and honor the Indian men, women, and children who were killed in 1890.

I again thank the gentleman from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON) and the Oglala Sioux and Cheyenne River Sioux Tribes for their work on this important legislation.

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

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

I rise in support of H.R. 165, the Wounded Knee Massacre Memorial and Sacred Site Act.

This is an important step to honor the Lakota lives lost at Wounded Knee and the Lakota people for generations to come.

The bill would place approximately 40 acres of land located within the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation into restricted fee status for the Oglala Sioux Tribe and Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe.

This is land believed to be the site of the 1890 Wounded Knee Massacre.

In the late 1800s, Tribes began holding Ghost Dances for the renewal of stolen land and in protest of the U.S. Government, which had prohibited American Indians from practicing their religious freedom.

In December of 1890, the government, our government, sent the Army’s 7th Cavalry to disarm the Lakota near Wounded Knee Creek, and what resulted was a brutal massacre. Troops murdered over 350 American Indian women, men, and children. Mr. Speaker, 25 U.S. soldiers were lost in that massacre, as well.

The Wounded Knee Massacre was one of the most atrocious moments in our Nation’s history, the dark side of that manifest destiny that was romanticized in the President’s speech yesterday.

In 2022, the Oglala Sioux Tribe and the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe purchased this land and signed a covenant to hold and maintain the land as a memorial and sacred site.

This bill would reaffirm that covenant and would allow the Tribes to hold, maintain, and protect the land from any development.

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

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON), the lead sponsor of the bill.

Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chair and the body for bringing up my bill, the Wounded Knee Massacre Memorial and Sacred Site Act, this afternoon.

This is the greatest country in the history of the world, and when you are a country that is that great, it is important that you acknowledge your failures and that you try to do better in the future.

As has been said, in December 1890, Chief Spotted Elk and his band of Lakota, which largely consisted of women and children, were headed from the Cheyenne River Indian Reservation to the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. While they were en route, they were stopped by the Army’s 7th Cavalry, and they were forced to make camp at Wounded Knee Creek.

It was the next morning, December 29, 1890, that the 7th Cavalry began to disarm the Lakota. There was a struggle, a shot rang out, and before people realized it, there were hundreds of Lakota being massacred, the overwhelming majority of which were non-combatants, women and children.

On the 100th anniversary of Wounded Knee, this body made a formal apology and expressed deep regret for what had happened that day.

Another important step forward was in October of 2022 when the Oglala Sioux Tribe and the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe jointly purchased that 40 acres that is the site of the 1890 massacre.

This bill very simply places those 40 acres into restricted fee status, which is in essence putting it into trust.

My bill ensures that those two Tribes working together can protect this land as sacred without any commercial development, and they can retain their sovereignty to manage that land appropriately.

It was last Congress that I told you all about my trip to the massacre site in June of 2023. It was there I spoke at length to an older gentleman whose grandmother had survived the massacre that day. He, with his own ears, had heard the oral history of the terrible tragedy that occurred that day.

I then went and visited St. John's Church where the Lakota had taken their wounded to treat their injuries. Their blood, the blood of the survivors, stained the floorboards in the church that day. The wounds of that dark day remain present to this day, and this land is sacred. I do think this action, this cooperation between the two Tribes and our Federal Government, will make sure that we do right as much as we can in the wake of that tragedy.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the Wounded Knee descendants. I thank Oglala Sioux Tribal Chairman Frank Star Comes Out and Cheyenne River Sioux Tribal Chairman Ryman LeBeau for their teamwork in advancing this legislation.

Last Congress, this bill passed unanimously out of this body, and I would just ask my colleagues to again vote for H.R. 165, the Wounded Knee Massacre Memorial and Sacred Site Act, so that we can provide the Oglala and the Cheyenne River Tribes the authority they need to protect this land.

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

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from South Dakota for this bill. I urge my colleagues to support it, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, this legislation will further allow the Lakota people to memorialize and honor their relatives and ancestors killed in the Wounded Knee Massacre.

It gives the title of the land to both the Oglala Sioux Tribe and Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe, while ensuring that the land has the protections provided by restrictions against alienation and taxation.

I again commend my friend from South Dakota for bringing us this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I urge its adoption, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 165.

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. 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 motion will be postponed.

CONTINUED RAPID OHIA DEATH RESPONSE ACT OF 2025

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 375) to require the Secretary of the Interior to partner and collaborate with the Secretary of Agriculture and the State of Hawaii to address Rapid Ohia Death, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 375

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 "Continued Rapid Ohia Death Response Act of 2025".

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) **RAPID OHIA DEATH.**—The term "Rapid Ohia Death" means the disease caused by the fungal pathogen known as *Ceratocystis fimbriata* that affects the tree of the species *Metrosideros polymorpha*.

(2) **STATE.**—The term "State" means the State of Hawaii.

SEC. 3. COLLABORATION.

The Secretary of the Interior shall partner and collaborate with the Secretary of Agriculture and the State to address Rapid Ohia Death.

SEC. 4. SUSTAINED EFFORTS.

(a) **TRANSMISSION.**—The Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Director of the United States Geological Survey, and the Chief of the Forest Service, acting through the Forest Service Institute of Pacific Islands Forestry, shall continue to conduct research on Rapid Ohia Death vectors and transmission.

(b) **UNGULATE MANAGEMENT.**—The Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Director of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, shall continue to partner with the Secretary of Agriculture, the State, and with local stakeholders to manage ungulates in Rapid Ohia Death control areas on Federal, State, and private land, with the consent of private landowners.

(c) **RESTORATION AND RESEARCH.**—The Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the Chief of the Forest Service, shall continue to provide—

(1) financial assistance, including through agreements with the Secretary of the Interior—

(A) to prevent the spread of Rapid Ohia Death; and

(B) to restore the native forests of the State; and

(2) staff and necessary infrastructure funding to the Institute of Pacific Islands Forestry to conduct research on Rapid Ohia Death.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arkansas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask that all Members be given 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 375, the bill now under consideration.

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, Representative TOKUDA's legislation, the Continued Rapid Ohia Death Response Act of 2025, is important legislation that directs the Secretary of the Interior to partner and collaborate with the Secretary of Agriculture and the State of Hawaii to address rapid ohia death.

Rapid ohia death is a fungal disease that has ravaged Hawaii's ohia tree population. The ohia tree is important ecologically and culturally to Hawaii. Ohias play an important role in regulating water flow in addition to preventing soil erosion.

If the loss of ohia trees continues, there could be significant economic impacts, including lost tourism revenue and increased water treatment and erosion control costs. Unfortunately, there is currently no cure that can help the afflicted trees.

H.R. 375 helps address rapid ohia death by focusing Federal and State agencies' efforts on detection, prevention, and restoration to combat this disease.

I thank Representative TOKUDA for her work on this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE,
Washington, DC, January 15, 2025.

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

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: This letter confirms our mutual understanding regarding H.R. 375, the "Continued Rapid Ohia Death Response 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. 375 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,