Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson
Wolf
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NOT VOTING—5

Campbell
Cook
Cox
Crane
Vento

☐ 1456

Messrs. HUTCHINSON, DEUTSCH, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Messrs. FORD, WEINER, SWEENEY, HASTINGS of Florida, and THOMPSON of California, and Ms. KILPATRICK, Ms. VELAZQUEZ, Mrs. MEEK of Florida, and Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas changed their vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

Messrs. SPRATT, BAIRD, FRELINGHUYSEN, and BILBRAY, and Ms. PRYCE of Ohio, Mrs. McCARTHY of New York, Ms. PELOSI and Mrs. KELLY changed their vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). The question is on the passage of the bill.

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

Mr. CANADY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 287, nays 141, not voting 7, as follows:

[Roll No. 104]

YEAS—287

Aderholt
Archer
Armey
Baca
Bachus
Baker
Ballenger
Barcia
Barr
Barrett (NE)
Barrett (WI)
Bartlett
Barton
Bass
Bateman
Bereuter
Berry
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop
Bliley
Blunt
Boehner
Bonilla
Bonior
Bono
Borski
Boswell
Boyd
Brady (TX)
Bryant
Burr
Burton
Buyer
Callahan
Calvert
Camp
Canady
Cannon
Castle
Chabot
Chambliss
Chenoweth-Hage
Clement
Coble
Coburn
Collins
Combest
Condit
Cooksey
Costello
Cox
Cramer
Crowley
Cubin
Cunningham
Danner
Davis (FL)
Davis (VA)
Deal
DeLay
DeMint
Diaz-Balart
Dickey
Dingell
Doolittle
Doyle
Dreier
Duncan
Dunn
Ehlers
Ehrlich
Emerson
English
Etheridge
Everett
Ewing
Fletcher
Foley
Forbes
Ford
Fossella
Fowler
Franks (NJ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Ganske
Gekas
Gephardt
Gibbons
Gilchrest
Gillmor
Goode
Goodlatte
Goodling
Gordon
Goss
Graham
Green (WI)
Gutknecht
Hall (OH)
Hall (TX)
Hansen
Hastert
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Hayworth
Hefley
Herger
Hill (IN)
Hill (MT)
Hilleary
Hinojosa
Hobson
Hoekstra
Holden
Hostettler
Houghton
Hulshof
Hunter
Hutchinson
Hyde
Isakson
Istook
Jefferson
Jenkins
John
Johnson, Sam
Jones (NC)
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Kasich
Kelly
Kennedy
Kildee
Kind (WI)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kleczka
Klink
Knollenberg
Kucinich
LaFalce
LaHood
Lampson
Largent
Latham
LaTourette
Lazio
Leach
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Lucas (KY)
Lucas (OK)
Maloney (CT)
Manzullo
Martinez
Mascara
McCollum
McCrery
McHugh
McInnis
McIntosh
McIntyre
McKeon
McNulty
Metcalf
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller, Gary
Minge
Moakley
Mollohan
Moran (KS)
Moran (VA)
Murtha
Myrick
Neal
Nethercutt
Ney
Northup
Norwood
Nussle
Oberstar
Obey
Ortiz
Ose
Oxley
Packard
Pascrell
Paul
Pease
Peterson (MN)
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Phelps
Pickering
Pitts
Pombo
Pomeroy
Porter
Pryce (OH)
Quinn
Radanovich
Rahall
Ramstad
Regula
Reyes
Reynolds
Riley
Roemer
Rogan
Rogers
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Roukema
Royce
Ryan (WI)
Ryun (KS)
Salmon
Sandlin
Sanford
Saxton
Scarborough
Schaffer
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shadegg
Shaw
Shays
Sherwood
Shimkus
Shows
Shuster
Simpson
Sisisky
Skeen
Skelton
Smith (MI)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Souder
Spence
Spratt
Stearns
Stenholm
Strickland
Stump
Stupak
Sununu
Sweeney
Talent
Tancredo
Tanner
Tauzin
Taylor (MS)
Taylor (NC)
Terry
Thomas
Thornberry
Thune
Tiahrt
Toomey
Traficant
Turner
Upton
Visclosky
Vitter
Walden
Walsh
Wamp
Watkins
Watts (OK)
Weldon (FL)
Weldon (PA)
Weller
Weygand
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson
Wolf
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NAYS—141

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Allen
Andrews
Baird
Baldacci
Baldwin
Becerra
Bentsen
Berkley
Berman
Blagojevich
Blumenauer
Boehlert
Boucher
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Brown (OH)
Capps
Capuano
Cardin
Carson
Clay
Clayton
Clyburn
Conyers
Coyne
Cummings
Davis (IL)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Deutsch
Dicks
Dixon
Doggett
Dooley
Edwards
Engel
Eshoo
Evans
Farr
Fattah
Filner
Frank (MA)
Frost
Gejdenson
Gilman
Gonzalez
Green (TX)
Greenwood
Gutierrez
Hastings (FL)
Hilliard
Hinchey
Hoeffel
Holt
Hooley
Horn
Hoyer
Inslee
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Johnson (CT)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones (OH)
Kilpatrick
Kolbe
Kuykendall
Lantos
Larson
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lofgren
Lowey
Luther
Maloney (NY)
Markey
Matsui
McCarthy (MO)
McCarthy (NY)
McDermott
McGovern
McKinney
Meehan
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Menendez
Millender-McDonald
Miller, George
Mink
Moore
Morella
Nadler
Napolitano
Olver
Owens
Pallone
Pastor
Payne
Pelosi
Pickett
Price (NC)
Rangel
Rivers
Rodriguez
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Rush
Sabo
Sanchez
Sanders
Sawyer
Schakowsky
Scott
Serrano
Sherman
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Stabenow
Stark
Tauscher
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thurman
Tierney
Towns
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Waters
Watt (NC)
Waxman
Weiner
Wexler
Wise
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn

NOT VOTING—7

Campbell
Cook
Crane
Granger
Portman
Velazquez
Vento

☐ 1505

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Ms. GRANGER. Mr. Speaker, I have been informed that my voting card did not register during final passage of H.R. 3660, rollcall vote 104. I intended to vote ''yea'' on passage of the ''Partial Birth Abortion Ban Act.''

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. Speaker, because of a prior commitment, I was unavoidably detained and missed rollcall vote No. 104 today on passage of H.R. 3660, the Partial Birth Abortion Ban Act.

I am an original cosponsor of this legislation. Had I been present, I would have voted ''yea.''

PERMISSION FOR COMMITTEE ON BANKING AND FINANCIAL SERVICES TO FILE SUPPLEMENTAL REPORT ON H.R. 1776, AMERICAN HOMEOWNERSHIP AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY ACT OF 2000

Mr. LEACH. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Banking and Financial Services be permitted to file a supplemental report on the bill (H.R. 1776) to expand homeownership in the United States.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Iowa?

There was no objection.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 4011

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to remove my name as a cosponsor of H.R. 4011.

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

There was no objection.

WILDLIFE AND SPORT FISH RESTORATION PROGRAMS IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2000

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 455 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 455

Resolved, That at any time after the adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3671) to amend the Acts popularly known as the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act and the

Dingell-Johnson Sport Fish Restoration Act to enhance the funds available for grants to states for fish and wildlife conservation projects and increase opportunities for recreational hunting, bow hunting, trapping, archery, and fishing, by eliminating opportunities for waste, fraud, abuse, maladministration, and unauthorized expenditures for administration and execution of those acts, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. Points of order against consideration of the bill for failure to comply with clause 4(a) of rule XIII are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Resources. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. It shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the five-minute rule the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Resources now printed in the bill. The committee amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read. Points of order against the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute for failure to comply with clause 4 of rule XXI are waived. The amendment printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution shall be considered as read, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against the amendment printed in the report are waived. During consideration of the bill for amendment, the Chairman of the Committee of the Whole may accord priority in recognition on the basis of whether the Member offering an amendment has caused it to be printed in the portion of the Congressional Record designated for that purpose in clause 8 of rule XVIII. Amendments so printed shall be considered as read. The Chairman of the Committee of the Whole may: (1) postpone until a time during further consideration in the Committee of the Whole a request for a recorded vote on any amendment; and (2) reduce to five minutes the minimum time for electronic voting on any postponed question that follows another electronic vote without intervening business, provided that the minimum time for electronic voting on the first in any series of questions shall be 15 minutes. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. Any Member may demand a separate vote in the House on any amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole to the bill or to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, for purposes of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Ohio (Mr. HALL), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for purposes of debate only.

(Mr. HASTINGS of Washington asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 455 would grant H.R. 3671, the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Programs Improvement Act of 2000, an open rule, and waives clause 4A of rule 13 that requires the three-day layover of the committee report against consideration of the bill.

Further, the rule provides 1 hour of general debate, divided equally between the chairman and ranking member of the Committee on Resources.

House Resolution 455 makes in order the Committee on Resources' amendment in the nature of a substitute now printed in the bill as an original bill for the purpose of amendment, which shall be open for amendment at any point. The rule further waives clause 4 of rule XXI that prohibits appropriations in a legislative bill against the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute.

House Resolution 455 provides that the amendment printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying the resolution shall be considered as read, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for a division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole House.

House Resolution 455 waives all points of order against the amendment printed in the report.

The rule also allows the Chair to accord priority in recognition to Members who have preprinted their amendments in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. Further, it allows the chairman of the Committee of the Whole to postpone votes during consideration of the bill, and to reduce voting time to 5 minutes on a postponed question if the vote follows a 15-minute vote.

□ 1515

Finally, the rule provides one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

Mr. Speaker, the Wildlife and Sports Fish Restoration Programs Improvement Act of 2000, H.R. 3671, is a bill to enhance the use of funds available for grants to States for fish and wildlife conservation projects and to increase opportunities for recreational hunting, bow hunting, trapping, archery and fishing. The legislation accomplishes this by eliminating opportunities for waste, fraud, abuse, mismanagement and unauthorized expenditures.

The Committee on Resources held three oversight hearings examining the manner in which the Fish and Wildlife Service, through its division of Federal aid, administered and executed the Pittman-Robertson Act and the Dingell-Johnson Act. The hearings of the Committee on Resources made it clear that funds committed for the administration and execution of these programs had not been used for their stated purposes and that there was a general lack of fiscal accountability and management throughout the programs.

H.R. 3671 stops wasteful spending and mismanagement of the wildlife and sports fish trust funds and allows more money to be distributed directly to the States for conservation programs.

The legislation fixes what the GAO called, quote, ''one of the worst managed programs it had ever encountered by increasing accountability and restricting the administrative use of funds from the trust funds.''

Specifically, H.R. 3671 restricts the use of administrative funds reserved from Federal excise taxes on hunting and fishing equipment to purposes directly related to the Pittman-Johnson Wildlife Restoration Act and the Dingell-Johnson Sport Fish Restoration Act.

Further, the legislation established 12 categories of authorized costs for the Wildlife Restoration Act and Sports Fish Restoration Act and provides that administrative funds will be available for one fiscal year, after which all unobligated funds will be returned to the States through the apportionment formula.

H.R. 3671 also requires the Secretary of Interior to certify in writing the amount apportioned to each State and the amount obligated for administering those programs.

In addition, the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Programs Improvement Act provides grants from the savings generated from the administrative changes in the bill to enhance firearm and bow hunter education and shooting range construction. The legislation also provides up to $2.5 million for the Secretary of Interior to make multistate conservation grants.

Finally, the legislation requires increased accountability within the Fish and Wildlife Service, through certification of the use of funds and administrative restructuring.

The Committee on Resources reported H.R. 3671 as amended by a unanimous vote of 36 to nothing last March.

H. Res. 455 makes in order an amendment by the gentleman from Alaska (Chairman YOUNG) to increase the amount authorized to administer the Pittman-Robertson Act and the Dingell-Johnson Act to $7.09 million for each act, an increase of $5 million for each act with the reduction of these funds in later years.

The amendment also makes certain technical changes and changes to ensure that the bill language conforms to language in the existing statute, language that is not amended by the bill.

Finally, the CBO has estimated that enacting H.R. 3671 would have no net effect on the Federal budget. The Committee on Rules was pleased to grant the request of the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG) for an open rule under H.R. 3671; and accordingly, I urge my colleagues to support H. Res. 455 and the underlying bill.

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

Mr. HALL of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) for yielding me the time.

Mr. Speaker, this is an open rule. It will allow for a debate on the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Act. As my colleague has described, the debate will be equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member from the Committee on Resources.

The rule permits amendments under the 5-minute rule. This is the normal amending process in the House. All Members on both sides of the aisle will have the opportunity to offer amendments if they are germane and if they meet the requirements under House rules.

Mr. Speaker, the Fish and Wildlife Service operates two programs that give States grants to help conserve and manage their fish and wildlife resources, and there is widespread agreement the financial management for these programs needs to be improved. However, there is disagreement over the solutions in this bill. Much in the bill is a step in the right direction, but the restrictions in the measure could reduce the ability of the Fish and Wildlife Service to manage these programs.

This is an open rule, though, and Members will have an opportunity to improve the bill on the House floor, as long as their amendments meet the requirements of the House rules.

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

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. PRYCE), my colleague on the Committee on Rules.

Ms. PRYCE of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I thank my distinguished colleague, the gentleman from the State of Washington (Mr. HASTINGS), for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this open rule. As a cosponsor of the underlying legislation, H.R. 3671 the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Programs Improvement Act of the year 2000, I am pleased that this open rule will allow this body to fully debate this environmentally sound and fiscally responsible legislation.

H.R. 3671 addresses recently uncovered waste, fraud and abuse in two very important funds established by two different acts of Congress which provide money to the States for wildlife and sport fishing conservation programs.

Mr. Speaker, our Nation's sportsmen and women proudly contribute to wildlife and fish improvement projects every time they purchase fishing tackle, hunting gear, or any other sporting goods.

However, recent oversight hearings held by the House Committee on Resources and an audit conducted by the General Accounting Office have revealed widespread abuses and misuses of millions of dollars of these funds, which are financed by the excise taxes on sporting goods, guns, ammunition, fishing tackle, and motor boat fuel. In fact, the General Accounting Office has characterized this program as one of the worst-managed programs the investigator has ever encountered.

H.R. 3671 addresses and rightfully corrects these abuses by increasing accountability and reeling in the administrative use of these funds so that this waste of taxpayer money will not occur in the future.

Simply put, the money paid by our Nation's sportsmen and women will go toward wildlife and fish improvement projects, as the law specified, rather than on unauthorized expenditures, slush funds, alcoholic beverages, or overseas trips to exotic designations.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 3671 goes to the very heart of why our constituents elected us to office, to safeguard their money and to ensure that it is spent wisely. As a fiscal conservative, my constituents sent me to Washington to reduce the size of bureaucracy, increase the efficiency of Federal programs, and improve the accountability of our government.

This bill represents the very checks and balances between the administration and the Congress which our Founding Fathers envisioned to control waste, fraud and abuse. Passage of this legislation will allow us to regain the trust of those who enjoy what our great outdoors has to offer and who seek to contribute to its conservation.

I would like to commend the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG) and the House Committee on Resources for their bipartisan work in oversight in protecting the American taxpayer while at the same time increasing funds for true conservation. I urge adoption of this open rule and passage of the underlying bill.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG), the distinguished chairman of the Committee on Resources.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, as has been stated before, we sought an open rule. The Committee on Rules decided to give us the open rule.

The law says that a percentage of that money, up to 8 percent for Pittman-Robertson and up to 6 percent for Dingell-Johnson, can be used for administration expenses.

We have found out, though, that the maximum percentage was used in 1998. $31 million was used for administration purposes. Throughout the 1990s, the percentage escalated from 2 percent or 3 percent all the way to the maximum, which is 14 percent.

Our year-long oversight project examined exactly how the $31 million was supposedly used to administer the important conservation acts. We found out, through the oversight, some very alarming things.

Mr. Speaker, I suggest respectfully, in fact, we found out that the money was spent not as the law said it shall be spent, not for administrative purposes.

The bill I bring to the House today is designed to make sure that not one dime of wildlife or sport fishing conservation trust funds are misspent again. We have been as accommodating as possible to concerns about adequate levels of funding for program administration, and with the open rule we want to be receptive to other ideas about how to make the conservation funds run more effectively.

The bill was developed during a 7-month process with 14 wildlife and fish sport groups representing each State. These groups conceptualized the solutions based on the oversight work of the Committee on Resources.

We held three oversight investigative meetings, and we had suggestions from those findings; and this bill is a result of those.

The law as exists today does not authorize those expenditures which occurred; but rather than argue over that point, we focused on solutions which are in the bill that I bring to the Committee on Rules today. My cosponsor and I decided to fix the loopholes that the Fish and Wildlife Service point to when they try to justify their expenditure of administration of trust funds. This bill caps the amount of administrative expenditures at $10 million. We spell out exactly what expenses are authorized to administer the program. We add reporting and auditing requirements. We create a transparent multiple-State grant program where $5 million of the funds were improperly used for unauthorized costs. We use some of the savings to enhance hunter safety and education. We create an associate director of Fish and Wildlife, and sport fish trust funds to raise the profile of these important conservation activities and look out for the conservation trust funds. These are solutions of the Pittman-Robertson, Dingell-Johnson acts, two acts that are vital to the conservation and restoration of wildlife and sport fishing in the country.

I have asked for only one amendment today under the rule that increases the level of funding from $10 million to $14 million, with a total level of funding of $19 million. We did this to ensure a transition period for 3 years during which there would be a slight reduction in staffing levels that manage that trust fund.

My amendment takes the authorized level down from 120 employees in 2001 to 100 employees in 2003. That adjusts the level upward thereafter based on the Consumer Price Index.

The amendment makes other technical changes to make sure that the bill conforms with other parts of the underlying Pittman-Robertson, Dingell-Johnson acts that are not amended. Other than that, we think we have a good bill. Overall, this is a good bill and should be passed and voted on by all my colleagues.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT).

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my friend, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS), for yielding time on this important bill that really helps restore confidence with the

people who worked to get this legislation enacted to start with. Both Pittman-Robertson and Dingell-Johnson have had the support of virtually every outdoor sports organization. They have had the support of people who sell the very things that are taxed under this legislation. Seldom do we have people who are selling a product come and say we would like that product to be taxed because it enhances the cause that we believe is important to enhance.

Of course, this current law levies excise taxes on guns, on ammunition, on archery equipment, on fishing equipment; and that is used to fund wildlife programs. What we have seen happen is that the percentages that the chairman just mentioned, the maximum percentages for administration have been far exceeded in expenditures that were beyond the scope of this legislation.

The House Committee on Resources had hearings where it appeared that as much as one-third of the money was being used in areas that were originally thought to be capped at 6 or 8 percent. That is not acceptable.

This bill establishes a cap on administrative costs. It creates 12 specific categories of costs so that we know for sure what is going in can count as administration. It prohibits funds from being used for functions where Congress has already appropriated money. That is what this process is about. It is not up to the Fish and Wildlife Commission to decide that the Congress did not appropriate enough, and so they will supplement that out of funds intended for other purposes. They need to come back to the Congress and ask for more money and justify that money in the regular way.

This then returns unused money to the States. It eliminates a $1 million directors' conservation fund. Some have suggested that that was a slush fund, and there is plenty of evidence to say that that is what it very well could be called.

I hope that we restore the confidence of the people who asked for this excise tax, who collect the tax, who see how the tax is spent, by approving the rule and approving the bill today.

Mr. HALL of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. CALLAHAN), chairman of the Subcommittee on Foreign Operations, Export Financing and Related Programs.

Mr. CALLAHAN. Mr. Speaker, I suppose I rise to ask some questions possibly of the Committee on Rules members here today, and I wanted also to have the opportunity to address this question to the chairman of the full committee. I know that many have had thousands of phone calls, like I have, of people concerned with the fact that the Congress of the United States gave the Fish and Wildlife such excessive authority over the fining of people hunting for sport all over this country.

Specifically, it is my understanding that under current law there can be assessed to someone who owns a baited field, even whether or not he had anything to do with the baiting, if anyone is caught hunting, dove hunting over a baited field, the owner of the property can be assessed a fine of some $200,000; and the hunter can be fined $100,000.

I do not think anyone in this House and certainly no hunter that I know of would advocate the hunting over a baited field, but this type of excessive control that the Federal Government has in assessing these types of obnoxious fines to our hunters and to property owners should be addressed.

So I guess my question, Mr. Speaker, is can this be addressed in this issue? I know it is an open rule, but I know there are some limitations on what can be offered as an amendment. Would this bill today be the vehicle that we could use to begin addressing and reducing this situation that is causing such misery to hunters all over America?

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. CALLAHAN. I yield to the gentleman from Alaska.

□ 1530

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman bringing this to the attention of the floor. We cannot address it in legislation. It would not be germane.

But I can assure the gentleman from Alabama that the bill that he voted on and I voted on and which I was a sponsor last year concerning this issue was not in the House bill. In fact, it was a clean bill that would really relieve the ''don't know,'' and have, as Fish and Wildlife was, issuing fines against those people. It was trying to take that away from the Fish and Wildlife.

The Fish and Wildlife Enforcement Group have interpreted the bill on behalf of Senator CHAFEE, who is no longer with us, may his soul rest in peace, but he put this in the bill in the waning hours, which none of us knew about. We have been made aware of this by the gentleman's hunters and my hunters and the people involved in Fish and Wildlife Conservation.

I have also suggested to the Fish and Wildlife not to interpret the law as the gentleman from Alabama mentioned. But we are going to try to address this issue in the very near future to make sure that the untold fines which are now being suggested be imposed upon individuals will not take place.

I am one that does not believe in the baited field, but many times this could occur unbeknownst to the knowledge of the farmer or, in fact, the hunter itself, and it is unfair to put this type of burden upon those people.

So I will do everything in my power to make sure that we address the fact that we never supported it.

Mr. CALLAHAN. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time just for a second, when can I go back and tell the people in Alabama that are so interested in this when some relief is going to be forthcoming? If this is not the vehicle, where is the vehicle to address this?

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, we hope that we will have a vehicle that the gentleman can do it, in fact the bill itself in the near future. I can assure the gentleman that we are well aware of this issue. I will suggest one other thing. It will be taken ahead of the next dove season. I can assure the gentleman from Alabama of that.

Mr. CALLAHAN. Mr. Speaker, I should hope so. I know the hunters of south Alabama will, too.

I hope that we can address this as expeditiously as we can, because it is wrong of us to give this authority. Whether or not it was done in the middle of the night in the Senate or wherever, the law is the law.

The people of Alabama do not violate the law. So we are not baiting fields anyway. But if he finds one kernel of corn of Fish and Wildlife, the game warden, then that property owner can be assessed a $200,000 fine under existing law. So I hope we can address it.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will yield, I have already informed the Fish and Wildlife of this issue; and, to my knowledge, there has been no fines of that amount, but they could occur. We have to change it so it could not occur. If there has been any fines placed after the passage of the law last year, they have been in the $100, $200, $300 range, and we expect to keep it that way.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Montana (Mr. HILL).

(Mr. HILL of Montana asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HILL of Montana. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Washington for yielding me the time, and I want to thank the leadership for allowing this issue to come to the floor.

Mr. Speaker, we are living in a time when I think the cynicism about government is probably at an all-time high. It of course is because we have probably an all-time high in the number of scandals here in Washington.

The scandal that has given rise to this particular bill is that there has been a raid on the sportsmen and women's trust funds. The sportsmen and women in this country have supported an excise tax on guns and ammunition and fishing equipment and archery equipment, which it goes into a fund, the purpose of which is to support conservation efforts and promote hunting and fishing.

Now, what we have discovered is that, in recent years, these funds have been raided using what the General Accounting Office has described as a shell game. The Fish and Wildlife Service created slush funds to circumvent the intent of Congress.

The General Accounting Office described the management of these funds, and I quote, ''one of the worst managed programs that it had ever encountered. In some instances, even the General

Accounting Office could not determine where the money went or how it got spent.''

In another instance, the General Accounting Office reported that the Fish and Wildlife Service had placed these dollars into a fund that was not even authorized to circumvent their own criteria for the approval of the spending of the projects.

In another instance, they created an unauthorized administrative grant program to fund programs that were not supported by Congress.

There is an instance, for example, where the director tried to get an employee to fund an anti-hunting project using the funds that came from hunters' supported excise tax.

It is important for us at this point to rebuild public confidence and support for hunting and fishing. This bill is important because it will restore confidence in these programs. But it is also important that taxpayers know that, when they pay taxes, the money is going to be spent for the purpose that it was intended.

It has been commonplace in the Clinton-Gore administration to raid trust funds. They have raided the highway trust fund. They have raided the aviation trust fund. They have raided the Social Security trust fund. They have raided the Medicare trust fund. They have even raided the Wildlife trust fund.

I support this bill. I am proud to be a cosponsor. I urge my colleagues to support the rule and support the bill.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. CUNNINGHAM).

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Mr. Speaker, I laud the gentleman from Alaska (Chairman YOUNG) for this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I grew up in a little city called Fresno, California. I had 11 uncles that taught me how to hunt and fish. As a matter of fact, one time I threw a gum wrapper down in the woods, and my grandfather picked me up and threw me in a stream. I did not do it again.

The opportunity to enjoy the woods, to enjoy the fish and game that our forefathers have is very, very important. We have had legislation on this floor like the tuna-dolphin that allowed us, not only to save dolphin, but to preserve our fish species and not destroy our bycatch.

We have had bills on shark finning to preserve, even things that I do not like because I am a diver, sharks. But it is science based in its nature. People that most use the resource are the ones that are going to pay for it.

The Sportsmen's Caucus, made up of Republicans and Democrats and conservationists and environmentalists, support this legislation. We have a vision, not just for right now, but 100 years from now so that my children and my grandchildren will be able to use these resources.

Organizations like Ducks Unlimited that have put billions of dollars into habitat to bring about the restoration of ducks and geese across this country. Accountability, effectiveness, responsibility, and science based are some of the things that go into this particular bill.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. GILCHREST).

Mr. GILCHREST. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Washington for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to make two points here today. The first point is about Fish and Wildlife as an organization has done some magnificent things around the country. In my district in particular, they have helped enhance the marine ecosystem for the fisheries in the Chesapeake Bay. They have helped enhance wildlife habitat corridors to protect wildlife and keep the Eastern Shore of Maryland and much of Maryland in a beautiful state, in an environmental condition that we can be proud of.

The Fish and Wildlife has also worked in my district to help preserve agriculture and make it profitable by a collaborative effort with a number of Federal, State agencies, and the private sector. So the Fish and Wildlife is out there, and they can do a magnificent job that is worthy of all of us.

But what we do not want to have happen is those few dollars that are available for when official Fish and Wildlife can do a substantial job to be taken away and spent in an unwise fashion where there is no criteria.

The bill of the gentleman from Florida (Mr. YOUNG) addresses two specific problems that we have come across through a series of hearings. One, and this is, in essence, a misdirection of dollars that are badly needed at all of our congressional level districts.

Number one, the Director's Conservation Fund. The Director's Conservation Fund was used solely at the discretion of the director. No criteria existed for making grants under this unauthorized fund.

So what is the solution? The bill provides a solution. This bill will restore the good faith of sportsmen and women in this successful program by eliminating unauthorized expenditures through the Director's Conservation Fund, reducing disproportionately the high amount for overhead. So that is the Director's Conservation Fund.

The other problem has been there were several instances in which Fish and Wildlife Service use conservation trust funds for wildlife and sport fish to pay for other service needs. These were salaries, these were a whole range of things, travel and so on.

So what is the solution? The solution to spending these Federal aid program dollars in areas where they should not be spent is that this legislation eliminates extra funds for the Fish and Wildlife Service to use for inappropriate expenditures. We fix the amount available and limit what it can be spent on. That means that we fix the amount that can be spent on administrative services and ensure that a majority of those dollars, if not 99 percent of those dollars, that people pay excise taxes for will be given to the Fish and Wildlife.

With the cooperation of Members of Congress, other Federal agencies, the Fish and Wildlife Service can do the job that we all want them to do throughout this country, and that is preserve the natural heritage of Fish and Wildlife that our forefathers experienced in the past, we experience now in the present, and unseen generations to come will be able to enjoy that pristine natural environment.

Mr. HALL of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BARCIA).

Mr. BARCIA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 3671, the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Programs Improvement Act. I want to commend the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG) and the members of his committee for his diligence in uncovering the abuses that this legislation seeks to rectify and for introducing this bill which will ensure the conservation funds will be spent where they are most needed and where they were originally intended to be spent.

I would also like to thank the chairman for his dedication to protecting the rights and interest of sportsmen and women across the country who have contributed to this fund for well over 60 years.

As a member of the Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus and cochair of the Congressional Task Force on Bowhunting, I have been carefully monitoring the issue and criticism over the misuse of funds by the Fish and Wildlife Service. I was very concerned when I heard that the money was being spent, not on the administration of the act, but on unrelated trips, unauthorized bonuses, and the funding of other departments within the Fish and Wildlife Service.

This legislation addresses these administrative abuses and ensures that sportsmen's dollars will be used to benefit fish and wildlife conservation efforts. It also provides firearm and bow hunter education and safety training and establishes an assistant director for the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program whose sole responsibility will be the management and administration of the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program.

Overall, the bill will prevent conservation dollars from being spent in ways that do not help conservation. It will send more money to the States for them to use for conservation projects.

I wholeheartedly support this legislation and urge its immediate passage.

Mr. HALL of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER), former chairman of the committee.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Ohio for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, several Members have come to the floor to tout the findings of the General Accounting Office as necessary proof of the proposed reforms in this legislation. In most instances, I believe that GAO provides an important and impartial perspective to enable the Congress to assess the circumstances underlying any policy issue. I believe we all share this view.

But I have had time to reassess the information provided last year by the GAO. Frankly, Mr. Speaker, the more I have read and learned, the more concerned I have become about GAO's performance during the conduct of this investigation.

Contrary to the assertions made by the majority, I am sure that many Members of this House would be surprised to learn that GAO never filed a final report for their investigation. In fact, all of the assertions attributed to GAO were based upon preliminary findings, findings that in many instances were partial and failed to include important information.

Rarely have I seen such an example of cut and run analysis. I want to take just a few minutes to share some examples for the benefit of Members unfamiliar with this investigation.

For example, the Committee on Resources heard from GAO that the Fish and Wildlife Service had lost roughly $85 million in Federal aid funds. But upon closer inspection of the Fish and Wildlife Service's own internal account reconciliation process, it was revealed that only about $7 million was unreconciled at the time that GAO made that claim. GAO did not provide any reason for this oversight in their analysis.

To clarify this matter further, I am pleased to report to my colleagues that it is my understanding that the Service's reconciliation process has now reduced the outstanding total to around $700,000. A full accounting for all funds is expected soon.

More importantly, it appears that these funds were never lost in the first place. Had GAO's investigators gone to the Service's own Division of Finance, they would have found corresponding account information to fill in the gaps between the incomplete financial records kept in the Federal Aid Office. But GAO investigators never bothered to make a trip to Denver to look into this matter.

We also heard from GAO that the Fish and Wildlife Service was negligent in implementing GAO's recommendations after GAO's 1993 investigation into the Sports Fish Restoration Program. But in fact, the Fish and Wildlife Service has implemented almost all of GAO's previous recommendations. However, again, GAO failed to include in its preliminary findings any recognition that the Service had, in fact, implemented its recommendations.

□ 1545

Normally, these types of errors are corrected during the close-out review of the Federal agency under scrutiny. But because the GAO declined to file a final report, these errors were allowed to stand uncontested.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to submit for the RECORD this table of reforms that have been initiated by the Fish and Wildlife Service to address concerns raised by the GAO and by other critics of the financial management practices of the Office of Federal Aid. They speak for themselves.

These are just a few of the glaring examples of the flaws in the GAO's analysis; and I am left to wonder whether GAO really has, in fact, provided an objective analysis has in fact provided an objective analysis or has been more motivated to justify the preconceptions raised by the majority or the GAO itself.

The gentleman from Alaska has repeatedly referred to the statement made by the GAO asserting that the Office of Federal Aid was one of the worst-managed programs GAO has ever investigated. While I make absolutely no apologies for the shoddy past financial management at the Office of Federal Aid, I find GAO's performance lacking and disappointing.

The Congress relies on GAO to make these kinds of objective analyses, and they should be beyond reproach. In this case, I do not think that is the case. I will get into more detail in general debate about some of the corrective actions that the committee has taken, some of which are justified and others that I think are going to keep this agency from doing the type of proper job it should do in administering these programs.

Mr. Speaker, I submit for the RECORD the table of reforms I referred to earlier.

CORRECTIVE ACTIONS TAKEN BY THE SERVICE ON FEDERAL AID ISSUES

1993

Initiated a new budget review process to ensure that all requests for Federal Aid funds are adequately justified.

Began maintaining files of all direct charges to the Sport Fish program.

Transferred Take Pride position out of Federal Aid Office.

Required Management Assistance Team (MAT) and others in Federal Aid to charge for their services.

1994

Reduced amount of Federal Aid Administrative funds used for General Administrative Service account. Required that calculations be reviewed annually.

Ended the practice of charging overhead costs to the state grants portion of the account.

Implemented the practice of describing cross program initiatives involving Federal Aid in the FWS Budget submission.

Instituted a new cost recovery policy which established a minimum standard rate to be charged for administrative costs.

Published in the Federal Register the policy and procedures for funding Administrative Grants projects. Published annually from 1994–1998.

1996

Initiated a new program to audit the State's use of funds apportioned under Wallop-Breaux/Dingell-Johnson and Pittman-Robertson Programs.

Began to design a new grant management information and tracking system.

1997

Issued guidance to Regional Directors stating that all charges against Federal Aid must be approved by Appropriations Committee. Issued during September of 1997 and again on August 16, 1998.

1998

Began the process of reconciling differences between Federal Aid Office grant records and the Service's Division of Finance's records.

Requested Defense Contract Audit Agency (DCAA) to develop an audit program for administrative funds; DCAA advised that they were unable to do so.

Developed National Training program for Federal & State employees involved in grant activities.

Began working with Customs, IRS, BATF, IAFWA, Wildlife Management Institute, industry and staff from Sen. Breaux and Rep. Tanner to review excise tax collections in Treasury. Eventually recovered more than $20 million in excise taxes not credited to the Federal Aid programs, and another $20 million for the Migratory Bird Conservation Fund.

Published Notice in the Federal Register soliciting public input on alternative methods to fund administrative grants program. Also stated in that Notice that the present program needs to be eliminated or improved. (9/16/98)

1999

Implemented FAIMS (Federal Aid Information Management System), the grant management and tracking system. (1/99)

Announced decision to terminate the Director's Conservation Fund. (3/99)

Established a State/Federal Review Team to evaluate Washington and Regional office administration of Federal Aid program. (3/99) Team met formally during July and August.

Announced in a letter to the IAFWA (International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies) plans to terminate Administrative Grants Program. (5/12/99)

Announced in the Federal Register the termination of the Administrative Grants Program. (7/26/99)

Reviewed contract under which GAO says it is unclear whether the Service or contractor should receive over $100,000 collected. Determined that money was reimbursement of contractor copying costs, not profits. (7/99)

Established an inter-office Financial Management Team to address financial management weaknesses in the Federal Aid Program.

Mr. HALL of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, the rule is a good rule. It is open. We have no problem with it. We urge a ''yes'' vote on the rule.

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

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I too urge my colleagues to support the rule and the underlying bill.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The previous question was ordered.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HASTINGS of Washington). Pursuant to House Resolution 455 and rule XVIII,

the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the consideration of the bill H.R. 3671.

□ 1547

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 3671) to amend the Acts popularly known as the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act and the Dingell-Johnson Sport Fish Restoration Act to enhance the funds available for grants to States for fish and wildlife conservation projects and increase opportunities for recreational hunting, bow hunting, trapping, archery, and fishing, by eliminating opportunities for waste, fraud, abuse, maladministration, and unauthorized expenditures for administration and execution of those Acts, and for other purposes, with Mr. BURR of North Carolina in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered as having been read the first time.

Under the rule, the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG) and the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG).

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Mr. YOUNG of Alaska asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Chairman, listen to these words. They tell us why this legislation is urgently needed.

''We don't want legislation to put us in a tighter box. If another need for this money comes up in the future, we want to be able to direct money to do it,'' says the deputy director of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service about this bill in the March 2000 issue of Outdoor Life.

The deputy director's words were a plea for help and this bill answers that plea. Those who oversee this program still want to use wildlife and sport fish money, paid by sportsmen, to create slush accounts and fund other unauthorized needs.

This bill assists the Fish and Wildlife Service in their administration of the programs by providing clear direction on what they can do when administering these wildlife and sport fish trust accounts. The bill eliminates the broad discretionary authority that supposedly gave them the permission to spend wildlife and sport fish trust accounts on things like slush funds and other unnecessary foreign travel. This bill prevents abuses and protects the trust funds. This bill does not choke the administration of the wildlife and fish trust accounts. It makes them lean, and it makes them manage the money accountably.

This bill maintains the integrity of the two acts by ensuring the funds will be used for true administration by authorizing exactly what the administration funds may be spent on. This includes things like personnel, direct support costs, costs to make grants, and actual overhead costs.

It will ensure that millions of excise tax dollars paid by sportsmen and women on guns, ammo, archery equipment, and fishing equipment will go to the States to improve opportunities to enjoy hunting and fishing, enhance hunting safety, providing conservation projects to improve habitat, and a variety of other wildlife and sport fishery restoration projects that benefit all Americans.

The bill caps the amount of administration dollars at $10 million for both programs for true program administrative needs, plus $5 million for the multistate grant program that the Service improperly funded from administrative money. These program reforms deliver more wildlife and sport fishing restoration dollars to the States.

Because of past abuses, several certification, auditing and accounting requirements are added. These requirements will ensure that the committees in the House and Senate and the public will get what we need to confirm that the wildlife and sport fish trust funds are administered cleanly and effectively.

We authorize a multiple-state conservation grant program to fund wildlife and sport fish restoration properties or programs that will benefit both groups of the States. Often States wish to cooperate with conservation projects, and this program will allow them to do so; $5 million, split between wildlife and sport fish, are authorized for this purpose.

With some of the savings we achieve in the bill, we authorize a firearm and bow hunter safety grant program to assist States to enhance firearm, hunting and archery education programs, and ranges and safety programs.

We found a lack of accountability within the current Federal Aid program that administers the accounts. We found that Federal Aid managers lacked control over their own resources. As a result, we elevated the chief of the Federal Aid program to the level of assistant secretary.

The new position is the assistant director for Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Programs, who, organizationally, reports to the director. This structure elevates one-third of the total fish and wildlife service budget and places it squarely in the director's office. The sole responsibility of the new assistant director will be the management, administration, and oversight of the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Programs.

Every Member should support this legislation. I knew that we had to press on and make these reforms rigid when I read what the deputy director of the Service said about this bill in the March 2000 issue of Outdoor Life.

I urge the House to support this important legislation and ensure that the taxes paid by sportsmen and women benefit wildlife and sport fish conservation and restoration in the States. By supporting this legislation, we will prevent excise taxes, paid by our constituents and earmarked for our game and fish departments, from being improperly used and squandered by the Federal Government.

It is our job to protect the sportsmen and women who pay the tax in each of our districts. Vote for this bill. Do something we should have done more around here, and that is to provide solutions to eliminate waste and fraud and abuse by the Federal Government. It just so happens doing it this time means more wildlife and more sport activity for the people in our districts.

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

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

In just 3 weeks, we will be celebrating the 30th anniversary of the first Earth Day. And just like the return of spring, the coming Earth Day has spurred the majority to renew their annual migration to the House floor with legislation to supposedly demonstrate their concern and support for the environment.

This is legislation that does both of those things, it tries to express their concern for the environment and also to clean up some problems within the sport fish restoration program. But I am afraid this legislation goes too far.

In its desire to seek out waste, fraud, and abuse, I believe that this legislation, in fact, will end up, if kept in its current form, undermining the ability of the Fish and Wildlife Service to administer an account for roughly $450 million to support wildlife and sport fish conservation activities in the States.

As we sat through the hearings, I must say that I share some of the concerns that the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG) has outlined in his desire to improve the performance of this program within the agency. But unfortunately, the legislation, as it stands before the House today, I think makes cuts that are far too severe and imperil the ability of this agency to administer the programs to the States or, in fact, even put additional burdens on the States for which they will not have resources to do; and I will elaborate on that point later in the debate in this legislation.

I think it is important to remind our colleagues that the Fish and Wildlife Service is recognized and admitted substantial errors that have been made. Serious reforms have been initiated by Fish and Wildlife Service Director Jamie Clark to improve the enforcement of financial policies and procedures, including the termination of discretionary grant programs, the hiring of a new Federal Aid expert to closely oversee the Federal Aid Office, the establishment of strict new policies for

travel and expenses, and the initiation of new training programs for Federal and States employees.

These moves indicate to me that the Service is aggressively taking action to clean up this mess. Has the Service acted quickly enough to address these problems? Certainly not. But is the Fish and Wildlife Service now making a serious effort to clean up the administration of these programs? I believe they are. It is unfortunate the majority has decided to ignore these internal reforms.

Which brings us to where we are today. When the majority concluded its investigation, I hoped that we might be able to work to draft legislation sufficiently tailored to ensure long-term financial accountability of this program. But so far we have been unable to do that.

I have several concerns about this legislation. Foremost is my concern that the bill would severely cut the amount of allowable funding for the Service to administer the program. As reported by the Committee on Resources, the bill would have established a $10 million per-year cap to fund administrative activities which the majority claims would track existing costs for legitimate administrative functions. However, the Fish and Wildlife Service indicates that the personnel costs alone amount to $9.5 million annually.

Furthermore, when the service analyzed past spending, organized by the majority's own 12 expense categories, and when the Service backed out the illegitimate expenses, the costs for administration consistently ranged between $20 million to $25 million. Clearly, $10 million is simply not sufficient to engage in the proper practices.

It is my understanding that the funding levels imposed by this cap would force the Service to terminate anywhere between 40 to 60 Federal Aid employees. In addition, the caps would also force the Service to cut back on important administrative activities, including State grant audits, budget oversight, and procedural training for Federal and State personnel. How is the Service supposed to provide increased oversight, accountability, and services to the States under this scenario?

I ask if my colleagues' offices would be able to provide the same level of services to their constituents if they were forced to cut their office staff and operating budgets by 30, 40 or 50 percent? Of course not. But that is what this legislation would impose on the Service.

I am also concerned the bill does not provide any administrative flexibility for the Fish and Wildlife Service to respond to unknown future expenses that could be imposed on the Service. For example, if the CARA legislation should pass, it would allocate an additional $350 million to the Pittman-Robinson programs, but it would not allow any additional funding for that program. I hope we can either address that problem in this legislation or in the follow-along CARA legislation.

I find it remarkable that the majority insists that the workload of the program could virtually double overnight but would not provide additional administrative funds to the program.

I am also concerned that the bill does nothing to ensure the States who receive Federal funds are held accountable on how they spend their grants. After all, the States receive 93 percent of all the Federal Aid funds, roughly $450 annually. Yet the audit of State programs has uncovered many troubling examples of financial abuse, very similar, if not identical, to the problems uncovered in the Federal investigation of the Federal agency.

I find it interesting that the committee would focus its attention exclusively on how the Fish and Wildlife Service spends its funds, which total about $31 million, but fail to address the credible evidence of similar financial mismanagement among the States that spend more than 10 times that amount of money.

Perhaps this indifference reveals the true nature about this legislation. It is less about the avoidance of spending money unlawfully than it is about punishing the Service.

I am disappointed that we have been unable to resolve these substantial concerns and other problems that I have raised with this legislation. I would have preferred to resolve these matters before bringing the bill to the floor. Hopefully, they will be resolved before this legislation is reported from the Senate.

I would hope that the majority would understand that to seek signature on this legislation some of these concerns, that are legitimately raised by the Fish and Wildlife Service, by some of the State agencies, and by supporters of this program, will have to be changed if the agency is, in fact, going to effectively administer the Office of Federal Aid; and if they are going to be able to administer the programs as we on the committee now agree they should be, which resulted from the hearings and the investigations that the majority led into this agency.

I guess, in short, I would simply say this: I believe this legislation is on the right track, but I believe it is overkill.

□ 1600

I believe it is overkill, to the extent to which it can render the agency ineffective to do exactly the mission that is outlined in this reform legislation.

I would hope that the principals of this legislation could work out so there could be sufficient funding that would allow the agency to do its job properly, there would be the reforms that the legislation speaks to to make sure that, in fact, monies are spent properly for the purposes for which people pay into this fund and for which those of us who make the policy on this matter expect them to be paid.

The agency must be allowed to function, and I would hope that those needs could be addressed.

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

The CHAIRMAN. The Committee will rise informally to receive a message.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HASTINGS of Washington) assumed the Chair.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Mr. Sherman Williams, one of his secretaries.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Committee will resume its sitting.

WILDLIFE AND SPORT FISH RESTORATION PROGRAMS IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2000

The Committee resumed its sitting.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY), the great leader in the House.

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Chairman, last year, congressional Republicans fought tooth-and-nail to cut waste, fraud and abuse out of a bloated Federal budget. We were successful, but we have only just begun.

This year we remain vigilant in our crusade to return accountability to the Federal Government, and, today, thanks to the chairman of the Committee on Resources (Mr. YOUNG), we are taking another important step by bringing this bill to the floor.

This measure will eliminate waste, fraud and abuse at the Fish and Wildlife Service and restore integrity and accountability to our conservation programs.

Last century, America's sportsmen agreed to excise taxes on sporting equipment so that others could enjoy hunting, fishing, and other outdoor activities. In doing so, they placed their trust in the Federal Government to administer these funds, their hard-earned dollars, for State conservation efforts.

This system worked for decades, but this administration has shattered that trust. A yearlong committee investigation revealed that half the money set aside to administer these programs, over $15 million, was improperly used.

But do not just take my word for it. The GAO report, and I quote, ''to our knowledge, this is, if not the worst, one of the worst managed programs we have encountered.''

Mr. Chairman, this bill ensures that the government manages the people's money wisely. I urge my colleagues to support this bill and restore trust between America's sportsmen and their government.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Chairman, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. UDALL).

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Chairman, I thank my colleague, the gentleman from California for yielding me the time.