

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this legislation. As explained by the gentleman from Utah (Mr. HANSEN), this was an inadvertent mistake when this report was terminated by the Federal Reports Elimination Sunset Act of 1995, and it is right for us to reinstate it.

It is obvious to all Members of Congress that the Endangered Species Act has been one of our Nation's keystone environmental laws to protect biodiversity and recover threatened and endangered species from the brink of extinction. This better helps us target our efforts to restoring endangered species.

Section 18 of the Endangered Species Act requires the Secretary of the Interior to report annually to the Congress on "reasonably identified" expenditures for the conservation and recovery of threatened and endangered species under the ESA. This report includes an accounting of expenditures from all Federal agencies and from all States that receive section 6 grant funding for conservation activities. Over the years this report has been a valuable tool to discern priorities and trends in how and where ESA funds are spent.

Unfortunately, the section 18 report was included in the list of unnecessary report requirements when Congress passed the Federal Reports Elimination and Sunset Act of 1995. Consequently, this report requirement was scheduled to sunset on December 21, 1999, provided that Congress does not act to reauthorize it.

This bill would correct the initial oversight and simply reauthorize this valuable report requirement. It is my understanding that the Administration did not include this report in the initial list that was forwarded to the Clerk of the House in 1994, and it is my further understanding that the Administration does not oppose its reinstatement at this time.

The Endangered Species Act has been our Nation's keystone environmental law to protect biodiversity and to recover threatened and endangered species from the brink of extinction. This bill would restore a helpful report and do no harm to the Act itself. I support S. 1744 and urge all members to do likewise.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Utah (Mr. HANSEN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill, S. 1744.

The question was taken.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. 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 and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

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

which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 2932 and S. 1744.

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

There was no objection.

#### HMONG VETERANS' NATURALIZATION ACT OF 2000

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 371) to expedite the naturalization of aliens who served with special guerilla units in Laos, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 371

*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 "Hmong Veterans' Naturalization Act of 2000".

##### SEC. 2. EXEMPTION FROM ENGLISH LANGUAGE REQUIREMENT FOR CERTAIN ALIENS WHO SERVED WITH SPECIAL GUERRILLA UNITS OR IRREGULAR FORCES IN LAOS.

The requirement of paragraph (1) of section 312(a) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1423(a)(1)) shall not apply to the naturalization of any person—

(1) who—

(A) was admitted into the United States as a refugee from Laos pursuant to section 207 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1157); and

(B) served with a special guerrilla unit, or irregular forces, operating from a base in Laos in support of the United States military at any time during the period beginning February 28, 1961, and ending September 18, 1978; or

(2) who—

(A) satisfies the requirement of paragraph (1)(A); and

(B) was the spouse of a person described in paragraph (1) on the day on which such described person applied for admission into the United States as a refugee.

##### SEC. 3. SPECIAL CONSIDERATION CONCERNING CIVICS REQUIREMENT FOR CERTAIN ALIENS WHO SERVED WITH SPECIAL GUERRILLA UNITS OR IRREGULAR FORCES IN LAOS.

The Attorney General shall provide for special consideration, as determined by the Attorney General, concerning the requirement of paragraph (2) of section 312(a) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1423(a)(2)) with respect to the naturalization of any person described in paragraph (1) or (2) of section 2 of this Act.

##### SEC. 4. DOCUMENTATION OF QUALIFYING SERVICE.

A person seeking an exemption under section 2 or special consideration under section 3 shall submit to the Attorney General documentation of their, or their spouse's, service with a special guerrilla unit, or irregular forces, described in section 2(1)(B), in the form of—

(1) original documents;

(2) an affidavit of the serving person's superior officer;

(3) two affidavits from other individuals who also were serving with such a special guerrilla unit, or irregular forces, and who personally knew of the person's service; or

(4) other appropriate proof.

##### SEC. 5. DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FOR EXEMPTION AND SPECIAL CONSIDERATION.

In determining a person's eligibility for an exemption under section 2 or special consid-

eration under section 3, the Attorney General—

(1) shall review the refugee processing documentation for the person, or, in an appropriate case, for the person and the person's spouse, to verify that the requirements of section 2 relating to refugee applications and admissions have been satisfied;

(2) shall consider the documentation submitted by the person under section 4;

(3) shall request an advisory opinion from the Secretary of Defense regarding the person's, or their spouse's, service in a special guerrilla unit, or irregular forces, described in section 2(1)(B) and shall take into account that opinion; and

(4) may consider any certification prepared by the organization known as "Lao Veterans of America, Inc.", or any similar organization maintaining records with respect to Hmong veterans or their families.

##### SEC. 6. DEADLINE FOR APPLICATION AND PAYMENT OF FEES.

This Act shall apply to a person only if the person's application for naturalization is filed, as provided in section 334 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1445), with appropriate fees not later than 18 months after the date of the enactment of this Act.

##### SEC. 7. LIMITATION ON NUMBER OF BENEFICIARIES.

Notwithstanding any other provision of this Act, the total number of aliens who may be granted an exemption under section 2 or special consideration under section 3, or both, may not exceed 45,000.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE) and the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. VENTO) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE).

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 371, the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Today, Mr. Speaker, this body considers legislation to facilitate citizenship opportunities for Hmong refugees who were recruited by the United States to assist our combat effort in Indochina. Twenty-five years after the end of the Vietnam War, we honor the heroism and sacrifices of the Hmong.

At great personal peril and loss of life, they fought with us and performed critical roles in dangerous missions on our behalf.

As a former CIA officer pointed out in a statement submitted to the Committee on the Judiciary Subcommittee on Immigration and Claims in the last Congress, and I quote, "Throughout the war, CIA's paramilitary forces collected intelligence, used it in combat operations to tie down some 50,000 North Vietnamese forces in Laos, rescued downed American pilots and protected sensitive American installations at remote mountain tops."