database that links more than 400 partnering organizations. The resulting transplants are made possible through the efforts of millions of volunteers and professionals, connected through an award-winning integrated information system that quickly records, analyzes, and electronically transmits millions of pieces of critical medical data every day to and from hundreds of medical organizations.

There is more to providing marrow and other sources of blood stem cells than simply helping physicians search the Registry. Patients also need assistance. Therefore, the Program provides support services for individual patients to help them through the transplant process. The Patient Advocacy program provides patients with services such as information about transplants, assistance in intervening with insurers to determine coverage, and financial assistance. These efforts include patients assistance funds, case management services, referring physician education, consultation on the best match sources, and accelerated searching to facilitate transplants with an urgent need. The Program also provides support to patients after the transplant occurs to ensure that they can return to a normal, healthy life. Without this support, many patients would not be able to obtain life-saving transplants.

Even with these wonderful successes, we all recognize that the number of donors is not sufficient to meet the needs of every American. Each year more than 30,000 children and adults are diagnosed with life-threatening blood diseases, such as leukemia and plastic anemia, as well as certain immune system and genetic disorders for which a marrow or blood stem cell transplant can be a cure. These transplants require matching certain tissue traits of the donor and patient. Because these traits are inherited, a patient's most likely match is someone of the same heritage. Thus, men and women of the National Marrow Donor Program work continuously to recruit more donors, especially minorities who historically have difficulty finding matches. Since 1995, the Program has more than tripled the number of minority donors.

Mr. Speaker, at a time when our nation seeks to bring the nations and the people of the world closer together, to live in peace, and better understand each other, we can look to the National Marrow Donor Program as one important way to achieve these goals. There is no greater cause than to save a life, and with the ongoing support of every member of this House we can adopt this Resolution today to support the many heroes who have contributed to the work and vision of this program.

From the early days when we sought a home for the program, and had a few doors slammed in our faces, there was Admiral Elmo Zumwalt, Jr. and Dr. Bob Graves. There was Captain Bob Hartzman of the United States Navy who connected us with the Navy Medical Command where we appropriated the first small amount of funding to give birth to the program. There were the early medical pioneers such as Dr. Robert Good, Dr. John Hansen, Dr. Donnell Thomas, and Dr. Jerry Barbosa, all of whom helped perfect the science of marrow transplantation and who assisted us in our legislative quest to establish a federal registry.

There were the members of Congress, past and present, who stood by me as I sought funding to start up the program, to recruit marrow donors, and to perfect the marrow transplant procedures. There were my colleagues on the Appropriations and Energy and Commerce Committees who helped expedite these funding requests and the consideration of several authorization bills.

There were the members of the board of the National Marrow Donor Program and the Marrow Foundation, who have volunteered their time to establish a finely tuned international registry that quickly and efficiently matches marrow donors and patients to give them the best chance of a successful transplant. There is the staff of the NMDP, based in Minneapolis, Minnesota but with operations throughout our nation, who manage the flow of information, marrow and cord blood around the world. And there is the staff and medical teams at the transplant and donor centers who use their medical expertise to complete the transplantation procedures.

Finally, there are the true heroes of the program, the patients and donors. Every patient that has sought a transplant has helped the doctors and researchers perfect the marrow or cord blood transplant procedure to improve the outcome for every future patient. And every donor who has signed up for the national registry has given the ultimate gift of life. They are the heroes without whom we would not have this tremendously successful national and international life-saving program.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, let me again thank the sponsors of this Resolution. Let me thank every member of this House for their partnership in helping us continue the work of the National Marrow Donor Program. With your support, we are giving hope to thousands of patients here and throughout the world today and into the future.

I call on my colleagues to continue their support for the National Marrow Donor Program and its important mission. Whether it is working with physicians and patients to find the best source for a transplant, helping a patient navigate the complexities of the health care system and insurance, or encouraging more Americans to become part of the life-saving Registry, the Program has proven itself a critical part of our Nation's health care infrastructure. Today, we proudly support the work of the National Marrow Donor Program during National Marrow Awareness Month and share in the celebration of the program's successes. However, our work is not finished. We must continue to help all Americans in need of umbilical cord blood, bone marrow, or peripheral blood stem cells to have access to the life saving services and the patient advocacy programs of the National Marrow Donor Program.

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I wholeheartedly support House Concurrent Resolution 206 supporting the National Marrow Donor Program and other bone marrow donor programs and encouraging Americans to learn about the importance of bone marrow donation. I commend Mr. BURGESS for introducing this legislation.

The importance of National Marrow Donor Program (NMDP) and other bone marrow donor programs cannot be overstated. Each year thousands of people are diagnosed with leukemia or other blood diseases which may be cured through a blood stem cell transplant may be a cure. Some will find a matched donor, but many others will have to rely on the kindness of strangers. For those of African-American, Asian, Pacific Islander, Hispanic, Native American, Native Alaskan descent, this is especially challenging.

I commend NMDP and other on their education and outreach initiatives particularly those programs aimed at recruiting donors from minority populations. In 1993, the NMDP Registry included 37,601 donors of African-American, Asian, Pacific Islander, Hispanic, Native American, Native Alaskan heritage. As of August 2003, the number is now 1,145,000 donors. This an increase of approximately 3,000 percent. But there is still a critical need for donors from minority populations.

Her name was Justice Taitague, She was one of the 70 percent who could not find a matched donor from among her family members. Sadly, the donor registry at the time could not provide a match. Through the efforts of Dr. Thomas Shieh, the Guam Medical Society, and the National and Hawaiian Marrow Donor Programs, the first ever marrow drive on Guam was held on her behalf. This ''Drive for Justice'' registered thirty-four hundred volunteers in just three days. But it was too late for Justice, who passed away a few days after the drive.

Justice will never know the impact her life, her story has had on others. She has given us a gift—the gift of understanding of the importance of the National Marrow Donor Program and other bone marrow donor programs and she has given hope to others of Asian/Pacific Island descent searching for a donor.

Mr. Speaker, I fully support House Concurrent Resolution 206 supporting the National Marrow Donor Program and other bone marrow donor programs and encouraging Americans to learn about the importance of bone marrow donation. For me and the people of Guam, it's a matter of Justice.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMMONS). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. WALDEN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 206.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. WALDEN of Oregon. 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.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 1904, HEALTHY FORESTS RESTORATION ACT OF 2003

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 457, I call up the conference report on the bill (H.R. 1904) to improve the capacity of the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of the Interior to plan and conduct hazardous fuels reduction projects on National Forest System lands and Bureau of Land Management lands aimed at protecting communities, watersheds, and certain other at-risk lands from catastrophic wildfire, to enhance efforts to protect watersheds and

address threats to forest and rangeland health, including catastrophic wildfire, across the landscape, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 457, the conference report is considered as having been read.

(For conference report and statement, see proceedings of the House of November 20, 2003, at page H11686.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. STENHOLM) each will control 30 minutes.

Mr. INSLEE. Mr. Speaker, I respectfully demand one-third of the time under clause 8 of rule XXII.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentleman from Texas opposed to the conference report?

Mr. STENHOLM. No, Mr. Speaker, I am in favor of the conference report.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under clause 8(d) of rule XXII, the Chair will divide the hour of debate on the conference report as follows: the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE), the gentleman from Texas (Mr. STENHOLM), and the gentleman from Washington (Mr. INSLEE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE).

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the gentleman from California (Mr. POMBO), chairman of the Committee on Resources, be recognized for 10 minutes for the purposes of controlling debate.

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

There was no objection.

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

Today, we are finally able to bring the Healthy Forests Restoration Act, H.R. 1904, for a vote. In spite of a severely flawed process to arrive at this point, we have driven a hard bargain, and we have got a bill that the President will sign. I believe it will make a difference on the ground, but it is only a first step towards fixing what is wrong with the management of our public lands.

I worked with two other distinguished full committee chairmen, the gentleman from California (Mr. POMBO) of the Committee on Resources and the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER) of the Committee on the Judiciary, to craft a bipartisan bill that passed earlier this year by an overwhelming, and bipartisan, majority. I also want to note the outstanding efforts of my counterpart in the other Chamber, Agriculture Committee Chairman COCHRAN, and our distinguished ranking member, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. STENHOLM), for their efforts.

This bill seeks to address the issues that have tied the hands of our forest managers: National Environmental Policy Act analysis that drags on for months, administrative appeals that spring up at the last minute, and court actions that stall projects for so long that areas proposed for treatment frequently are destroyed by fires long before the judicial process concludes. The conference process has produced a bill that does not do as much as I would like to address on these issues. I understand there are many in both Chambers who would like to have seen a stronger product. But this bill creates the first real relief from bureaucratic gridlock after over 8 years of legislative effort. It sends a clear signal that the Congress favors results over process and that protecting our communities, our watersheds, and our people is more important than producing mountains of paperwork.

There are over 190 million acres of forests and rangelands which remain at risk of catastrophic wildfires, insect and disease, a landmass larger than New England. Our bill takes the modest step of addressing the hazardous conditions on only 20 million acres of this total. This bill also takes an innovative approach to forest health on private lands, creating new nonregulatory, incentive-based approaches to promote conservation on private lands. In short, it takes a national approach to a national problem.

H.R. 1904 has enjoyed broad support from groups such as the Society of American Foresters, the National Volunteer Fire Council, the International Association of Fire Chiefs and others. Professional wildlife managers, sportsmen, and serious conservation groups all support this bill.

We as a Congress have more work to do to perfect our forest management laws. Forest fires are a symptom of a land management system that suffers from procedural, managerial, and practical gridlock. Our forest management laws, environmental laws, and procedural laws do not work well together. They create a process that only highly trained legal minds can comprehend; and while claiming to encourage citizen participation, they often achieve just the opposite. So we need to do more, but we should be proud of what we are doing today. We are taking a bipartisan step toward better management of our forests. We are saying that protecting our communities, our watersheds, and our people comes before protecting the dilatory tactics of those who oppose any type of sensible land management.

I applaud President Bush for helping to bring this about. We would not be on the verge of passing this bill without his leadership. I hope he continues to exert leadership in this field to ensure that the Federal land managers act aggressively to implement this program as quickly as possible. I will do my utmost to ensure that bureaucratic inaction does not delay implementation. I urge my colleagues to support this conference report.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act conference report, and I am pleased to be here on the verge of completing legislation that will give us a chance to return America's cherished forests back to a healthy landscape. For the last century, public land managers have suppressed all forms of wildfire, including natural small-scale fires that restore forest ecosystems.

The unintended result of this policy is a decades-long buildup of forest fuel, woody biomass, and dense underbrush that is as close as the next lightning strike or escaped campfire from exploding into a massive fire. In some areas, tree density has increased from 50 trees per acre to as many as 500 trees per acre, according to the Forest Service and fire ecologists. These unnaturally dense forests are a small-scale ignition away from a large-scale wildfire. These natural small-scale fires burn at the ground level and at relatively low temperatures, allowing some trees to survive and, in the process, renewing the forest.

The suppression of these natural small-scale fires, however, has resulted in an accumulation of fuel that supports catastrophic wildfires of unnatural intensity that burn hotter, spread faster and cause long-term severe environmental damage, sometimes even sterilizing the soil. America's forest ecosystems are being decimated at an alarming rate by large-scale catastrophic wildfire and massive outbreaks of disease, insect infestation, and invasive species. Federal foresters estimate that an astounding 190 million acres of land managed by the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of the Interior are at unnatural risk to catastrophic wildfire. Of that, over 70 million acres are at extreme risk to catastrophic wildfire in the immediate future.

During the second year of the National Fire Plan implementation, we witnessed the second largest fire season this Nation has seen in half a century. An early widespread drought, unparalleled since the Dust Bowl of the 1930s, affected 45 percent of the country. On June 21, 2002, the national level of readiness rose to the highest level possible, 5 weeks earlier than ever before, and remained at that level for a record-setting 62 days. In fact, wildland fires burned 7.2 million acres, or nearly double the 10-year average. Colorado, Arizona and Oregon recently recorded their largest timber fires of the century. And then we saw the devastation in Southern California.

Forest ecologists, professional land managers, and many environmental groups agree, the exploding incidence of catastrophic wildfire and disease and insect infestation pose a massive threat to the health, diversity, and sustainability of America's national forests. The Nature Conservancy, one of

the world's largest and most acclaimed environmental groups, has been a leader in the environmental community in building public awareness about the environmental calamities that catastrophic wildfires cause.

Of the three factors that most influence wildland fire behavior, weather, topography and fuel, land managers can effectively affect only fuel. Unless we take a proactive approach to fuel reduction, the remaining components of the National Fire Plan, which include firefighting, rehabilitation, community assistance and research, will only continue to increase in cost. Local governments, volunteer firefighters, professional foresters, conservationists, and labor organizations agree, it is time to act to protect our forests.

Fortunately, the Healthy Forests Restoration Act addresses these concerns by giving Federal land managers the opportunity to restore our forests to a more natural balance while maintaining important environmental requirements. The conference report before us allows for authorized hazardous fuel reduction projects on Federal lands, helps communities in the wildland-urban interface prepare for wildfires, improves the NEPA analysis process, and augments public involvement and review. Additionally, the report includes titles allowing grants to use biomass, providing watershed forestry assistance, addressing insect infestation research, and establishing private forest reserves.

In closing, let me remind Members that this is not a new issue to come before the United States Congress. We have been talking about this issue for years. I remember the tremendous work done by former House Agriculture Committee chairman Bob Smith and his efforts to reach out and find a compromise, only to go down in flames because of the inability of extreme sides of this question to come together.

I am disappointed that certain Members of the House were excluded from the process that got us here today. That certainly has not been the case with the House Committee on Agriculture. I commend Chairman GOODLATTE for his bipartisanship and leadership on this important issue. We all have differing opinions about the various components of the legislation before us; but in passing this legislation, we will restore America's treasured landscapes by reducing the risks of catastrophic wildfires and insect and disease infestations.

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

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

(Mr. INSLEE asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. INSLEE. Mr. Speaker, it is abundantly clear to all of us of all political persuasions and parts of the country that we need a vigorous, well-funded, well-prioritized hazardous fuels reduction program in our national forests.

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The Nation needs that because of a ''perfect storm,'' if I may use that term, of enormous changes in our climate which have led to drought, particularly in the western United States, leaving the most explosive conditions due to the lack of moisture in over 100 years and because of our misguided and mutually ignorant policy over the last several decades, if not century, of suppressing all fire, thereby allowing certain additional density to increase. All of us know we need a well-prioritized, well-funded, well-defined hazardous fuels reduction program.

But I, regretfully, cannot support this bill because it fails in several fundamental ways. It fails to prioritize the taxpayers' dollars where they ought to be prioritized which is the protect of human health and property first. It fails to protect our most treasured crown jewels in our Forest Service of our roadless areas, which I have to tell the Members in the part of the world where I come from, we treasure the roadless areas on our weekends and afternoons. It is part of our culture and our families, and they are unprotected in this bill. Third, it fails to adequately solve the problem as to why we cannot get these programs completed, which is money, and I will come back to that. We today change the law, but not the appropriations that we need to get this job done.

Let me start with a failure to prioritize in this bill. If I may, this ought to be job one for the U.S. Congress when it comes to hazardous fuels reduction. Job one for the U.S. Congress ought to be protecting, with a protective buffer, the homes and towns and cabins and barns in our thousands of acres from voracious forest fire, and this bill does not follow a fundamental precept that when we have got job one and when we have got limited dollars, we prioritize. To govern is to choose, and this bill consciously chose not to give the majority of funds in this program to protect these areas with moats, if I may, to protect them from this horrendous fire. And we have seen what happens in California when that occurs. And it ought to be a totally unanimous agreement here that the majority of our funds in our program ought to be directed to the areas around our towns and cities rather than spent up in Timbuktu harvesting commercial lumber.

We have seen that they split the baby 50/50, but spliting the baby 50/50 is not always right nor is it fair, and I will tell my colleagues why. This conference report says 50 percent of this money will go to the Wildland-Urban Interface. It will not do to tell people in this community that we have saved half their houses, and we have sacrificed the other half to the demands of those who want to continue commercial logging in our roadless areas. We failed in our duty to prioritize our precious dollars where they belong, and we have offered a modest amendment to improve that in the conference committee which were rejected out of hand.

And let me tell the Members why this prioritization is so important. Of the dollars we have spent next year, if we double the amount that has been appropriated by the majority party, whom I respect, and I respect their positions on this bill, but if we even double the amount that was spent in the last 3 years, we will still only do 2 to 3, maybe 4 percent of the acreage of the millions of acres that need to be treated. We have to prioritize. This bill did not do it.

The second thing this bill did not do, it did not protect our roadless areas. We have 58 million acres of roadless areas which are the crown jewels of our national forest, which are pristine, and everyone loves the trees in our roadless areas. The problem is some of them love them vertically and some of them like them horizontally. This bill does not protect our roadless areas from the ones who want to do commercial logging so that they will be horizontal. It does not protect them one wit in those roadless areas, and that is most discomforting, and I will tell the Members why. We should have been able to fashion a unanimous way to protect those roadless areas. Let me just suggest one way to do it. I offered an amendment in the conference committee that would simply say that if we have to, if there is some terrible disease-ridden patch in the roadless area that we have to build a road to get to it, to do an emergency program that would be allowed under this bill, okay; but let us at least restore the road after the project is completed to its original topography. How can anyone object to that? How could anyone object to that precept? If we are building a road in a roadless area to do a hazardous fuels reduction program, when we are done with the program, why not put the road back in its natural topography. Who could object to it? I will tell the Members who does object to it. The timber industry who wants to use these roads to punch them into the heart of our most virginal forests and then make them available for commercial harvest, and we do not need to do that to accomplish our ends here, and it is regrettable we did not solve that problem.

The third thing that this bill does not do, it does not cut to the heart of the problem. This bill, its whole fundamental idea is if we just cut off those pesky environmentalists, by gum there will not be any more forest fires. I will give the Members bad news. We can outlaw environmentalists if we want to, and I see some nods. My friend over on this side of the aisle would like to do that. I take a different view. They are my constituents. They are people who like to go up and have clean water out of the roadless areas. They are people who like to go on a picnic in the roadless areas, and they know, as I do, that if all we try to do to fix this program is to cut off citizen participation,

we will not solve the problem of getting these fuels reduction programs in line, and I will tell the Members why we will not. The reason we have we are not getting the job done and giving therapy to our forests is that we have not appropriated one tenth of the money that is necessary to get this job done. It is not appeals. Come on. The GAO, in their last study, after four rounds to make sure they got it right, said that 92 percent of all of these fuels reduction projects go lickity-split right through the process without any problems and only 3 percent of them were litigated. Ninety-seven percent of these projects go through without litigation. So why have we not cut the mustard? Why have we not done enough therapy on these forests? It is because we have not invested the money to do it. We have only invested enough money to do 2 to 3 percent, and that is not going to significantly improve in this bill. Doubling does not even cut it, even if we got the appropriation. So we are united, I think, unanimously on this floor in the belief that we need to have a strong fuels reduction program, but we cannot say that this bill will provide what the American people need to get this job done in a reasonable fashion.

The fourth, if I can, problem with this bill: It is clear that we have got to cut down a whole bunch of trees to solve this problem because they are dense, they have grown up because of our misguided fuels suppression program, and now we have got this cataclysmic fire situation. But the question is what do we cut and where? That is really the issue we need to resolve on the floor of this House. And here is a tree, a mature tree. I wish I could tell the age, marked for cutting in the fuels reduction program. There is no reason to cut that tree except for commercial purposes. We needed to develop a firm definition, so that the Forest Service can use it to determine what trees to cut, and it would have been easier if we provided them adequate money to do it, so they do not have an incentive to log bigger trees to generate money for this program. But we did not do it, because the appropriations process did not cut the mustard. So we have a problem that we have not given adequate definition of what to cut and where.

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

Mr. POMBO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 2 minutes.

I am glad that the gentleman from Washington (Mr. INSLEE) claimed the time in opposition to this because I think it is important for everyone to see just how difficult this bill has been to finally arrive at this point of developing a bill and a conference report that is so widely supported in both this Chamber and the Chamber across the Capitol, that we have brought together such divergent interests, so many people who may have initially opposed this bill that are now on board because of the great compromise that was reached to bring this bill to the floor.

The history behind the Healthy Forests initiative, it has been, I think, 8 years now since the very first bill was introduced and the work began to finally get to this point, and we have gone through, I believe, close to 75 hearings in Committee on Resources alone on this legislation. There has been a countless number of people that have testified, and we have gone back and forth. And these past 3 years, we actually have to give a lot of credit to two of my colleagues in the House, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. MCINNIS), subcommittee chairman, and the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. WALDEN) for the work that they did in pulling together with all of the different interests to bring something together, the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER), former ranking member on the committee, and the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) and others to put together a bill that was really a great balance between so many different interests. And I found with interest the gentleman from Washington's (Mr. INSLEE) talk about a particular tree and saying that we need to resolve on the floor of the House whether or not that should be cut down. I have got to tell him, we do not know. That is the job of the professional foresters. The focus of this bill is to go out into the forests and let the professionals, the scientists, the people who really do understand what is going on out there, have them decide where the best place to do thinning projects is, not on the floor of the House. That is ridiculous to think that we on the floor of the House should be doing that.

But this is a grand compromise. It is a great bill, and I urge my colleague to support it.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. GUTKNECHT), chairman of the Department Operations, Oversight, Nutrition, and Forestry Subcommittee of the House Committee on Agriculture.

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for yielding me this time.

And I want to especially thank all those who have been involved, the gentleman from Virginia (Chairman GOODLATTE), the gentleman from California (Chairman POMBO), and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. STENHOLM), ranking member, for all of their work on this legislation. And in addition, I think we should thank President Bush because of his leadership on this issue.

Nearly half of the 190 million acres managed by the Secretaries of Agriculture and Interior are at extreme risk to wildfire. Millions of acres across the South, the East, and in my home State of Minnesota are facing disease and insect epidemics. And yet Federal land managers will treat only about 2.5 million of those acres each year because of the extraordinarily lengthy procedural and documentation requirements.

Time and again, we have seen the destruction that forest mismanagement and drought can cause to our landscape and to our families. This year alone 4.3 million acre of our Nation's forests have burned and 29 firefighters have lost their lives. Recently, more than 750,000 acres have been burned in southern California, and 22 Californians died trying to escape those fires.

Many see the fires on TV and think this is only an issue for ''out West.'' Unfortunately, poor forest health is a national problem. The lack of forest management of our national forests in States across our country, including my home State of Minnesota, has placed private forests and communities at risk of fires, insects, and disease. Almost 3 million acres of the National Forest System lands in Minnesota are at high risk. Standing by and doing nothing to protect this precious resource is tantamount to criminal neglect. Congress has an obligation to ensure that we do not neglect our national forest lands and ensure that they are available for generations to come. Too often, excessive regulation and what I call ''paralysis by analysis'' has made even the simplest management project an ordeal of years instead of weeks. H.R. 1904 is critical to begin to solve the problems of proper management of our forests.

I urge all Members to support this important legislation.

□ 1400

Mr. STENHOLM. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO).

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas for yielding me this time, and I thank all of the members of the Committee on Agriculture and the Committee on Resources who have put so much time and effort into this. Yes, it was a long process, but I believe that a good result is worth the work. I wish we had got it done a year ago; but, hey, we are now finally going to get something in place long ahead of next year's fire season.

This bill, if properly implemented, will begin to carefully undo 100 years of mismanagement of our national forests. It recognizes that this is going to be a long and expensive process. It recognizes that it cannot be done for nothing. This bill includes a $760 million-a-year authorization. I think we could even go higher. Mr. Speaker, $1 billion a year could be productively spent in the West, given the magnitude of the problem; but it is a significant increase over the commitments we are currently making.

It will bring jobs to hard-hit rural areas in the forests. It sets a priority that half the funds should be spent in proximity to high-risk communities in the West, and it also sets priorities for protection of other high-value resources in high-risk areas.

If properly implemented and fully funded, I believe that we can begin to step incrementally away from the catastrophic, or potentially catastrophic,

conditions that exist throughout the West today.

It contains old-growth language that clearly reflects the intent of Congress that the objective is to return the forests to presettlement conditions, which means there will be large, fire-resistant trees more widely spaced, particularly in the inter-mountain areas; that we would leave native stands intact, but we would aggressively thin from below. We would remove ladder fuels, we would remove trees that are growing into the crowns of the larger trees.

I mentioned earlier the Davis fire in Oregon and the lodgepole that carried the fire into the crowns of the Ponderosa, that would have survived the fire otherwise, had we gotten in there and removed those lodgepoles, which have little commercial value. That is why this program will be expensive. In many areas, what needs to be removed has little or no commercial value. Where it has commercial value, we will use that to offset the costs and to amplify the program.

It does not unduly restrict the right of appeal. It does require that people participate meaningfully in the process if they are going to appeal, and that is the way it should be. I want people to be involved from the beginning in communities, meaningfully commenting on the plans and proposals of the Forest Service. It allows judicial review if the bill is misapplied by this or any future administration.

But it will move the process along, and we will begin to chip away at the backlog. But make no mistake, even if we get the $760 million a year, this is going to take a long time to return our forests to their natural state.

Mr. INSLEE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. HINCHEY).

Mr. HINCHEY. Mr. Speaker, this is an example of not just an act that will destroy good policy, but it also destroys the language; and it is consistent with the kind of thing that has been happening here recently, particularly with regard to environmental policy.

What is the name of this bill? The Healthy Forest Restoration Act. It reminds me very much of the Clear Skies Initiative that the President was pushing and the majority in this House was solidly behind. What did we get from the Clear Skies Initiative? Increased greenhouse gases, increased acid rain, a big gift to the polluters so that they do not have to upgrade their equipment. The same kind of thing occurs here.

The rationale behind this legislation as it is stated is that we need this act in order to carry out thinning processes in places where fires are likely to occur. Now, one would have the idea, based upon that, that these thinning processes are being held up. That is what they want us to believe, these thinning processes are being held up by litigation and things of that nature.

Well, what does the General Accounting Office say? The General Accounting Office has a lot of credibility around here. The General Accounting Office tells us that the appeals and litigation are not slowing thinning projects at all. In fact, 92 percent of the thinning projects are being completed without delay.

Now, why, then, are we engaged in this?

Well, the real reason is, just like under the Clear Skies Initiative, we were not interested in cleaning up the skies, and here we are not interested in healthy forests. What we are interested in is a big giveaway to the people who want to go out and cut down the trees that are on public land. That is what this is all about.

Now, another interesting aspect of it to me is a lot of people in this House who are dead set against any activity by the Federal Government, they want the Federal Government out of everything. Now, however, under this piece of legislation it is, no problem, just give them this authority, trust the administration, trust the Federal Government. They will do everything right. Totally inconsistent, obviously.

So what else does this bad bill do? It fails to focus on projects in communities that are actually in need of protection. It undercuts NEPA by eliminating the requirement to consider a full range of reasonable alternatives. It fails to treat or provide assistance to State, tribal, and private lands. It throws up unprecedented roadblocks to citizens across the country and their access to the courts, and it is a direct threat to the independence of the judiciary in this country on this specific issue. It curtails the rights to appeal bad projects and authorizes a new appeals process with no sideboards to be created by the Secretary.

This is an example of a bad bill and specious arguments driving bad policy.

Mr. POMBO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. LEWIS).

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time. While I am doing so, I want to express my deep appreciation to the leadership on both sides of the aisle who have gone about the compromises necessary to bring this bill to the floor in the first place.

It is important to know that we have been mismanaging our forests for all too long now; and if there is a need for a demonstration project relative to that, all one has to do is look at the recent devastating fires in Southern California.

My territory is directly impacted. We have lost thousands and thousands of homes. We have lost dozens of lives as a direct result of mismanagement of our forests. And as of this moment, the most pristine areas of Southern California are in jeopardy of total loss because of mismanagement by this body and by the Federal Government of their forestlands.

This bill is a good step in the right direction. It is going to cost some money, but not nearly the billions and billions of losses that we have already suffered in Southern California.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Montana (Mr. REHBERG).

Mr. REHBERG. Mr. Speaker, I would like to add my voice to the chorus of accolades thanking the various chairmen and subcommittee chairmen and Members who have worked so hard on this piece of legislation.

It is ironic in this country when something like September 11 occurs, or a tornado or a flood that creates massive destruction quickly, we roll up our sleeves and we get to work rebuilding. Yet the cancer that is caused by drought and insect infestation, disease and such that is occurring within our forests somehow is treated differently.

What have we seen over the years? In 1988 we burned a large area of Montana, the Yellowstone ecosystem. We assumed that something would be done, but it was not. It got stuck back in Washington, D.C., and what did they do? They talked and talked and talked. And over the years, while we talked about solutions, what have we done? We have talked our forests to death. And eventually we go to the corners, and then we sue our ways back out. It is stupid. It is ridiculous. That is not the way to present a better forest. This piece of legislation in fact will now manage the lawsuits.

Please support this compromise. It is a good one.

Mr. STENHOLM. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. STUPAK).

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, as cosponsor of H.R. 1904, the Healthy Forest Restoration Act of 2003, I rise in support of this legislation because of the relief it provides to combat the challenges facing our forest system today. From hazardous fuel reduction to insect and disease infestation research, this bill gives our forest managers and our private citizens the money and the technical assistance they need to help bring our forests back to health.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 1904 will work to alleviate the fire hazards that currently plague our forests. As evident by the rampant spread of the wildfires that recently ravaged Southern California, our Nation's forest system is overwhelmed with excess brush and foliage which could fuel catastrophic wildfires.

This bill provides thinning programs for up to 20 million acres of at-risk lands near communities and their water supplies, at-risk lands that serve as habitat for threatened and endangered species, and at-risk land that is particularly susceptible to disease or insect infestation.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 1904 also provides money and technical assistance to stop the growing problem of insect and disease infestation. In southeastern Michigan, for example, Forest Service managers are battling the emerald ash

borer. This insect has decimated the population of ash trees located in a 6-county area. Luckily, officials have responded quickly, and we are in the process of containing this threat. H.R. 1904 will assist in our fight against invasive species like the emerald ash borer and others around our country by promoting new research and quick action to reduce the impacts on these forest pests.

I strongly urge my colleagues to pass this conference agreement on H.R. 1904. I want to thank the ranking member, the chair, and all of the staff for their hard work on this. It is time we reduce the threat of wildfires to our communities and our environment. Support H.R. 1904.

Mr. POMBO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. HAYWORTH).

Mr. HAYWORTH. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman of the committee, my friend from California, and I thank him for yielding me this time. I rise in strong support of this conference report, which at once is an important first step and, at the same time, is long overdue.

It has been interesting to listen to the conflicting philosophies on the floor. There is one point of view represented that true environmentalism means therapy for the forests.

Mr. Speaker, I think the questions are accurate to be asked. Is it therapeutic to have such destruction in the forests that the number of particulates in the air eclipses rush hour in many of our major metropolitan areas? Is it therapeutic in the forests to see watersheds destroyed? Is it therapeutic in the forests to see land burned so badly that, as the gentleman from Texas pointed out, the land is sterilized?

No, the sound environmental position is to have sound scientific principles embracing healthy forest management. And to the effort of protecting homes and property and people like the 20-plus who perished in California, this job is long overdue. We must pass this bill; and, quite frankly, we should do more, not only for rural America, but for suburbanites who perished in the recent fires in California.

Mr. STENHOLM. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Oregon (Ms. HOOLEY).

Ms. HOOLEY of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time and for all the hard work he has put in on this particular piece of legislation. I also want to especially thank my two colleagues, the gentlemen from Oregon (Mr. WALDEN) and (Mr. DEFAZIO), for their enormous work on this piece of legislation.

Mr. Speaker, this is an issue that is very important to my home State and to my congressional district. Reduction of hazardous fuels. Oregon has been hit hard by wildfires in recent years, and I am very happy that we are finally taking steps in this House to make up for years of neglect of our Federal forests. Forests and timber are vitally important to the citizens of Oregon. The economic costs of forest fires in Oregon have been astronomical and the human costs have been even higher. It is essential we do something about it, and something sooner rather than later.

Prior to coming to Congress, I served as a county commissioner in Clackamas County, which owned thousands of acres of forest land. I was responsible for management of those forests. I know from experience that it is possible to manage and protect a forest and that in many cases, it is necessary to manage a forest in order to protect it.

This legislation before us will have a positive impact. Not only will it help save people's homes and people's lives, it will focus money on lands that need it most and provide environmental protections.

□ 1415

At the same time it allows local communities and citizens to remain involved in the process. What I am most pleased about, however, is that this legislation provides funding for fuel reduction. The $760 million authorized in this bill is a great start and will help protect our forest and our communities.

The House and the Senate have reached an important compromise that is balanced, and provides money to get the job done. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join with me in supporting this legislation that fosters a healthy management and protection of our national forests.

Mr. INSLEE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL).

(Mr. UDALL of New Mexico asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I compliment the gentleman from Washington (Mr. INSLEE) for his management of this bill. Let me just talk a little bit about the judicial review test here, because I think that we are embarking on new ground. When we put in a test that talks about short-term and long-term, really what we are ending up doing is saying that if you cut down the whole forest and it is okay in 100 years, then that is all right. I mean, that is the kind of test that we are putting into this piece of legislation. We do not know what that means. And so we are encroaching into the judicial arena, trying to tell the courts what to do. This is a new test. It is a new standard. It has never been used before.

And what is going to happen? We hear all the talk about lawsuits and litigation from this side of the aisle. Guess what, folks? This is going to be a lawyers employment bill. If there is anything that is going to come out of this, it is going to be more litigation, it is going to be more billable time, it is going to be more lawyers involved in this process. And I think what is going to happen further, if we allow this to happen, if we allow this to happen, we are going to see this appear across the board in other areas, workers' rights, OSHA, any place where Federal agency decision-making is going on, this is going to be imposed on the Federal courts. And I think that is why the committees that supervise in the Congress judicial review have such a hard time with this provision.

With that, I would just urge my colleagues to vote against this bill.

The recent firestorm in Southern California acted to once again remind us of the gravity of rampant wildfires in the west. However, this issue is of such great importance that I am extremely concerned about, and strongly object to, the manner that this legislation was brought before us today.

You may recall that the Committee Print of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act was released to the members of the Resources Committee during a recess period, on the Friday afternoon before it was scheduled to be marked up in Resources committee, a few days later.

Similarly, we are called upon today to vote on the Healthy Forests Conference Committee report. This report was just released yesterday. It is my understanding that the rules for the House call for a minimum of 3 days of review of a conference report before it is voted upon.

So, in what now seems to be standard operating procedure of the House, we have barely had twenty-four hours, if that, to read and digest its contents. One day is hardly sufficient to allow all Members to carefully and thoughtfully consider this vital legislation.

I would like to point out that H.R. 1904 was not the sole option available for our protection from wildfire devastation. Mr. UDALL of Colorado and I introduced H.R. 1042, the Forest Restoration and Fire Risk Reduction Act.

Had we had an opportunity to hold hearings on our bill, Mr. UDALL and I would have been able to formally raise some of the issues that I view are not adequately addressed in H.R. 1904 or the conference report, but that are critically important to wildlife prevention and protection.

Our bill would place greater emphasis on protection of the "wildland/urban interface" without imposing the unprecedented deadlines and standards for injunctive relief on the Federal judiciary, and without emasculating our environmental laws that are present in both H.R. 1904 and the Report.

While the results of the conference are better than the version passed by the House, the provisions that I view to be most controversial remain in the text. The agreement places a greater emphasis on thinning forests very close to communities, but, like the House bill, it significantly limits environmental reviews of forest thinning projects and insect infestation field research projects.

I reemphasize that I believe that we must conduct thinning projects to help reduce the likelihood of unusually severe fires. However, I do not support the contention that to facilitate such projects we need to expunge our environmental laws and procedures for public comment and participation.

The limits placed on fire-risk reduction projects from environmental review and administrative appeals, especially in the wildland

urban interface, in effect constrain the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act. Furthermore, denying the public the full and fair opportunity to have viable alternatives to agency action considered circumvents established policy of public participation.

Such participation is an important aspect of our democratic process for making decisions affecting public lands. Limiting public comment and ignoring the provisions of NEPA and other laws designed to protect our environment does not assist in developing sound forest management.

I believe, however, that the conference report is a better bill than the version passed by the House. The Report contains specific provisions to protect the wildland urban interface. Furthermore, the report authorizes tribal watershed management programs for Indian tribes, an issue that I have strongly advocated for since we began working on this legislation in the 107th Congress.

Nonetheless, I am afraid that this legislation is just another assault by the Bush Administration on our Nation's forests. Most of the attacks over the last year have been below the radar—in arcane rules, stealth riders and misnamed legislation. In this many-fronted assault, big timber is the winner.

Under the guise of buzz words such as forest health, catastrophic-wildfire prevention and streamlining, the Administration's initiatives transform forest policy in ways that are staggering in their scope as well as in their implications for democracy.

The changes revamp laws fundamental to sound forest management, including the National Forest Management Act, the Appeals Reform Act and NEPA. The cumulative effect of these changes is to undermine or eliminate open decisionmaking, agency accountability, resource protection and recourse in the courts.

It began in December 2002, when the Administration proposed a forest-planning regulation that renders public involvement virtually meaningless. The rule ignores scientific involvement, eliminates fish and wildlife protection, and fails to protect roadless areas.

It skews the planning process to favor logging, mining and off-road vehicle use. It renders plan standards more discretionary, further reducing agency accountability. Most shocking, the final rule, due out imminently, exempts forest plans from environmental analysis and eliminates the opportunity for the public to appeal the final plan.

The Forest Service assured critics that it would undertake in-depth environmental studies when specific logging projects were proposed. Not so.

In June 2003, the Administration abolished environmental review of logging done in the name of ''hazardous fuels reduction'' on up to 1,000 acres of land as well as post-fire rehabilitation projects on up to 4,200 acres.

One month later, the Administration carved out more loopholes for National Environmental Policy Act exemptions for commercial logging by setting acreage limits of 70 acres for timber sales and 250 acres for salvage sales. These projects have few, if any, meaningful constraints.

For example, the projects must be ''consistent'' with local forest plans. Yet, under the soon-to-be final planning regulations, forest plans can be amended simply by changing the plan on an interim basis with no public notice.

Under the banner of hazardous fuels reductions, large-scale, intensive commercial logging projects may take place virtually anywhere in our forests, regardless of forest type or tree size. In effect, the conference report allows logging and associated road building with limited environmental analysis, administrative appeals, judicial review and public involvement.

The Appeals Reform Act of 1992 gave citizens a statutory right of appeal after the Forest Service tried to eliminate appeals on timber sales. Although billed as part of the ''Healthy Forests Initiative,'' changes to these regulations significantly curtail rights to appeal a broad range of timber sales and land management decisions—not just those pertaining to fire risk.

H.R. 1904 sets no time frames for appeal, no required stay of action provision during the appeal, and no guaranteed right to appeal. Instead, the Forest Service would have 30 days after enactment of this legislation to develop the new administrative appeals process.

This legislation also pushes citizens out of the picture. In addition to altering the intentions of the Appeals Reform Act, H.R. 1904 reduces environmental review on logging projects not already given a wholesale exemption and severely restricts opportunities for public involvement.

Furthermore, it encroaches upon the courts' ability to review the legality of logging projects almost anywhere on our publicly owned forests, including roadless areas and old growth. If bug and disease-control are the purported reasons for logging, projects up to 1,000 acres will bypass all environmental review and appeals.

With millions of dollars authorized in the act for any hazardous fuels project on public lands, logging without laws can proceed throughout the backcountry.

The synergistic effects of these radical rollbacks are breathtaking. I predict that the assault will only foment more controversy and stimulate more distrust of the Forest Service for years to come.

I urge my colleagues to vote ''no.''

Mr. STENHOLM. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PETERSON).

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise to urge everyone if you want forests to be healthy and be managed, to support this bill. I have heard stated here that we have mismanaged, that the Forest Service and other agencies cannot manage forests under the current law. It is impossible to manage.

In the Allegheny National Forest in Pennsylvania, the finest hardwood forest in America, we just had 10,000 to 20,000 acres of blow-down in July. It has been assessed at somewhere between $50 to $100 million in value lying on the ground. The Forest Service chief there just determined that it would be at least 3 years before he could have people there harvesting trees on the ground. Tell me that the system season broke, that it makes sense to have $100 million worth of American assets to lie there and rot because in 3 years they are of little value at all.

Folks, this system is broken. We do not want judges managing our forests. We want soil scientists, fish and wildlife biologists, and all the people that our Forest Service hires. They have every kind of scientist there is managing our forests. They should make those decisions.

Mr. POMBO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. RENZI), who brought a renewed vigor to this debate.

Mr. RENZI. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the chairman for his leadership, and I especially want to thank the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. MCINNIS) for his fighting spirit and 3 years of perseverance that it took us to finally get to this point.

I also maybe want to offer a little bit of a different view for those limousine environmentalists from the inner city, who do not necessarily live in the forests as we do. Coming from Flagstaff, Arizona, the largest Ponderosa pine forest in the world, where we suffered the likes of the Rodeo-Chedeski fire, a fire of 500 thousand acres.

I want my colleagues to know there is a science that is being ignored here. We are taking half the money and putting it into wildland urban interface right on the boundaries of our communities. Yet the forest managers want to be able to attack fire in the outlands. What they understand is in the West we have canyons. While they may have concrete canyons in New York City, we have real canyons in Arizona. In those canyons, we have up-slope terrain. When up-slope terrain combines with wind and temperature, that fire burns so hot and so fast that wildland urban interface and limiting the money will not be able to give us fallback positions for our firemen. It is a compromise that we have proposed here. Vote in favor of the bill.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. BURNS).

Mr. BURNS. Mr. Speaker, I want to join my colleagues in support of H.R. 1904, the Healthy Forest Initiatives. I want to thank the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE), the gentleman from California (Mr. POMBO), my distinguished colleague from Texas (Mr. STENHOLM). We think about the healthy forests, we think about our homes, the wildlife, the lives of the men and women who live near and certainly the forest, and we want to protect those.

In California, we saw the devastating fires of this year. I can think of no better way to ease the minds of those in the West than to pass the Healthy Forest Initiative.

In Georgia, we do not have the wildfires and the large forest fires that we see in the West, but we have pests, and we have disease. We have millions of acres that are at risk in Georgia due to the southern pine beetle and other insects. We have seen a 278 percent in increase in pine beetle infestation last year alone. This Healthy Forest Restoration Act provides the Federal land managers with great flexibility to deal with the fire dangers in the West, but it also provides them with the authority to do innovative things in detection

and suppression of pests that really threaten eastern forests.

Mr. Speaker, the Healthy Forest Restoration Act is a national solution to a national problem. I urge Congress to vote yes.

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

Mr. POMBO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. WALDEN), the coauthor of the legislation.

Mr. WALDEN of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, this legislation provides for major improvements in how we will manage our forests. First of all, it reduces unneeded government analysis. Second, it provides for actually more public involvement, especially in the beginning, through better notice and better participation requirements. It requires and reforms the appeals process so we can end the costly delays that do keep our professional foresters from doing the work they need to do to make our forests more healthy.

Finally, it does require the courts to more quickly move on appeals and, more importantly, consider the catastrophic affect on forest health of preventing these projects from going forward.

Now, we have heard today about the problem with the General Accounting Office, but let us talk about what the General Accounting Office actually found. This is what the GAO report found: 58 percent of eligible thinning projects in the United States were appealed in fiscal year 2001 and fiscal year 2002. Fifty-two percent of the eligible forest thinning projects proposed near communities in the wildland urban interface were appealed. Half the projects, half the projects right around communities were appealed. The GAO found an overwhelming number of Forest Service appeals were found to be without merit. Seventy-three percent of the appeals were rejected.

Ladies and gentlemen, we have to change the process. That is what we are doing today. We are going to fund the work that needs to be done. This year alone we are going to spend $420 million to go in and thin out our forests so we will not have catastrophic fires in the future. I would like to see this bill expanded beyond 11 percent of the forests that need this kind of treatment, but that is as far as we could get under this act. I want to see our communities protected.

This legislation relies on the underlying National Forest management plans to protect old growth forests. My colleague, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. INSLEE) talks about protecting old growth. We do that in this bill because the underlying plans protect the old growth. And the alternative of defeating this bill is to have old growth forests that are blackened, burned and destroyed, and I will not stand for that. Vote for the bill.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Colorado (Mrs. MUSGRAVE).

Mrs. MUSGRAVE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to offer my gratitude to the chairman of the Committee on Agriculture, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE), the ranking member, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. STENHOLM), the gentleman from California (Mr. POMBO), and especially to my colleague, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. MCINNIS).

In the West we care very deeply about this legislation, particularly in Colorado. We have had the Buffalo Creek Fire, we have had the Hayman Fire in Colorado, we have had massive loss in acres of our beautiful forest land. We have had immeasurable damage to the environment, to our water quality.

The Denver Water Board spent over $20 million cleaning up after the last fire. Habitat has been destroyed. Our tourism industry has been harmed greatly. And, more importantly, we have lost the lives of our brave firefighters in Colorado.

We are in strong support, those of us that care about our national forests and our private forests, are in strong support of this conference committee report. And I commend all those who have worked so hard on this conference committee and this legislation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BASS). The Chair would like to announce that the gentleman from California (Mr. POMBO) has 3 minutes remaining, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) has 1 minute remaining, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. STENHOLM) has 7 minutes remaining, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. INSLEE) has 5 minutes remaining.

Mr. STENHOLM. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER).

(Mr. DREIER asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this conference report. And I was told that I had to spend my entire 2 minutes praising the gentleman from Texas (Mr. STENHOLM), but I am going to instead talk about the benefits of this bill. And I want to compliment my colleague, the gentleman from California (Mr. POMBO), and the chairman of the conference, our good friend, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE), the chairman of the Committee on Agriculture, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. WALDEN), and others who have been so involved in this measure.

I happen to represent the Los Angeles area in southern California. And the world knows that we have just suffered devastating fires in the southern California area. It impacted the districts of my colleague, the gentleman from California (Mr. LEWIS) who represents the area in the Inland Empire to the east of Los Angeles, further east of the area I represent, and several others of our colleagues in San Diego. I know that my colleague, the gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER), as we all know, lost his home. And this impacted the district of the gentleman from California (Mr. CUNNINGHAM). And I can go through the litany of our colleagues. Many members of the California delegation had their districts impacted by this. We lost lives, we lost a tremendous, tremendous amount of property. I lost in excess of 50 homes in the area that I represent.

And I was very pleased when the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) was before the Committee on Rules yesterday and talked about the fact that within this measure we will be able to have resources to deal with things like the bark beetle which has played a role in creating a problem in southern California when these trees were not cleared. And that played a role in starting these fires.

We know that some resources were provided through the Department of Agriculture to deal with this, but it was not handled appropriately from the reports that we had from the head of the Office of Emergency Services there. It is important for us to do everything that we can to ensure that the loss of life and property is diminished. I am convinced that passage of this conference report will go a long way towards doing just that. And I thank all my friends who played such an important role in making this happen.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BASS). The Chair will advise that the closing order will be the gentleman from California (Mr. POMBO) first, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. STENHOLM) second, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. INSLEE) third, and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) fourth.

□ 1430

Mr. POMBO. Mr. Speaker, I have one additional speaker to close.

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

Mr. STENHOLM. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. SMITH).

(Mr. SMITH of Michigan asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, our Committee on Agriculture is a great committee in terms of Republicans and Democrats working together.

Our forests in this country are one of our strong resources that not only help us economically but also help the environment, and conserving the environment is important. Our forests certainly are an important part of Michigan, but they are also a very important part of our economic strength in the United States.

In the West, catastrophic wildfires recently have decimated those forests over the last several years. We have made a mistake over how we want to control forests. And sometimes in our overzealousness to protect from fires, we have increased the potential of additional damage. Two days ago, we

passed an energy bill. In this bill there is also language to utilize the natural renewable resources of our woodlands of America to also contribute to energy.

Removing some of the bureaucratic red tape for performing fire prevention measures is not only environmentally friendly but also fiscally responsible, as fire prevention costs American taxpayers approximately one-fourth of what it costs to fight catastrophic forest fires. The Healthy Forests Restoration Act authorizes the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to reduce the amount of underbrush and deadwood buildup in forests that serve as kindling and fuel for the hottest, most dangerous fires. It would regulate BLM's activities by putting limits on the tree removal and road construction that has provoked controversy at times in the past. This would give BLM the tools it needs to confront the increasing threat of destructive forest fires on federal lands that have had serious impacts both on people and wildlife.

The bill takes additional measures to improve our forests. These include provisions to encourage energy production from renewable energy sources, protection of watersheds in forest areas and the creation of a forest reserve program aimed at preserving and rehabilitating up to one million acres of degraded and rare forest lands.

Disease and insect infestations are not only detrimental to our woodlands, but also to our tree-lined streets and backyards. In southeast Michigan, we are combating an exotic beetle known as the Emerald Ash Borer. The bettles' larvae feed on the sapwood and eventually kill branches and entire trees. This invasive pest has resulted in the quarantine of all ash products in six counties and southeastern Michigan. There are 28 million ash trees in the six quarantined counties and an estimated 700 million ash trees in Michigan. We are not finding that the pest is spreading into Ohio. The magnitude of this problem is serious. Preliminary data from the Forest Service estimates that the potential national impact of the Emerald Ash Borer is a loss of ash trees up to 2 percent of total timber with a value loss of between $20–60 billion.

Following discussions with Secretary Veneman and gaining the support of the Michigan delegation, Michigan Department of Agriculture, and DNR we were able to get the approval of substantial millions of dollars in emergency assistance from USDA to combat the Emerald Ash Borer. This federal funding will supplement resources provided by state and local authorities and will be used for pest surveillance, quarantine of infected areas, and some tree removal. In order to more efficiently combat destructive pests like the Emerald Ash Borer, the Healthy Forest Restoration Act puts in place measures that will allow accelerated information gathering on such insect infestations. By removing bureaucratic red tape and being more proactive in maintaining forest health, the Healthy Forest Restoration Act is a step in the right direction towards efficiently managing our forests, preventing catastrophic fires, controlling damaging insect infestations, and protecting our environment.

Mr. STENHOLM. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to give two of my remaining minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) for the purposes of closing.

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

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) has 2 extra minutes.

Mr. POMBO. Mr. Speaker, I yield the balance of our time to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. MCINNIS), the subcommittee chairman and co-author of the legislation.

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the yeoman's work of the chairman and the guidance of making sure that we could get this bill through. I also wish to acknowledge deeply the gentleman from Virginia's (Mr. GOODLATTE) service and especially the service of the staff who have worked so hard in making sure that we could come together on this side of the aisle so that when we approached this side of the aisle we had a package that had common sense. We had a package that people like the gentleman from Texas (Mr. STENHOLM), the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER), and the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) could come to the table and work with us on. And a lot of that was guided, a lot of the going back and forth was guided by someone who I consider an artist and that is the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. WALDEN), somebody who can negotiate between both the Republicans and the Democrats.

It was about 99 years ago when Teddy Roosevelt used his State of the Union address to urge Congress to create a national forest system to ensure proper stewardship of these tremendous assets that we have in our huge public lands. And by the way, I live in a district that has 23 million acres of public lands. It is fitting now that 99 years later, 99 years later we have one of the most significant pieces of forest legislation that has come in since.

What this piece of legislation does is over the 99 years we have seen the leadership, the guidance, the expertise and the science taken away from the Green Hats, who I complimentarily refer to as our Forest Service people, the people who understand the forests, the people who dream of running the forest, the people who have been educated in the forests. We have seen through some very tactical maneuvers their power and their authority taken by the Sierra Club-types and moved to the courts and moved to the Congress.

What this bill does is this bill allows this authority to go back to those people on a commonsense approach, on a balanced approach which is demonstrated by the fact that this will pass with bipartisan support, to let it go back to the Green Hats, to let the Forest Service manage those forests.

The passage of this legislation today means that the Congress, all of us are responding to the America forests health crisis, the crisis that was demonstrated recently in the State of California, the crisis which we have seen in the State of Oregon, the crisis through bug infestation, not just fires, but bug infestation down in the South. Storm King Mountain, the mountain that I grew up on, the mountain that I took bodies off of, we finally are responding and we are coming back. I am pleased that we are coming back and giving that authority where Theodore Roosevelt thought that authority ought to exist, and that is with the United States Forest Service.

Once again I want to compliment my colleagues on the Democratic side that have worked with us. And I want to point out those who have not. It amazes me that one like the gentleman from New York City (Mr. HINCHEY) would stand up and make the kind of statements that he made and speak from a wooden podium. A little ironic.

This is a good bill. It is bipartisan, and it is going to make a big, big difference.

Mr. INSLEE. Mr. Speaker, I will be closing, so when the appropriate order comes, I will take my turn.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The closing order will be the gentleman from Texas (Mr. STENHOLM), the gentleman from Washington (Mr. INSLEE), and, lastly, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE).

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

I will yield to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) if he would like to engage in a colloquy on monitoring.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. STENHOLM. I yield to the gentleman from Virginia.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I will clarify a point that the gentleman from Texas (Mr. STENHOLM) is interested in. Let me state that the projects authorized by title IV are primarily scientific efforts, and scientific methods should be the primary means of assessing them. While we encourage multiparty monitoring, it is not our intent to require it, particularly for projects conducted under title IV.

Mr. STENHOLM. Mr. Speaker, I will state I certainly agree with the chairman. I understand the benefit of multiparty monitoring. However, the chairman is correct in expressing that our intent with respect to projects conducted under title IV are to be scientifically conducted and multiparty monitoring is not a requirement of these projects.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to conclude by thanking all who have worked so diligently for so long to bring us to this point to where we truly have a compromise that will move our forest policy in a desirable direction.

I thank the staff, all who have worked on both sides on the aisle so diligently under somewhat trying conditions from time to time as we have had some of the internal strife that unfortunately finds its way into this House of Representatives. But that certainly has not been the case regarding

the House Committee on Agriculture, and the bipartisan support there is something that I have enjoyed and working with the chairman and the gentleman from California (Mr. POMBO) and others as we have strived to put together what is basically a good bill.

When you read the bill, much of the complaints about what we have heard today are not in the bill. If you are going to have sound forests, if you are going to have a sound forest policy, sound science, common sense has got to replace the opinions of many who have a difference of opinion regarding what is good conservation, what is good management, and how we do, in fact, manage our forests so that we do have lumber for housing and other projects.

So all in all, this is a good sound compromise worthy of overwhelming support of this body. I thank all of those who have worked on it. It certainly has been something that I personally have worked on for many, many years. I am glad to see it is getting to this point. I urge a very strong vote in favor of the project.

Mr. INSLEE. Mr. Speaker, how much time do I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Washington (Mr. INSLEE) has 5 minutes remaining.

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

Mr. Speaker, I commend all of the people who have worked on this bill. There are a lot of technical and difficult issues trying to fashion a hazardous fuels reduction program. And I am unable to support this and I hope my colleagues will join me and the Sierra Club and the League of Conservation Voters and other main-line commonsense groups who have committed their lives to protecting our national forests in defeating this bill and moving on to a better one, and I hope that my colleagues will join me.

Underlying that position is the basic belief that the medicine that we are providing here is both inadequate and misguided. It is misguided because it is based on a myth; and that myth rising to an urban legend is that these fires have consumed thousands of acres because people have questioned what some government officials have done, and that is an abject falsehood.

The GAO report shows that 92 percent of these projects go ahead unimpeded. In California, you know why the California projects did not get done? It was not environmental project appeals. In the last 3 years, there has not been one hazardous fuel reduction program that held up national forests in Southern California the last 3 years. The reason some of this work did not get done is Uncle Sam, us, did not appropriate enough money for California to do the job. The State of California asked for $430 million last April to solve this problem. And what did Uncle Sam do in the Bush administration? They did not give it to them. And the fires occurred.

This is a failure of appropriations, not a failure because certain citizens once in a blue moon have the temerity to stand up on their back legs and question decisions by the Forest Service to do disguised commercial logging which has on occasion happened, thankfully not very often. Maybe 2 percent of the time. We are not doing enough to really solve this problem.

What we have done is in one of the most serious reductions of citizens' ability to question their government is reduce the ability to have their oversight of our Federal officials.

Now, it is kind of a conservative position to be rightfully sometimes distrustful of our Federal officials. Now, I have got to say there have been occasions, thankfully few, where these projects have been disguised timber sales. And the reason is because we are not appropriating enough to the Forest Service to do their job. And when that has happened, less than three pearls of the time there has been a brief appeal of that decision, and most frequently these things get worked out. But until we increase tenfold our appropriations, we are not going to cut the mustard in this program.

Now, let me mention something else, too. We have not talked about what the real debate is about here. The debate is as much about roads as it is about forests, because the real issue here is where we are going to build roads. We have 440,000 miles of Forest Service roads in our forests, 440,000 miles. They are falling apart, and we ought to be putting our money in and fixing those roads before we punch new roads into roadless areas.

Let me put this into real-life perspective. Take a couple in northeast Washington who is not getting adequately protected by this bill. Their house is surrounded by pine trees in the national forest. We have not prioritized those pine forests around their home for treatment like we should have in this bill. We did not do it. Now, when that couple leaves their home to drive over to the Olympic Peninsula to the Jupiter Ridge Roadless Area, if they hike out to a nice little picnic spot, they will find two trees. They are about maybe 6, 7, 8 feet in diameter, cedars, right next to each other. We call them Jefferson and Washington.

In this bill, neither protects that couple in their home surrounded by the pine forest, nor the two trees they go to visit in the roadless area.

Their home is not protected from fire adequately, and those two trees are not protected from chainsaws adequately in this bill.

It is my hope that this bill will be defeated and we will come back and make some very modest but important improvements on it to solve both of those problems.

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

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

Let me start by thanking the gentleman from Texas (Mr. STENHOLM) for yielding me 2 additional minutes for this close, but more importantly for the very cooperative way in which the House Committee on Agriculture has produced this legislation. This is truly the example of why this bill will pass by an overwhelming margin here today.

It passed out of the House Committee on Agriculture originally on a voice vote; and when it came to the floor, I believe, 19 of the 24 Democrats on the committee, Members who represent rural areas, Members who represent areas that are forests, voted for this legislation, nearly 80 percent.

Had we had that kind of support elsewhere in the Congress, this legislation would have been adopted a long time ago. It has been 8 years that we have been working on it. And I would have to say to the gentleman from Washington State (Mr. INSLEE) that if we were not to pass this conference report, not to send it to the President, we would be working on this for many more years. We would see more years like this year where 6½ million acres of forest land in this country were burned to the ground.

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That is what we are faced with. That is why we need to begin this first step of solving this problem by giving the Forest Service the tools that it needs.

It is absolutely incorrect that these forest fires are not related to the problems that the Forest Service is presented with. Certainly, money is a problem. Certainly, we are going to have to deal with that, but in addition, massive parts of the Western part of this country are tied up in legal cases, including the entire southern California area that is tied up over litigation related to the spotted owl. This is clearly, clearly needed to address the problems that we face across the country.

I want to thank also the gentleman from California (Mr. POMBO). He recognizes very clearly the nature of this problem, and the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. MCINNIS), I want to congratulate him on his leadership in bringing this bill to the floor as well. He is leaving the Congress at the end of this term, and this is his signature bill. This is his legacy in the Congress. So I commend him as well.

I also commend Members who have fought against this process like the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER) and the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO). They have seen the light. They understand what it takes. They understand that it is time to get about the business of solving the problem, rather than another 8 years of fighting, and I would say to those few remaining who do not understand, get on board, get this done.

Yes, there is additional work that needs to be done. Yes, we will look forward to working with them in future

Congresses, but now is the time to give the President the ability to sign a bill that will put our Forest Service to work, to get this problem underway. We will come back for additional legislation because this problem is going to persist, and this is only a beginning.

Support this conference report. It is a good one.

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, my home state of California has just been through a terrible series of wildfires. The fires burned more than 800,000 acres, destroyed over 3,300 homes, caused over $12 billion in property damage, and tragically took the lives of 22 people.

What could have been done to prevent it? What should we do now to prevent such occurrences in the future?

The answer, it seems to me, is active management and control of overgrown areas near development, usually referred to as the Woodland-Urban Interface. This will go a long way to preventing fires from destroying homes and worse, killing our citizens.

We have a bill in front of us today, H.R. 1904, The Health Forests Initiative, that its proponents tell us will help prevent the kind of devastation that we endured in California.

This conference report is certainly better than the initial House version of the bill. In the House bill, money used for clearing would have had to come from nearby logging activities. In the chaparral of Southern California, there is no logging, and that means no removal of forest fuels would have occurred to protect our homes and our families.

The House-Senate compromise that is before us today is a step in the right direction. Most importantly, it provides $760 million to fund clearing forest fuels to prevent catastrophic wildfires. Nevertheless, there remain some fundamental problems with the bill.

First of all, the Healthy Forests Initiative is only effective for federal lands. Roughly two-thirds of the lands that burned in California was not federal land, and therefore would be unaffected by the healthy forests initiative.

Second, only half of the $760 million is set aside for forest clearing within 1½ miles of structures—the Wildlife-Urban Interface. The other half will go toward thinning in other areas. Moreover, where in the initial bill the clearing was paid for by nearby profitable logging, now we are giving $365 million to commercial loggers for these thinning activities. So, instead of asking logging companies to contribute their fair share to forest management and fire mitigation, we are subsidizing them to do it.

I am disappointed with this bill. We had an opportunity to craft a bipartisan bill, one that would have addressed the pressing issue of protecting lives and property in the Wildlife-Urban Interface. Instead, the Healthy Forests Initiative puts commercial logging interests ahead of protecting our vulnerable communities. Once again, the Republican-controlled Congress has it priorities all wrong.

While this bill does not sufficiently address this important priority, I am supporting an effort that does. I am working to provide more funding for community and individual-initiated and driven initiatives to clear fire fuels in their areas. We should be empowering local communities to clear these areas—they have the greatest knowledge of the environments in which they live, and the greatest personal stake in the success of these efforts. I am hopeful that this initiative will generate broad bipartisan support.

In the meantime, I regret that I must oppose the Health Forests Initiatives, principally because it uses a great deal of resources, but it won't do very much to make our Southern Californian forests any healthier.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, today the House of Representatives accepted the conference report for H.R. 1904, the Healthy Forests Restoration Act. I was appointed as a conferee, as was Representative INSLEE of Washington and Representative CONYERS of Michigan. Unfortunately, instead of using the conference process to reconcile differences between the House and Senate versions of the legislation, certain members of the conference committee were included in bicameral meetings to craft a compromise acceptable to the group of negotiators. In short, the negotiating group picked people from the conference committee who would agree with them and did not invite others to participate. Official members of the conference committee were invited to a conference meeting to consider the product negotiated outside the conference process. The conference consideration did not provide for a real debate of amendments and the Chair moved to close the conference 30 minutes after it began. This does not contain the elements of a democracy but the elements of arrogance of power.

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I am going to vote for this conference report.

It has flaws. But if its provisions are properly implemented it can help reduce the risk of severe wildfire damage that now threatens lives and property in many communities in Colorado and other States—and for me that is the bottom line.

I am convinced we need to act to protect our communities and their water supplies. For that, a variety of things must be done, including working to reduce the built-up fuels that can increase the severity of the wildland fires that will periodically occur nearby.

That's why I have introduced legislation to expedite those thinning projects. It is also why last year I joined with my Colorado colleague, Representative MCINNIS, and other Members to develop a bill that was approved by the Resources Committee.

I voted for that bill last year, and if H.R. 1904 as it came to the House floor earlier this year had been the same as that bill, I would have voted for it again. But it wasn't the same bill, which was why I voted against it.

Instead of building on last year's work in the Resources Committee, the Resources and Agriculture Committees this year brought forth a quite different measure—one that added a long list of new provisions while omitting some of the key parts of last year's bill. As a result, it has taken much longer than I though it should have for us to reach the point of being ready to vote on a measure that has a good chance of clearing both chambers and being sent to the President for signing into law.

Because H.R. 1904 as passed by the House rejected key compromises that we worked our last year, the bill encountered more resistance in the Senate than otherwise would have been the case, and it was that much harder to shape compromises on a number of difficult points.

However, in the end the Senate passed a bill that made important improvements on the House version—and this conference report, while far from perfect, is itself a definite improvement over the legislation that I voted against earlier this year.

Let me briefly outline some of the ways in which the conference report is enough of an improvement over the House bill that I can and will vote for it today:

FUNDING FOCUS

Like the Senate bill, the conference report requires that at least 50 percent of all thinning-project funds be spent in the interface areas. Last year's Resources Committee bill would have required 70 percent of the money to be spent in the interface, but H.R. 1904 as passed by the House did not include any such requirement. So, the conference report is an improvement over the House bill in this area.

WILDLAND/URBAN INTERFACE

I think the highest priority for fuel-reduction work needs to be on the forest lands where accumulated fuels present the most immediate risks to our communities—those within the wildland/urban interface, or the ''red zone,'' as it is called in Colorado—and to municipal water supplies. These are the places where forest conditions present the greatest risks to people's lives, health, and property, and so they should be where our finite resources—time, money, and people—are concentrated.

To properly focus on these areas, we have to properly identify them. In that regard, I had no quarrel with the provisions of H.R. 1904 as passed by the House. By referring to lands within either an ''interface'' or ''intermix'' community, it provided an appropriate limitation on the discretion of the agencies without drawing an arbitrary mileage line that would not appropriately reflect the reality that a community's exposure to the risk of wildfire depends on terrain, forest conditions, and other factors that can vary greatly from one place to another and over time.

However, proper focus also requires assured priority status for funds to carry out projects to protect communities and their water supplies. The bill reported by the Resources Committee last year required that at least 70 percent of the funds provided a for fuel-reduction purposes would have to be used for such projects—but no similar provision is included in H.R. 1904. I offered an amendment to restore the provision, and its absence was a major reason I voted against the House bill.

The Senate bill had a basic limit of one-half mile from a community's boundary, with some exceptions—if a larger area was identified in a community protection plan developed through a collaborative process; or if land near a community was steep; or if there was a geographical feature that would provide a firebreak within three-quarters of a mile, in which case the interface would go to that feature. The ''community protection plan'' provision was particularly good, in my opinion, because it did not require an arbitrary cutoff, and because it allowed both Federal and non-Federal land to be included. The rest of the definition was problematical.

The conference report improves somewhat on the Senate bill. It (1) retains the ''community protection plan'' part of the definition; (2) keeps the basic one-half mile limit; but (3) allows the interface to go to 1½ mile, if the slopes are steep or if there is a firebreak-feature within that distance and the lands are very susceptible to fire. Like the Senate bill, it

also defines the interface as including a route identified as necessary for escape from a threatened community.

I think it is well established that reducing the fuels closest to structures pays big dividends in terms of reduced fire risks. However, I do into favor defining the interface in terms of arbitrary lines on the map, because fires do not respect those lines and because our experience in Colorado has shown that some of the high-priority ''red zone'' areas are extensive. A prime example is the Hayman fire—it was among the largest in our State's history, but all of the lands involved were within the ''red zone'' as defined by our State Forester (a definition that is included in my bill, H.R. 1042).

Nonetheless, on balance, I think the conference report is acceptable on this point because of the emphasis that it puts on community-protection plans. This should encourage at-risk communities, like those along the Front Range, to develop protection plans and to encourage owners of non-Federal lands to join in working to reduce fire risks.

COMMUNITY-PROTECTION PLANS

I strongly support increased public involvement during the planning and other initial stages of fuel-reduction projects. That was the purpose of an amendment I offered during the markup of the House bill. The ideal is to make it less likely those projects will be delayed by controversies or lawsuits, by developing support at the front end for projects that are urgently needed, narrowly tailored and scientifically sound. I think the conference report's provisions related to community protection plans can foster such involvement and promote a collaborative approach that will do much more to reduce conflicts and delays than will the provisions related to NEPA analysis, administrative appeals, and judicial review.

NEPA ANALYSIS AND JUDICIAL REVIEW OF THINNING PROJECTS

On judicial review, the Senate bill is slightly better than the House bill, and the conference report follows the Senate bill.

On NEPA analysis, the conference report is a compromise between the House and Senate bills. Under the House bill, no alternatives to a proposed action would have to be analyzed; under the Senate bill at least the ''no-action'' alternative would have to be analyzed, and so would a third if proposed during scoping. The conference report would follow the House bill for projects within the interface, but follow the Senate bill for projects outside the interface.

As passed by the House, H.R. 1904 clearly reflected the premise that the land-managing agencies are laboring under procedural burdens that unnecessarily delay work on fuel-reduction projects—a premise that I think has not been proved beyond doubt.

The Chief of the Forest Service has testified that the agency has been slow to act to reduce the risks of catastrophic wildfire because of ''analysis paralysis,'' meaning that the fear of appeals or litigation has made Forest Service personnel excessively cautious in the way they formulate and analyze fuel-reduction—and other—projects. The chief may be correct in that diagnosis—certainly he is in a better position that I am to evaluate the mental states of his subordinates. But it is important to remember that the Chief has also testified that he does not think revision of the environmental laws is required in order to treat this condition—and on that point I am in full agreement.

Nonetheless, I supported some restrictions on NEPA analysis last year, and because the conference report does not go as far in that direction as the House bill I am prepared to reluctantly accept this part of the conference report as well as its provisions related to administrative appeals and judicial review even though I would have preferred the provisions of last year's Resources Committee bill or this year's Senate bill dealing with those topics.

OLD GROWTH AND BIG TREES

The House bill had no specific protection for old-growth stands, and only weak language to require that thinning projects focus on removing small trees. The Senate bill had provisions intended to protect old-growth stands and slightly stronger language to put emphasis on thinning out smaller trees. The conference report falls far short of ideal in these areas—in this respect it is weaker than either the Udall-Hefley bill of 2001 or H.R. 1042. However, it is an improvement over the House-passed bill.

FUNDING

The House bill had no specific authorization for funding thinning projects; the Senate bill authorized $760 million per year, and the conference report follows the Senate bill.

This part of the conference report is a definite improvement over the House bill, because the main obstacle to getting needed work done has been lack of funds, and lack of focus on red zone areas, not the environmental laws or the appeals process.

Of course, an authorization alone will not assure appropriation of adequate amounts, and nothing in the conference report will protect the funding that is appropriated for thinning projects from being used to fight fires if Congress does not provide adequate funding for that essential purpose. However, the specific authorization may assist in both respects by demonstrating the importance that Congress attaches to thinning projects.

OMITTED PROVISIONS

The conference report drops a number of provisions that the Senate added to the original House bill. I think some of those provisions should have been retained, such as those dealing with health monitoring of firefighters, monitoring of air quality, increases in the fines for violations of regulations related to fires on Federal lands, and the enforcement of animal fighting provisions of the Animal Welfare Act. I also would have preferred the deletion of some parts of the original House bill that have been retained in the conference report. On balance, however, neither the omission of some good Senate provisions nor the retention of some defective House provisions is enough to make the conference report unacceptable to me.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, let me say that while I am voting for this conference report, I do not expect this to be the last time Congress addresses the matters it addresses. I am under no illusions about the flaws in this legislation, and will be working to improve it. I will also do all I can to make sure that it is implemented in a way that is consistent with sound, balanced management of the Federal lands.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, the problem of forest fires in the West that are aggravated, in some cases caused, by human mismanagement has been a problem as long as I have been in Congress. I am pleased that with the work of Oregonians Representative PETER DEFAZIO, Senator RON WYDEN and Representative GREG WALDEN, the bill that's moving forward is better than the bill I voted against in the past.

I wish I could vote for H.R. 1904 in good conscience, but it still has three fundamental problems. First, the procedural fix far exceeds any procedural problem. This bill would undermine the National Environmental Protection Act, the judicial process, and the system of administrative appeals to fix a perceived problem of too many projects being tied up in environmental litigation. However, the Government Accounting Office estimates that only 1 percent of forest management projects have been tied up in litigation. This type of sweeping procedural change is unnecessary.

Second, the bill opens up our forests to much broader timber harvest. This should be debated on its own merits and not under the guise of forest health and fire prevention. If we want to substantially increase timber harvest on Federal lands we ought to be clear and deal with it directly.

Last, and most troubling of all for me, is that this bill does not adequately protect families whose lives and property are at risk because of forest fire hazard. This bill does not focus our resources on the interface between residential properties and forest land, in what we are coming to know as the ''flame zone.'' Focused hazardous fuel reduction around communities could substantially reduce the risk of fire damage by providing a buffer to help slow and stop advancing fires.

This is a better bill than before but it is still a missed opportunity. To adequately protect families and businesses we need to take a few, simple, proactive steps. We need to strengthen building codes and insurance requirements for ''firewise'' construction and ''defensible space'' landscaping. According to Forest Service scientists, these precautions can increase a home's ability to survive a wildfire by more than 90 percent. We need to educate homeowners of the dangers before wildfires start so they can adequately prepare, and make informed choices on where to live. We need to implement smart land-use planning that guides development away from fire-prone areas. And, we need to provide affordable, livable housing options for families away from danger.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the conference report. Others will come to the floor to discuss the threat of wild fire to the health and general welfare of segments of the American population.

Others will come to the floor to discuss other elements of this legislation, such as its provisions concerning insect infestation which threatens some of our forests and forest industries.

I am not unmindful of the need to address the issues raised by the bill, but in our view, we would do so in a more prudent and responsible manner.

There is one issue in the pending legislation, however, which transcends the debate over forest fires and forest health: the independence of our judiciary and the right of Americans to seek redress from the courts when they believe they are aggrieved by a governmental action.

Indeed, the judicial review provisions of this bill would set a dangerous precedent for anybody concerned with civil liberties, civil rights, workers' rights and any other issue that may come before our judiciary.

Simply put, this legislation curtails access to the courts by American citizens by limiting where challenges can be brought, by whom, and on what issues.

This legislation interferes with how judges run their courtrooms. It arbitrarily requires courts to lift injunctions and stays after 60 days unless affirmatively renewed by the court.

A dangerous precedent and very bad policy. Our Constitution clearly delineates three branches of government. This conference report tramples on that tenant of our Constitution.

Incredible. Simply incredible.

This bill tells the court that litigation involving thinning trees is more important than prosecuting suspected Al Qaeda terrorists.

To judge suits over forest thinning projects more important than all other civil cases, let alone criminal cases, is seriously misguided. To make this policy law is absurd.

I have been here long enough to remember when conservatives did not trust the federal government and did not endorse expanded and unchecked federal powers.

It is unfortunate, it really is, that the sponsors of this bill chose to inject this controversial attack on the independence of our judiciary in a measure of this nature.

These provisions are a poison pill, and do a disservice to our addressing issues such as forest insect infestation and forest fires in a prudent and responsible fashion.

Mr. TANCREDO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1904, the Healthy Forest Restoration Act. I would like to thank leadership for allowing this long overdue bill to come to the floor today, and most importantly, I would like to thank Forest Subcommittee Chairman SCOTT MCINNIS, whose hard work and dedication this bill has brought us to this point today.

Mr. Speaker, there are many reasons to cut through the current procedural and bureaucratic thicket that has engulfed the U.S. Forest Service. It is time to eliminate the ''analysis paralysis'' of administrative appeals and litigation that has heretofore prevented the U.S. Forest Service from conducting badly needed thinning projects that are needed to protect communities and wildlife.

The fires of the last few years have ravaged the west. My district was no exception, where the 137,000 acre Hayman Fire tore through the Pike National Forest last year. That wildfire—the largest and most destructive in state history—burned homes, fouled streams and reservoirs, and may even have pushed an endangered butterfly into extinction. Fires like these have proven once and for all that no management on our public lands, is bad management.

Unfortunately, much of the destruction caused by these fires is attributable to the bureaucracy, appeals, and red tape that have hamstrung land managers for years. The Hayman Fire, for example, occurred in part in an area slated for treatment. Unfortunately, the treatments took years to plan because of arcane procedural rules, and were then further held up by frivolous appeals filed by a host of environmental groups. Before the treatments could begin, the fires reduced the area to ashes. This bill will seek to streamline that process, and curtail frivolous litigation so that we can avoid the large scale environmental devastation caused by these catastrophic fires in the future. In addition, the bill will help reduce costs to the American taxpayer.

The cost to extinguish these abnormally massive fires to protect communities and their water supplies has cost more than $1 billion. With the passage of H.R. 1904, rather than continuing to treat the expensive symptoms of this dangerous buildup of dead and diseased trees in our forests—we will finally get at the root cause of the problem.

Mr. Speaker, I believe every dollar we spent on a thinning project that prevents a fire, is several dollars saved in suppression and first responder costs when the fire starts. Restoring our forests to a healthier state by clearing out dead fuel and bug-infested trees before they feed wildfires isn't just good environmental policy, it's good fiscal policy too.

Mr. HERGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 1904, the ''Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003.'' For the Northern California Congressional District I represent, this bill is long overdue. My District comprises 5 national forests, and wildfires are an annual and growing threat. Each day, month and year that good forest management is stymied, communities are placed in greater danger.

Mr. Speaker, in my view, this bill doesn't go far enough to address our monumental and compounding forest health crisis. With 190 million acres of forests at risk, and only 2 million acres being treated annually, we have to do much, much more. But it takes an important first step forward in the face of tremendous resistance from the radical environmentalists. And I want to commend my colleagues—Chairman POMBO, Chairman GOODLATTE, Chairman MCINNIS and Congressman WALDEN—for their staunch leadership and dedication in fashioning a collaborative bill that is able to win a majority of the House and Senate. President Bush also deserves a great deal of credit and thanks for his efforts in bringing our growing forest health crisis to the attention of the American public, and to the forefront of our environmental policy debate.

An extraordinarily cumbersome environmental review process, which can delay forest health projects for years, has elevated the review ''process'' over good management and professional judgment. The Forest Service Chief, Dale Bosworth, testified to Congress that his agenda spends 40% of its time on planning and process activities. Litigation and an appeals process that is ripe for abuse have been utilized by radical environmental groups to stop community-supported forest health projects. A General Accounting Office study indicated that 59% of all projects eligible for appeal are appealed, the vast majority from radical environmental groups. The percentage is even higher in California. Meantime, our forests are literally burning up. Lives are being lost. Catastrophic fires are causing billions in property damage and costing the taxpayer billions in suppression and rehabilitation costs. Public health and safety demands that something be done.

For too long radical environmental groups have hijacked our forests to advance their own so-called ''environmental agenda.'' Their handiwork has contributed to an immense forest health crisis where lives and property are threatened, billions of taxpayer dollars are spent to suppress destructive fires—instead of on common sense forest health projects that could prevent them—and millions are wasted on endless environmental reviews and litigation. It's high time for the rest of us to take our forests back.

This bill will not solve this enormous and compounding crisis. But it takes an important step forward by streamlining environmental reviews and preventing abuses of the appeals process, which will allow urgently needed management to move forward in a small portion of our at-risk forests. It will give forest professionals the tools they desperately need, and provide positive momentum for continuing active management throughout all of our forests to restore them to a healthy condition, and address a very serious and growing threat to lives and property. I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. MATHESON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Healthy Forests bill. This legislation will help restore Utah's forests that have been devastated by fire, drought, and insect infestations.

I am hopeful that this legislation will prevent a repeat of this year's severe wildfire season and stop fires from spreading so quickly and affecting our communities. This legislation focuses its resources on hazardous fuel reduction efforts close to home by prioritizing efforts to prevent fires within a mile and a half of at-risk communities. This bill also provides grants for states and local communities to perform the fuel reduction activities that will benefit them the most.

Not only will this legislation help prevent forest fires, but it will address the infestation of the bark beetle that has affected much of southern Utah. This bill requires the Forest Service to develop a plan to combat insect infestation and allows for the expedition of projects that would help eliminate this problem that has turned Cedar Mountain in the Dixie National Forest into a skeleton of what it once was.

The passage of this bill is critical to protecting the health of the forests in Utah and throughout the West. We've seen too much devastation and damage in recent years to allow the situation to go unchanged. I am committed to this legislation as an important first step toward remediating our forests.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BASS). All time has expired.

Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the conference report.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the conference report.

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

Mr. GOODLATTE. 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, this 15-minute vote on the conference report will be followed by 5-minute votes on H. Res. 453, on which the yeas and nays were ordered, and S. 1156, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 286, nays 140, not voting 8, as follows:

[Roll No. 656]

YEAS—286

Aderholt	Alexander	Bachus
Akin	Baca	Baird

Baker
Ballance
Ballenger
Barrett (SC)
Bartlett (MD)
Barton (TX)
Bass
Beauprez
Bereuter
Berkley
Berry
Biggert
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blunt
Boehlert
Boehner
Bonilla
Bonner
Bono
Boozman
Boswell
Boucher
Boyd
Bradley (NH)
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Brown (SC)
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Burgess
Burns
Burr
Burton (IN)
Buyer
Calvert
Camp
Cannon
Cantor
Capito
Cardoza
Carson (OK)
Carter
Castle
Chabot
Chocola
Clyburn
Coble
Cole
Collins
Cox
Cramer
Crane
Crenshaw
Culberson
Cunningham
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (TN)
Davis, Jo Ann
Davis, Tom
Deal (GA)
DeFazio
DeGette
DeLay
DeMint
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Dicks
Dooley (CA)
Doolittle
Doyle
Dreier
Duncan
Dunn
Edwards
Ehlers
Emerson
English
Etheridge
Everett
Feeney
Flake
Foley
Forbes
Ford
Fossella
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Frost
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Gerlach
Gibbons
Gilchrest
Gillmor
Gingrey
Goode
Goodlatte
Gordon
Goss
Granger
Graves
Green (WI)
Greenwood
Gutknecht
Hall
Harman
Harris
Hart
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Hayworth
Hefley
Hensarling
Herger
Hobson
Hoekstra
Holden
Hooley (OR)
Hostettler
Houghton
Hulshof
Hunter
Hyde
Isakson
Issa
Istook
Janklow
Jenkins
John
Johnson (CT)
Johnson, Sam
Jones (NC)
Keller
Kelly
Kennedy (MN)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kline
Knollenberg
Kolbe
LaHood
Lampson
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latham
LaTourette
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
Lipinski
Lucas (KY)
Lucas (OK)
Manzullo
Marshall
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (NY)
McCotter
McCrery
McHugh
McInnis
McIntyre
McKeon
Mica
Michaud
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Miller, George
Mollohan
Moran (KS)
Murphy
Murtha
Musgrave
Myrick
Nethercutt
Neugebauer
Ney
Northup
Norwood
Nunes
Nussle
Oberstar
Obey
Ortiz
Osborne
Ose
Otter
Oxley
Pearce
Pence
Peterson (MN)
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Platts
Pombo
Pomeroy
Porter
Portman
Pryce (OH)
Putnam
Radanovich
Ramstad
Regula
Rehberg
Renzi
Reyes
Reynolds
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Ross
Royce
Ryan (WI)
Ryun (KS)
Sandlin
Schrock
Scott (GA)
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shadegg
Shaw
Sherwood
Shimkus
Shuster
Simmons
Simpson
Skelton
Smith (MI)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Souder
Spratt
Stearns
Stenholm
Strickland
Stupak
Sullivan
Sweeney
Tancredo
Tanner
Tauzin
Taylor (MS)
Taylor (NC)
Terry
Thomas
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Toomey
Turner (OH)
Turner (TX)
Udall (CO)
Upton
Vitter
Walden (OR)
Walsh
Wamp
Weldon (FL)
Weldon (PA)
Weller
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (SC)
Wolf
Wu
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NAYS—140

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Allen
Andrews
Baldwin
Becerra
Bell
Berman
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Brown (OH)
Brown, Corrine
Capps
Capuano
Cardin
Carson (IN)
Case
Clay
Conyers
Cooper
Costello
Crowley
Cummings
Davis (FL)
Davis (IL)
Delahunt
DeLauro
Deutsch
Dingell
Doggett
Emanuel
Engel
Eshoo
Evans
Farr
Fattah
Ferguson
Filner
Frank (MA)
Gonzalez
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Hastings (FL)
Hill
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hoeffel
Holt
Honda
Hoyer
Inslee
Israel
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones (OH)
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Kennedy (RI)
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind
Kirk
Kleczka
Langevin
Lantos
Leach
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
LoBiondo
Lofgren
Lowey
Lynch
Majette
Maloney
Markey
McCarthy (MO)
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNulty
Meehan
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Menendez
Millender-McDonald
Miller (NC)
Moore
Moran (VA)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Olver
Owens
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Paul
Payne
Pelosi
Price (NC)
Rahall
Rangel
Rodriguez
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sabo
Sanchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sanders
Saxton
Schakowsky
Schiff
Scott (VA)
Serrano
Shays
Sherman
Slaughter
Smith (NJ)
Solis
Stark
Tauscher
Tierney
Towns
Udall (NM)
Van Hollen
Velazquez
Visclosky
Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Wexler
Woolsey

NOT VOTING—8

Cubin
Fletcher
Gephardt
Green (TX)
Kucinich
Quinn
Ruppersberger
Wynn

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BASS) (during the vote). Members are advised 2 minutes remain in this vote.

□ 1509

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas and Messrs. CROWLEY, EVANS, ABERCROMBIE, DEUTSCH, LANTOS, OWENS, DELAHUNT, COSTELLO and JEFFERSON changed their vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

Mr. STRICKLAND changed his vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So the conference report was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the remainder of this series of votes will be conducted as 5-minute votes.

CONDEMNING TERRORIST ATTACKS IN ISTANBUL, TURKEY ON NOVEMBER 15, 2003

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The pending business is the question of suspending the rules and agreeing to the resolution, H. Res. 453, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 453, as amended, on which the yeas and nays are ordered.

This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 426, nays 0, not voting 8, as follows:

[Roll No. 657]

YEAS—426

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Allen
Andrews
Baca
Bachus
Baird
Baker
Baldwin
Ballance
Ballenger
Barrett (SC)
Bartlett (MD)
Barton (TX)
Bass
Beauprez
Becerra
Bell
Bereuter
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Biggert
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Blunt
Boehlert
Boehner
Bonilla
Bonner
Bono
Boozman
Boswell
Boucher
Boyd
Bradley (NH)
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Brown (OH)
Brown (SC)
Brown, Corrine
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Burgess
Burns
Burr
Burton (IN)
Buyer
Calvert
Camp
Cannon
Cantor
Capito
Capps
Capuano
Cardin
Cardoza
Carson (IN)
Carson (OK)
Carter
Case
Castle
Chabot
Chocola
Clay
Clyburn
Coble
Cole
Collins
Conyers
Cooper
Costello
Cox
Cramer
Crane
Crenshaw
Crowley
Culberson
Cummings
Cunningham
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (FL)
Davis (IL)
Davis (TN)
Davis, Jo Ann
Davis, Tom
Deal (GA)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
DeLay
DeMint
Deutsch
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Dooley (CA)
Doolittle
Doyle
Dreier
Duncan
Dunn
Edwards
Ehlers
Emanuel
Emerson
Engel
English
Eshoo
Etheridge
Evans
Everett
Farr
Fattah
Feeney
Ferguson
Filner
Flake
Foley
Forbes
Ford
Fossella
Frank (MA)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Frost
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Gerlach
Gibbons
Gilchrest
Gillmor
Gingrey
Gonzalez
Goode
Goodlatte
Gordon
Goss
Granger
Graves
Green (WI)
Greenwood
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Gutknecht
Hall
Harman
Harris
Hart
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Hayworth
Hefley
Hensarling
Herger
Hill
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hobson
Hoeffel
Hoekstra
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hooley (OR)
Hostettler
Houghton
Hoyer
Hulshof
Hunter
Hyde
Inslee
Isakson
Israel
Issa
Istook
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Janklow
Jefferson
Jenkins
John
Johnson (CT)
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jones (NC)
Jones (OH)
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Keller
Kelly
Kennedy (MN)
Kennedy (RI)
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kirk
Kleczka
Kline
Knollenberg
Kolbe
LaHood
Lampson
Langevin
Lantos
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latham
LaTourette
Leach
Lee
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (GA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Lofgren
Lowey
Lucas (KY)
Lucas (OK)
Lynch
Majette
Maloney
Manzullo
Markey
Marshall
Matheson