

and I have taken a different approach in introducing the 527 Fairness Act in the 109th Congress.

The 527 Fairness Act seeks to restore basic fairness to the political process for political parties and 501(c) organizations instead of attempting further regulation on political speech. More freedom is always the answer of the difficulties and challenges and the politics of a free society.

While this liberty may be a bit more chaotic and inconvenient for some in the political class, as Thomas Jefferson said, "I would rather be exposed to the inconveniences attending too much liberty than those attending too small a degree of it."

I join the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. WYNN), my colleague, in urging cosponsorship and swift passage of the 527 Fairness Act.

WINE INDUSTRY IN NORTH CAROLINA

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the flourishing viticulture industry located in North Carolina's 5th District.

The Yadkin Valley is North Carolina's first federally recognized American viticultural area. Located in northwestern North Carolina, it includes all of Surry, Wilkes and Yadkin counties, as well as portions of Stokes, Davie, and Forsyth counties. There are currently 14 wineries and more than 400 acres devoted to vineyards in the Yadkin Valley.

These vineyards and wineries create jobs and attract tourist dollars to rural communities, while generating revenue for the State. They also offer an opportunity for farm diversification and farmland preservation.

Vineyards in North Carolina produce an average of nearly 3 tons per acre, valued at \$1,180 per ton. That is an average gross income of \$3,481 per acre. The average price per ton is among the highest in America.

The North Carolina Grape Council estimates that North Carolina vineyards and wineries bring in \$100 million in revenue per year.

Congratulations to the Yadkin Valley vineyards and wineries, and I thank them for everything they contribute to our State and region.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. MILLER of Michigan). Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken after 6:30 p.m. today.

TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY WATER COMMISSION ACT OF 2005

Mr. DUNCAN. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 135) to establish the "Twenty-First Century Water Commission" to study and develop recommendations for a comprehensive water strategy to address future water needs.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 135

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Twenty-First Century Water Commission Act of 2005".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds that—

(1) the Nation's water resources will be under increasing stress and pressure in the coming decades;

(2) a thorough assessment of technological and economic advances that can be employed to increase water supplies or otherwise meet water needs in every region of the country is important and long overdue; and

(3) a comprehensive strategy to increase water availability and ensure safe, adequate, reliable, and sustainable water supplies is vital to the economic and environmental future of the Nation.

SEC. 3. ESTABLISHMENT.

There is established a commission to be known as the "Twenty-First Century Water Commission" (in this Act referred to as the "Commission").

SEC. 4. DUTIES.

The duties of the Commission shall be to—

(1) use existing water assessments and conduct such additional assessments as may be necessary to project future water supply and demand;

(2) study current water management programs of Federal, Interstate, State, and local agencies, and private sector entities directed at increasing water supplies and improving the availability, reliability, and quality of freshwater resources; and

(3) consult with representatives of such agencies and entities to develop recommendations consistent with laws, treaties, decrees, and interstate compacts for a comprehensive water strategy which—

(A) respects the primary role of States in adjudicating, administering, and regulating water rights and water uses;

(B) identifies incentives intended to ensure an adequate and dependable supply of water to meet the needs of the United States for the next 50 years;

(C) suggests strategies that avoid increased mandates on State and local governments;

(D) eliminates duplication and conflict among Federal governmental programs;

(E) considers all available technologies and other methods to optimize water supply reliability, availability, and quality, while safeguarding the environment;

(F) recommends means of capturing excess water and flood water for conservation and use in the event of a drought;

(G) suggests financing options for comprehensive water management projects and for appropriate public works projects;

(H) suggests strategies to conserve existing water supplies, including recommendations for repairing aging infrastructure; and

(I) includes other objectives related to the effective management of the water supply to ensure reliability, availability, and quality, which the Commission shall consider appropriate.

SEC. 5. MEMBERSHIP.

(a) NUMBER AND APPOINTMENT.—The Commission shall be composed of 9 members who shall be appointed not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act. Member shall be appointed as follows:

(1) 5 members appointed by the President;

(2) 2 members appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, in consultation with the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives; and

(3) 2 members appointed by the Majority Leader of the Senate, in consultation with the Minority Leader of the Senate.

(b) QUALIFICATIONS.—Members shall be appointed to the Commission from among individuals who—

(1) are of recognized standing and distinction in water policy issues; and

(2) while serving on the Commission, do not hold any other position as an officer or employee of the United States, except as a retired officer or retired civilian employee of the United States.

(c) OTHER CONSIDERATIONS.—In appointing members of the Commission, every effort shall be made to ensure that the members represent a broad cross section of regional and geographical perspectives in the United States.

(d) CHAIRPERSON.—The Chairperson of the Commission shall be designated by the President.

(e) TERMS.—Members of the Commission shall be appointed not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act and shall serve for the life of the Commission.

(f) VACANCIES.—A vacancy on the Commission shall not affect its operation, and shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment provided under subsection (a).

(g) COMPENSATION AND TRAVEL EXPENSES.—Members of the Commission shall serve without compensation, except members shall receive travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, in accordance with applicable provisions under subchapter I of chapter 57, United States Code.

SEC. 6. MEETINGS AND QUORUM.

(a) MEETINGS.—The Commission shall hold its first meeting not later than 60 days after the date on which all members have been appointed under section 5, and shall hold additional meetings at the call of the Chairperson or a majority of its members.

(b) QUORUM.—A majority of the members of the Commission shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

SEC. 7. DIRECTOR AND STAFF.

A Director shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the Majority Leader of the Senate, in consultation with the Minority Leader and chairmen of the Resources and Transportation and Infrastructure Committees of the House of Representatives, and the Minority Leader and chairmen of the Energy and Natural Resources and Environment and Public Works Committees of the Senate. The Director and any staff reporting to the Director shall be paid a rate of pay not to exceed the maximum rate of basic pay for GS-15 of the General Schedule.

SEC. 8. POWERS AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE COMMISSION.

(a) HEARINGS.—The Commission shall hold no fewer than 10 hearings during the life of the Commission. Hearings may be held in conjunction with meetings of the Commission. The Commission may take such testimony and receive such evidence as the Commission considers appropriate to carry out this Act. At least 1 hearing shall be held in Washington, D.C., for the purpose of taking testimony of representatives of Federal agencies, national organizations, and Members of Congress. Other hearings shall be