

and improving the achievement of all students, eliminates and weakens protections for disadvantaged students, and lacks critical support systems for our nation's educators.

I believe No Child Left Behind (NCLB) is flawed and must be reformed, and reauthorization presents a tremendous opportunity to make much-needed improvements and bring our education system into the 21st century. However, instead of fixing the problems of NCLB, the Student Success Act does not reflect best practices and fails to strike the appropriate balance between flexibility and accountability.

Reauthorization should support college and career-ready standards, address the overuse of testing in teacher and school evaluations that currently forces educators to substitute test preparation for instruction, and feature an accountability system that includes meaningful targets for improving student attainment that gives schools and districts flexibility in how they achieve those goals.

I urge my colleagues to vote against H.R. 5 and instead support reauthorization that restores our nation's commitment to providing equal opportunity for all students regardless of their background and protect our country's students including the most vulnerable, which was the intention of this landmark civil rights law.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED
AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS
ACT, 2016

SPEECH OF

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 25, 2015

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2822) making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes:

Ms. LEE. Mr. Chair, let me thank our Ranking Member, Congresswoman McCOLLUM, for her tremendous leadership of this Subcommittee.

Mr. Chair, the Fiscal Year (FY) 2016 Interior and Environment bill before us would place health and safety of all Americans at risk. It dangerously cuts funding by \$246 million from FY 2015 levels and is \$3.1 billion less than the President's FY2016 request.

The deep cuts to this bill would undermine our air quality, land, water and conservation funding and will have devastating impacts on all communities in my home state of California and across the country.

What's worse—this bill slashes funding for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) by more than 700 million dollars—from FY2015 levels and funds the agency at more than a billion dollars less than the President's FY2016 request. These profound cuts would significantly harm the Clean Water Fund and the Safe Drinking Water Fund—critical programs that ensure the safety of our drinking water and our children.

It also includes \$40 million in cuts to the Historic Preservation Fund (HPP), which

would weaken the National Park Service's (NPS) ability to preserve sites significant in the Civil Rights Movement. This includes sites like the Selma to Montgomery National Historic Trail, where I marched this spring to commemorate the 50th anniversary of "Bloody Sunday."

Furthermore, there are also egregious policy riders in this bill that would block clean air protections, such as the EPA's Clean Power Plan.

Too many families, particularly those in low-income, vulnerable communities, already suffer from poor air quality because of dirty carbon pollution.

We know that communities of color are disproportionately affected by pollution-related illnesses, including asthma. According to the American Academy of Allergy Asthma and Immunology, one in six African American and one in nine Latino children suffer from asthma.

There are other toxic policy riders that would block the protection of our imperiled wildlife under the Endangered Species Act, like the Greater Sage Grouse population.

The Endangered Species Act is the only law that has safeguarded more than 2,000 plants and wildlife from extinction. This law enjoys broad support from nearly 85 percent of Americans. And yet here we are again, with a bill that seeks to undermine decades of animal protection and runs counter to vast public support.

Mr. Chair, we need to continue to fight to defend our environment, address climate change, and make real, meaningful impacts on reducing greenhouse gas emissions so we can protect our environment, our children and our future.

Unfortunately, the bill before us does just the opposite.

I hope that as this process moves forward, we can address the insufficient funding allocations and backwards policy riders that would harm every American and put our precious environment at risk.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED
AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS
ACT, 2016

SPEECH OF

HON. ROBERT C. "BOBBY" SCOTT

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 7, 2015

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2822) making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes:

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Chair, I rise in opposition to the amendment offered by my colleague that would, in essence, prohibit the EPA from spending any funds to ensure that states fulfill their obligations under the Clean Water Act to help clean up the Chesapeake Bay. If passed into law, this amendment would endanger the progress we have made in restoring the Chesapeake Bay Watershed and would put in jeopardy not only the Chesapeake Bay itself, but also critical economic contributions that the Bay provides.

When I was in the Virginia House of Delegates, I was part of a joint Virginia-Maryland legislative task force that first recommended the creation of a multi-state commission to address Bay issues. In our report filed in 1980, we recommended "the need for improved coordination of Bay-wide management to meet the long-term needs of the people of both Maryland and Virginia" and found that this was not an issue that Maryland and Virginia alone could solve.

Cleaning up the Bay required the cooperation of all states in the watershed. In 1983, Chesapeake Bay Watershed states signed the first Chesapeake Bay agreement to coordinate their efforts on this issue, and in 2010 the EPA set pollution limits to reduce pollution, nutrients, and sediment flowing into the Bay.

As a result of these efforts, the quality of the Chesapeake Bay has been significantly improved and states continue to invest millions of dollars in their Chesapeake Clean Water Blueprint Plans. Just yesterday, a unanimous decision was issued by the Third Circuit Court of Appeals affirming the authority of the EPA under the Clean Water Act to set limits on pollution in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. In the decision, the Court wrote that cleaning up the Chesapeake Bay "will require sacrifice . . . but that is a consequence of the tremendous effort it will take to restore health to the bay."

I agree with the Court's assessment: cleaning up the Bay will take tremendous efforts and coordination between all six states in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed and the District of Columbia, and participating states should have the certainty that other states can be trusted to fulfill their obligations to help clean up the Bay.

I believe that instead of offering amendments to undermine these efforts, we should be investing even more resources to ensure that they are successful. I urge my colleagues to reject this amendment.

RECOGNIZING LESLIE VELEZ AND
DANIEL HENRY

HON. KEN BUCK

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 8, 2015

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Leslie Velez and Daniel Henry for their hard work and dedication to the people of Colorado's Fourth District as interns in my Washington, DC office for the Spring 2015 session of Congress.

The work of this young man and woman has been exemplary and I know they both have bright futures. They served as tour guides, interacted with constituents, and learned a great deal about our nation's legislative process. I was glad to be able to offer this educational opportunity to these two and look forward to seeing them build their careers in public service.

Both of our interns have made plans to continue their work next year with various organizations in Washington. I am certain they will succeed in their new roles and wish them all the best in their future endeavors. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to recognize Leslie Velez and Daniel Henry for their service this spring.