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|--------------|---------------|---------------|
| Kinzing (IL) | Olson | Shuster |
| Kline | Palazzo | Simpson |
| Knight | Palmer | Smith (MO) |
| Labrador | Paulsen | Smith (NE) |
| LaMalfa | Pearce | Smith (NJ) |
| Lamborn | Perry | Smith (TX) |
| Lance | Pittenger | Tiberi |
| Latta | Pitts | Stefanik |
| Long | Poe (TX) | Stewart |
| Loudermilk | Poliquin | Stivers |
| Love | Pompeo | Thompson (PA) |
| Lucas | Posey | Thornberry |
| Luetkemeyer | Price, Tom | Tipton |
| Lummis | Ratcliffe | Trott |
| MacArthur | Reed | Turner |
| Marchant | Reichert | Upton |
| Marino | Renacci | Valadao |
| McCarthy | Ribble | Wagner |
| McCauley | Rice (SC) | Walberg |
| McClintock | Rigell | Walden |
| McHenry | Roby | Walker |
| McKinley | Roe (TN) | Walorski |
| McMorris | Rogers (AL) | Walters, Mimi |
| Rodgers | Rogers (KY) | Weber (TX) |
| McSally | Rokita | Webster (FL) |
| Meehan | Rooney (FL) | Westerman |
| Messer | Ros-Lehtinen | Westmoreland |
| Mica | Roskam | Whitfield |
| Miller (MI) | Ross | Williams |
| Moolenaar | Rouzer | Wilson (SC) |
| Mooney (WV) | Royce | Wittman |
| Mullin | Russell | Womack |
| Mulvaney | Ryan (WI) | Woodall |
| Murphy (PA) | Salmon | Yoder |
| Neugebauer | Scalise | Young (AK) |
| Newhouse | Schweikert | Young (IA) |
| Noem | Scott, Austin | Young (IN) |
| Nugent | Sessions | Zeldin |
| Nunes | Shimkus | Zinke |

NOES—213

| | | |
|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Adams | Doggett | Larson (CT) |
| Aguilar | Doyle, Michael | Lawrence |
| Amash | F. | Lee |
| Ashford | Duckworth | Levin |
| Bass | Edwards | Lewis |
| Beatty | Ellison | Lieu, Ted |
| Becerra | Engel | Lipinski |
| Bera | Eshoo | LoBiondo |
| Beyer | Esty | Loeb sack |
| Bishop (GA) | Farr | Lowenthal |
| Blumenauer | Fattah | Lowe |
| Bonamici | Fleming | Lujan Grisham |
| Boyle, Brendan | Foster | (NM) |
| F. | Frankel (FL) | Lujan, Ben Ray |
| Brady (PA) | Fudge | (NM) |
| Brooks (AL) | Gabbard | Lynch |
| Brown (FL) | Gallego | Maloney |
| Brownley (CA) | Garamendi | Carolyn |
| Buck | Gibson | Maloney, Sean |
| Bustos | Gohmert | Massie |
| Butterfield | Graham | Matsui |
| Capps | Graves (LA) | McCollum |
| Capuano | Graves (MO) | McDermott |
| Cárdenas | Grayson | McGovern |
| Carney | Green, Al | McNerney |
| Carson (IN) | Green, Gene | Meadows |
| Cartwright | Grijalva | Meeks |
| Castor (FL) | Gutiérrez | Meng |
| Castro (TX) | Hahn | Miller (FL) |
| Chu, Judy | Hastings | Moore |
| Cicilline | Heck (WA) | Moulton |
| Clark (MA) | Hice, Jody B. | Murphy (FL) |
| Clarke (NY) | Higgins | Nadler |
| Clawson (FL) | Himes | Napolitano |
| Clay | Hinojosa | Neal |
| Cleaver | Honda | Nolan |
| Clyburn | Hoyer | Norcoss |
| Cohen | Huelskamp | O'Rourke |
| Connolly | Huffman | Pallone |
| Conyers | Israel | Pascarell |
| Cooper | Jackson Lee | Payne |
| Costa | Jeffries | Pelosi |
| Courtney | Johnson (GA) | Perlmutter |
| Crowley | Johnson, E. B. | Peters |
| Cuellar | Jones | Peterson |
| Cummings | Jordan | Pingree |
| Davis (CA) | Joyce | Pocan |
| Davis, Danny | Kaptur | Polis |
| DeFazio | Keating | Price (NC) |
| DeGette | Kelly (IL) | Quigley |
| Delaney | Kennedy | Rangel |
| DeLauro | Kildee | Rice (NY) |
| DelBene | Kilmer | Richmond |
| DeSantis | Kind | Rohrabacher |
| DeSaulnier | Kirkpatrick | Rothfus |
| DesJarlais | Kuster | Roybal-Allard |
| Deutch | Langevin | Ruiz |
| Dingell | Larsen (WA) | Ruppersberger |

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|------------------|---------------|----------------|
| Rush | Sires | Veasey |
| Ryan (OH) | Slaughter | Vela |
| Sanchez, Linda | Smith (WA) | Velázquez |
| T. | Speier | Visclosky |
| Sanchez, Loretta | Stutzman | Walz |
| Sanford | Swalwell (CA) | Wasserman |
| Sarbanes | Takai | Schultz |
| Schakowsky | Takano | Waters, Maxine |
| Schiff | Thompson (CA) | Watson Coleman |
| Schrader | Thompson (MS) | Welch |
| Scott (VA) | Titus | Wenstrup |
| Scott, David | Tonko | Wilson (FL) |
| Sensenbrenner | Torres | Yarmuth |
| Serrano | Tsongas | Yoho |
| Sewell (AL) | Van Hollen | |
| Sinema | Vargas | |

NOT VOTING—3

| | | |
|-----------|---------|---------|
| Culberson | Lofgren | Sherman |
|-----------|---------|---------|

□ 1848

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama changed his vote from “no” to “aye.”

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated against:

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 423, had I been present, I would have voted “no.”

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the question on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal, which the Chair will put de novo.

The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

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

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 2822.

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

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 333 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 2822.

Will the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HULTGREN) kindly take the chair.

□ 1855

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of 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, with Mr. HULTGREN (Acting Chair) in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The Acting CHAIR. When the Committee of the Whole rose earlier today, an amendment offered by the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. HARDY) had been disposed of, and the bill had been read through page 132, line 24.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. ELLISON

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. _____. None of the funds made available in this Act may be used to enter into a contract with any person whose disclosures of a proceeding with a disposition listed in section 2313(c)(1) of title 41, United States Code, in the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System include the term “Fair Labor Standards Act” and such disposition is listed as “willful” or “repeated”.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 333, the gentleman from Minnesota and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Minnesota.

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Chairman, before I discuss my amendment, which is to prevent wage theft from violators who commit acts that are repeated and willful and to stop such actors from partaking of Federal procurement in this bill, I would like to set the table just a little bit.

In 1980, Mr. Chair, CEO-to-worker pay ratio for Fortune 500 companies was 20 to 1. Today it is 204 to 1, according to Bloomberg. At the same time, the buying power of the minimum wage is now less than it was in the 1960s.

The Economic Policy Institute found that, in total, the average low-wage worker loses a stunning \$2,634 per year in unpaid wages, representing about 15 percent of their earned income. It is particularly egregious in the fast-food sector. A recent study by Hart Research of fast-food workers found that about 89 percent reported some form of wage theft.

Lastly, in this case, I would like to point out, Mr. Chair, that the recent report by the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the U.S. Senate revealed that 32 percent of the largest Department of Labor penalties for wage theft were levied against Federal contractors.

As I bring this amendment before the body today, Mr. Chairman, it is simply to recognize that the hard work and the work that workers do who work for Federal contractors must be recognized. We are not debating today over increasing or decreasing the minimum wage. We are just saying the people who work hard ought to get the money that they earned.

I would hope that everyone in this body would be willing to say wage theft is not okay. No hard-working American should ever have to worry that her employer will refuse to pay her when she works overtime or take money out of her paycheck, especially if she works for a Federal contractor.

This practice, as I mentioned already, is called wage theft. Right now, Federal contractors who violate the Fair Labor Standards Act are still allowed to apply for Federal contracts.

□ 1900

This amendment seeks to ensure that funds may not be used to enter into a contract with a government contractor that willfully or repeatedly violates the Fair Labor Standards Act—willfully or repeatedly.

It is important, Mr. Chairman, to point out that it is not easy to get a violation. You have got to work at it.

There is a database called the FAPISS database, to begin with, in which contractors have to report all their violations. Just because a wage and hour complaint comes to your door, it doesn't necessarily mean you get a violation. In order to get a violation in the database, you have to have a criminal conviction, a civil proceeding with a finding of fault, or an administrative proceeding with a finding of fault or a penalty of \$5,000 or more or damages of \$100,000 or more. You have got to really work at it. In other words, if you are found to owe back wages and you agree to pay them, there is not going to be a case for you to have to report.

This amendment ensures that those in violation of the law do not get taxpayer support. And we should reward good actors.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the gentleman's amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CALVERT. The amendment doesn't recognize the suspension and debarment process that is already in place for Federal contractors. It does not provide exceptions for critical, urgent, or compelling needs or allow for the consideration of mitigating factors.

I am concerned that this amendment would impose strict legal triggers and take away the ability for Federal agencies to investigate and determine appropriate remedies. I am also concerned that it would deny the due process that the current suspension and debarment system provides. And finally, this is an issue that should be thoroughly vetted through the authorization process, not through the appropriation process.

I would urge a "no" vote on this amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ELLISON. I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Minnesota (Ms. MCCOLLUM).

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Chair, I rise in support of the amendment from the gentleman from Minnesota.

Every worker is entitled to receive pay for the hours they work; however, there are employers that refuse to pay for overtime, make their employees work off the clock, or refuse to pay

minimum wage. At the very least, we should take steps to ensure that these employers don't receive new Federal contracts.

This amendment would ensure that lawbreaking contractors don't get rewarded for stealing from their employees.

I support this amendment, and I ask for an "aye" vote.

Mr. CALVERT. I would just, again, oppose this amendment. I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on this amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ELLISON. Members, this has nothing to do with debarment. Debarment is a quasi-judicial process in which evidence is gathered and findings are made. This is saying that, after somebody has been found to engage in repeated and willful violations of the Fair Labor Standards Act, such persons are not the kind of people we want to reward through our procurement system. This is totally different from debarment.

What it is really saying is it reflects our values as a body and reflects our value of the dignity of work and that a dollar earned is a dollar that must be paid. And we should never be the kind of body that says: "Commit willful violations all you want; take workers' money away; you can still get another contract if you please." That is not the kind of body that we are, and I urge a "yes" vote on the amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. ELLISON).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Minnesota will be postponed.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. BUCK

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

STUDY

SEC. _____. Of the amounts made available by this Act to pay retention bonuses to Senior Executive Service personnel at the Environmental Protection Agency, not more than \$50,000 shall be made available to be used by the Department of the Interior to conduct a study on whether *Agricola Americus* should be classified as an endangered species.

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Chairman, I reserve a point of order on the gentleman's amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. A point of order is reserved.

Pursuant to House Resolution 333, the gentleman from Colorado and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Colorado.

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Chair, my amendment appropriates up to \$50,000 from the retention bonuses of Senior Executive Service personnel at the EPA to conduct a study of whether *Agricola Americus*, the American farmer, should be classified as an endangered species.

This money should be used to determine whether there is crucial habitat that is essential for the conservation of the species and acting in accordance with 16 U.S.C. chapter 35 if such a finding is made.

The Federal Government is no stranger to using its regulatory powers to interfere in important national issues, so it came as a surprise when I discovered that the Federal Government had overlooked the most endangered species in America.

The Fish and Wildlife Service has been so thorough in designating animals as endangered all around farms, but for some reason hasn't seen the plight of the American farmer.

Paul Harvey recognized, in 1978, that God made *Agricola Americus* with a unique set of characteristics essential to our Nation, so I am troubled that the number of farmers in America has steadily declined over the last six decades.

Not only has the number of American farmers shrunk, but so has the number of farms. Those lost have mainly been family farms, passed down through generations of hard work and built up with years of sweat equity. They have faced numerous manmade obstacles that interfere with their environment and encroach on their natural territory. They have been subject to the ravages of wolves released by the very agency that should be tasked with protecting this essential American species.

Yet the Department of the Interior does not have a monopoly on society's invasion of the American farmer and the habitat. Family farms have been destroyed by the death tax, regulated out of business by FDA and EPA mandates, and forced to dump crops by outdated government programs that even now are being struck down by the Supreme Court.

How much more of this regulatory onslaught can the *Agricola Americus* take before we recognize the harm of our actions and work to make sure that we are not complicit in its disappearance? We cannot leave the farmer alone in the eye of this regulatory storm.

I reserve the balance of my time.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Chairman, I make a point of order against the amendment because it provides an appropriation for an unauthorized program and, therefore, violates clause 2 of rule XXI. Clause 2 of rule XXI states in pertinent part:

"An appropriation may not be in order as an amendment for an expenditure not previously authorized by law."

Mr. Chairman, the amendment proposes to appropriate funds. The amendment, therefore, violates clause 2 of rule XXI.

I ask for a ruling from the Chair.

The Acting CHAIR. Does any other Member wish to be heard on the point of order?

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to withdraw the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Colorado?

There was no objection.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. BUCK

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. _____. None of the funds made available in this Act may be used to pay the salaries and expenses of personnel or any other entity to negotiate or conclude a settlement with the Federal Government that includes terms requiring the defendant to donate or contribute funds to an organization or individual.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 333, the gentleman from Colorado and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Colorado.

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Chair, my amendment bars the EPA and the Department of the Interior and any of its agencies from requiring mandatory donations to third-party groups as part of any settlement agreements the agencies enter into.

In agencies across the government, settlement funds are being funneled to third-party groups, contravening congressional budget authority. A recent investigation by the House Judiciary and Financial Services Committees found as much as half a billion dollars had been diverted by the Department of Justice to third parties as a result of these settlements in the past year. This is inexcusable, and it is not unique to the Department of Justice.

The Department of the Interior, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service routinely sue and then enter into settlements with businesses and individuals who are then forced to make donations to third-party groups.

This is all made possible because community service is expressly allowed as a condition of probation by the United States Criminal Code. In addition, the United States sentencing guidelines allow community service where it is reasonably designed to repair the harm caused by the offense. This results in settlement funds being directed to supposed "community service" groups. This is a practice that must be brought to an end.

As Thomas Jefferson once wrote:

To compel a man to furnish contributions of money for the propagation of opinions

which he disbelieves and abhors is sinful and tyrannical.

In this case, businesses and individuals are being sued by the government for violating environmental regulations, and then as part of the settlement, they have to make payments to the environmental organizations that engage in advocacy supporting the regulations. This power grab is abhorrent.

Please support my amendment and stop these agencies from funneling court settlement funds to radical environmentalists.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. McCOLLUM. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Minnesota is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. McCOLLUM. The fact is that this is a very broadly written amendment that would prevent the Federal Government from requiring polluters to pay for cleanup costs. Specifically, I would point out that the EPA is involved in numerous consent decree negotiations that result in payments to the Federal Government by responsible parties.

The ability of the Federal Government to recoup these funds from polluters is an essential part of maintaining good environmental policy and protecting public health and protecting taxpayers, not polluters. For example, some Superfund sites that the EPA may spend Superfund trust moneys up front to initiate the cleanup of a potential responsible party are not yet identified or the cleanup order or settlement agreement with the identified parties is not yet finalized.

In the event that the EPA does expend Superfund moneys at a site with veritable parties, reimbursements may be included in the terms of any settlement agreement that may be entered into with the parties. However, this amendment would prevent the EPA from receiving such reimbursements from the responsible parties in such an instance.

There are also times when defendants in settlement negotiations seek payments to third parties rather than the Federal Government. One such example is the settlement negotiations that followed the catastrophe at the Deepwater Horizon spill in the Gulf of Mexico.

As part of the criminal settlements that BP and Transocean reached with the Federal Government, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, a congressionally chartered nonprofit, received the funds to undertake the projects to help remedy the harm that occurred in the Gulf of Mexico—something I would agree all needed to happen—yet under this amendment, those payments would have been prohibited. It would be completely irresponsible.

This amendment is bad for the taxpayer, bad for public policy, and very bad for the environment.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BUCK. I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. McCOLLUM. Mr. Chair, once again, voting for this amendment and having it move forward would be completely irresponsible. This amendment is bad public policy, bad for environment, and it is bad for the taxpayer. I urge defeat of this amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. BUCK).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. BUCK

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. _____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to pay a Federal employee for any period of time during which such employee is using official time under section 7131 of title 5, United States Code.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 333, the gentleman from Colorado and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Colorado.

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Chair, my amendment would prohibit paying any Federal employee for the time spent not working for the taxpayers but working for a third party, a labor union. This practice is known as "official time."

□ 1915

Unlike any other type of third-party organization, labor unions have been granted the privilege of being able to have taxpayer-funded employees do their business on duty time, instead of doing the taxpayers' work.

Like any other type of private entity, labor unions should pay for their own employees to work for them. The taxpayers should not be picking up the tab for this practice.

According to the U.S. Office of Personnel Management, this practice costs taxpayers approximately \$156 million per year. That is assuming that the agencies are correctly reporting the amounts spent, and there have been indications that this number actually underreports the total cost.

In some instances, we are not talking about just a few minutes here and there for an agency employee who is a union official to confer with management about a workplace issue. Sometimes, the agency employee is actually working full time for the labor union, all the while being paid by the taxpayers for this union work.

For instance, the IRS has more than 200 employees working full time for labor unions; the VA has over 250 employees working full time for labor unions—this at a time when there is a significant backlog of cases to be processed.

One of these employees doesn't even work in a VA facility but, instead, works remotely from a private office in D.C.

The EPA, while not having as many personnel on full-time official time as some agencies, still pays over \$1.6 million just for those personnel who are working full time for their union.

Some agencies, such as the Department of Transportation, have numerous employees making over \$170,000 per year, while working full time for the union. This is more than almost all Federal employees make, higher than the salaries of many Senate-confirmed Assistant Secretaries.

My amendment would not prohibit this practice, but would make certain that the right party pays for this work, the labor union. It is not right to force our taxpayers to pay the bill to subsidize these private organizations any more than it would be right to force them to subsidize other private organizations such as the National Rifle Association or the Sierra Club.

Like any business, labor unions should pay the cost for their own employees, not taxpayers.

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

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Chair, I rise in strong opposition to this amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from Minnesota is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Chairman, this amendment clearly would serve no purpose but to erode collective bargaining rights for civil service employees and may violate collective bargaining agreements negotiated between workers and these agencies.

Federal unions are legally required to provide representation to all members of bargaining units, whether or not those workers elect to pay voluntary union dues. Representation for employees working their way through the administrative procedures is a cost-effective process for administering and adjudicating agency policies.

The alternative for official time is for the government agencies to pay for costly third-party attorney and arbitration fees. Eliminating official time would increase costs, and it would increase more time and effort for agencies to work out any conflicts with employees. That drives up the cost for taxpayers.

Official time is essential to maintaining workplace safety. Union representation uses official time to set procedures to protect employees from on-the-job hazards. Official time is used to allow employees to participate in work groups with management teams to improve the process and improve performance outcomes.

Under current law, official time may not be used to solicit membership, may not be used to conduct internal union meetings, may not be used to elect union officers, may not be used to engage in any partisan activities, and the notion that official time is used for any of these purposes is false.

I urge a "no" vote on the amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Chair, once again, this amendment would serve no purpose but to erode the collective bargaining rights of civil service Federal employees, hard-working Americans.

For that reason, I urge a "no" vote, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. BUCK).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Colorado will be postponed.

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Chairman, I yield to the gentlewoman from American Samoa (Mrs. RADEWAGEN) for the purpose of a colloquy.

Mrs. RADEWAGEN. Mr. Chair, I would like to commend Chairman CALVERT, Ranking Member MCCOLLUM, and the Appropriations Committee staff for their efforts in bringing this important bill to the floor.

I would also like to congratulate Chairman CALVERT on his leadership in overseeing this measure and his continued success as chairman of the subcommittee.

I want to take this opportunity to highlight just a small portion of the needs and shortfalls that the territories are facing. In particular, I want to bring to your attention some of the funding issues facing American Samoa.

Each year, the Office of Insular Affairs provides grant funds to American Samoa for the operation of local government, including the judiciary, Department of Education, and the local hospital. The purpose of this program is to fund the difference between budget needs and local revenues.

Mr. Chairman, the world has changed much since the inception of this program to assist American Samoa government operations, and additional needs have arisen.

Local revenues have remained relatively constant; the infrastructure has become dated and in disrepair, and outside influences, particularly China, have begun to make inroads into the region with the development of a port in the neighboring independent Samoa and future plans for a naval base in the same area.

We have also seen a dramatic spike in world conflict since the inception of the program. This increased military activity by both friendly and hostile nations has simultaneously created the need for increased border security, an element severely lacking in American

Samoa and one not funded under the current parameters of the program.

American Samoa is also facing severe infrastructure deficiency, which has caused undue hardship to both our people and businesses that rely upon our roads, airport, and port.

In fact, the recent decision by the NOAA National Weather Service to terminate weather observation service in American Samoa, which our local airport relies upon for flight operations, has prompted the need for the construction of a tower at Pago Pago International Airport. This facility would serve as a standard control tower and would also contain the weather monitoring service after NOAA ceases operations in American Samoa.

Mr. Chairman, my home district was devastated by a tsunami on September 29, 2009, that killed many of our people. I was there at the time. If it hadn't been for the fact that I had a scheduled meeting at that very time and was already awake, I could have been killed by the wave. We lost our tuna cannery the day after the tsunami, which was half of our private sector employment.

We also are suffering from the prolonged recession here in the States and suffered another setback with the recent longshoremen's strike that exposed just how dependent we are on outside resources.

Chairman CALVERT, I encourage the committee that, when considering funding levels for the territories, to keep in mind our economic and geographic isolation and the extreme disparity in opportunities for growth between these regions and the States.

Mr. Chairman, I look forward to working with the committee to increase funding for the territories which will help alleviate the many issues we are facing.

Mr. CALVERT. As someone who has always had the utmost respect for our fellow countrymen from the territories, I look forward to working with the gentlewoman from American Samoa, and I want to thank her for her efforts to inform the committee on the issues of the insular areas.

I am well aware of just how dedicated to our country the people of American Samoa are, as displayed by their extremely high rate of enlistment in our Nation's Armed Forces.

Your membership in this body is highly valued, and the appointment as vice chairman of the Indian, Insular, and Alaska Native Affairs Subcommittee as a first-term member is a testament to the perspective and leadership you bring to Congress.

Through your leadership, your people are well respected and have found themselves a champion for their cause.

Mrs. RADEWAGEN. At a time when we are faced with the need to reduce funding in many areas of government, I thank the committee for preserving the budgetary assistance to American Samoa.

I want to thank the chairman for his kind words and continued leadership,

and I look forward to working with him to ensure that the territories are given the same opportunity as the States.

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. GROTHMAN

Mr. GROTHMAN. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. _____. None of the funds made available by this act may be used to regulate the location of the placement of a monitor of pollutants under the clean air act in any county provided such county has at least one monitor.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 333, the gentleman from Wisconsin and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin.

Mr. GROTHMAN. Mr. Chairman, right now, the Environmental Protection Agency makes the determination whether a county is what they call a nonattainment zone based on readings, the amount of ozone that various monitors come up with. If you are a nonattainment zone, it results in problems for both individuals and business.

Individuals in counties in my area have two problems. First of all, if you are nonattainment, you might have to have gasoline that is probably a little bit inferior in quality, as well as more expensive.

I always think the price of gasoline is an important thing because it doesn't matter; either wealthy or poor, it is something you have to be able to afford. If you are knocking up your price of gasoline by 5 or 10 cents a year, that can be a very damaging thing for someone who doesn't have that great a salary.

Secondly, if you are a nonattainment zone, every car has to be checked for emissions. Maybe there are some wealthy environmentalists that it is no big deal—if their car fails the emissions test, they can afford to spend another \$900 on a catalytic converter or something wildly more expensive. For somebody not well off, it maybe puts you in a position which you have to buy a whole new car.

It is another problem for businesses. Manufacturing is very important to this country. If you crack down on a business and say that you have to do different things to affect the amount of ozone that may be emitted from your factory, it can be very cost prohibitive and put American business at a competitive disadvantage.

These determinations are made by air monitors. In every county, the amount of ozone that is detected by these monitors may vary greatly from one part of the county to another part of the county.

It is our opinion that sometimes in the past, in my district, if you put an

air monitor right on Lake Michigan, due to the effect the sun has on the water, you might get disproportionately high readings and wind up having to put your individuals and businesses in a situation which they are in nonattainment.

This is particularly onerous because, sometimes, whether or not you have a high ozone rating or not has nothing whatsoever to do with anything that is going on within your county.

My district, for example, is maybe 70 miles from Chicago, where most of the pollutants come from; so here you are, stuck trying to make your air cleaner and cleaner, and there is very little you can do to affect it anyway.

In any event, it seems fair that you should be able to put an air monitor anywhere within that county. You shouldn't have a situation in which, in the past, an air monitor was placed at an area where you got a disproportionately high reading.

The purpose of this amendment is to say that the Environmental Protection Agency, that I am sure has a budget tight as a drum, should not have to waste any time worrying about where that air monitor is and where we are determining whether or not we have an ozone problem in a county.

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

□ 1930

Ms. PINGREE. Mr. Chair, I claim the time in opposition to this amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from Maine is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. PINGREE. Mr. Chair, the amendment offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin would prohibit funds for regulating the location of air monitors in counties.

The Clean Air Act requires every State to establish a network of air monitoring stations for criteria pollutants, using criteria set by the EPA for their location and operation.

EPA's ambient air monitoring network assessment guidance provides States and counties with information about the assessment of technical aspects of ambient air monitoring networks. The guidance is designed to be flexible and expandable. It does not dictate specific locations for placement for air monitors.

The amendment would block EPA oversight of air quality monitoring, making possible a scenario in which counties could game the system by locating monitors in places that show the lowest amount of pollution rather than where they get the best representative data.

Let us look no further than today's paper to understand why we need to ensure the proper collection of air quality data.

A headline in the Wisconsin Ag Connection reads: Canadian Wildfires Prompt State to Issue Air Quality Notice.

The article reports that the Department of Natural Resources has issued

an air quality notice for all 72 Wisconsin counties this week. State air quality monitors are recording elevated concentrations of fine particles at several locations around the State, particularly across northern and western Wisconsin.

And some sites are recording values in the "unhealthy for sensitive" category, which includes children, elderly people, individuals with respiratory and cardiac problems, and people engaged in strenuous activities for prolonged periods of time.

This amendment would stop a transparent, science-based process to locate monitors where they will provide the most useful information about air quality.

Mr. Chairman, I don't think it is appropriate to dictate a nationwide moratorium on air quality monitoring in response to what appears to be a local issue perhaps in the gentleman's State of Wisconsin.

This amendment is harmful to local governments that depend on EPA's technical expertise when determining the best location for an air monitor placement. I urge my colleagues to oppose the amendment.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GROTHMAN. Mr. Chair, first of all, the gentlewoman from Maine makes a point not about this amendment specifically, but about the overall program.

And that is you have a situation right now in which, apparently, the Department of Natural Resources is making a determination that we have unsafe air based upon fires that are hundreds of miles away that the local people can't do anything about.

Secondly, the gentlewoman says it is tying the hands of local units of government. That is not true. Under this amendment, the local units of government have more flexibility.

The question is can the Federal Government tie the hands of local units of government, which they shouldn't be able to do.

So it is a good amendment. I think it is something that is going to, in the long term, benefit American business and, even more, benefit American individuals, particularly poor people, who don't have a lot of extra money, are stuck spending a lot more money on their cars because of determinations made by Federal bureaucrats in far-away cities who probably have enough money to be able to afford to deal with these problems anyway.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. PINGREE. Mr. Chair, I will just reiterate the points I made before and urge a "no" vote.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GROTHMAN).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the yeas appeared to have it.

Mr. GROTHMAN. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin will be postponed.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. SANFORD

Mr. SANFORD. Mr. Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

LIMITATION ON USE OF FUNDS FOR OIL AND GAS
LEASE SALE 260 IN LEASING PROGRAM

SEC. _____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used for oil and gas lease sale 260 included in the Draft Proposed Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Oil and Gas Leasing Program for 2017–2022 (DPP), or in any subsequent proposed or final iteration of such Program.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 333, the gentleman from South Carolina and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from South Carolina.

Mr. SANFORD. Mr. Chair, I rise in utter respect for my colleague from California and his colleagues and the Interior bill that they created and all the good that it does.

This is, in essence, just a very small refining amendment that, as was described in the reading, would simply prohibit the Department of the Interior from moving forward on sales within block 260. I think that this is important for a number of different reasons that I will enumerate.

But I want to be clear. This is not an amendment about a belief in there being dangers with regard to technology that is used and employed offshore. I have been quite impressed in all the studies I have done in the technological advancements that have taken place.

Nor is it an amendment about the belief that we shouldn't be using fossil fuels. I think that fossil fuels are very important in the mix with regard to energy independence in this country.

What this amendment is simply about is the age-old notion that Washington doesn't always know best, that the Founding Fathers were really deliberate in their belief in this notion of Federalism; that they divided power not only laterally, but vertically; that there was a Federal Government, but there was also a State and a local government; and those municipalities or those States should have a voice, too.

It is about recognizing that there is a difference between comment and control. And what municipalities, what people back home in South Carolina along the coast, are saying is: We want to have more than just a comment. We want to have control over our destiny in the way that the coast develops.

For that reason, nine communities in my district alone as well as 65 communities up and down the eastern seaboard have added comments, saying: We want to push the pause button here.

And, indeed, that is all this amendment does. It says: Let's pause so that we can do a cost-benefit analysis going forward. I think that this is important, given the large context.

You know, we are talking about 4 percent of the oil reserves within the Continental U.S. We are talking about a 5-month supply. These communities are saying a 5-month supply versus a lifetime impact in a place like Saint Helena Sound.

If you look at the ACE Basin, it has been nationally recognized as a treasure. It is about 250,000 acres on the coast of South Carolina. The Federal Government put a lot of money into preserving it, as did State and private interests.

And what people are saying is: Given the amount of industrialization that has to take place to support the offshore rigs, do you bring those pipes and that supply in through a place like Saint Helena Sound?

Again, what people have said along the coast of South Carolina is: Let's pause and reflect on that. And that is what this amendment does.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Chair, I must rise in reluctant opposition to this amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Chairman, this amendment is the mirror opposite, as the gentleman knows, of the Hudson amendment that is currently pending via a rollcall vote.

The Hudson amendment would allow lease 260 to move forward under the Department of the Interior's next 5-year offshore leasing plan for 2017 through 2022.

The Sanford amendment would prevent lease 260 from moving forward under the next 5-year plan. And given the competing amendments, I must oppose this amendment, since we accepted the other amendment last night.

So I would ask for a "no" vote on this amendment.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SANFORD. Mr. Chair, again, I respect the Solomon's wisdom that would be required by the chairman and others on the committee in dividing the different interests, and that is why I think the Founding Fathers had it right.

They said that, ultimately, nobody in Washington can have Solomon's wisdom when you talk about local perspective and local interests, that there was a real value to local voice, those nine communities.

If you think about Saint Helena Sound as the example that I just cited, the little town south of there, Beaufort, drew up a resolution, and the county and the city council moved forward, saying: We don't want to move forward with this.

The little town to the east, Edisto Beach, moved forward with the resolu-

tion citing the same. The larger town to the north, Charleston, did the same.

Those local inputs, those local people, have said: We have seen what might or might not come here. We think it is worthy of a pause. Again, that is all this amendment does.

It doesn't say: We will forever not have offshore drilling in sale 260.

What it says is: For the next 5 years, why don't we allow for more public input and more voice, given the fact that there are lifetime impacts and really long-lasting impacts in certain pristine and/or developed areas along the coast of South Carolina or other coastal areas along the block of 260.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Chair, I will just restate my opposition to this amendment. And I would hope that the gentleman could work with his colleagues in South Carolina and work all this out. But I must oppose the amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. PINGREE. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. SANFORD. I yield to the gentlewoman from Maine.

Ms. PINGREE. Mr. Chair, I just wanted to rise in support of the amendment offered by the gentleman from South Carolina.

I was here last night and had a chance to speak against the Hudson amendment for the very reasons that he is articulating.

Coming from Maine and being from a State where people take very seriously our waterfronts, our fisheries, our livelihood that we make on the water, there are deep concerns about the challenges that might come up with oil and gas leases.

And I think everyone in many coastal States wants to just make sure we go through the most thorough process possible. So I heartily support the concerns that he is raising, and I support this amendment.

Mr. SANFORD. I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SANFORD).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. SANFORD. Mr. Chair, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from South Carolina will be postponed.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Chair, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from Minnesota is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Chair, there are many of us here in Congress who want to build a better America, a stronger America, a healthier America. And there are many of us here who are willing to work and fight to move our country in that direction forward,

which is the direction the American people want to go.

For most Americans, for families and communities all across this country, protecting the air we breathe and the water we drink is an essential role of government. The American people expect Congress to protect the public's health from polluters who are all too willing to reap larger and larger profits as they pump poison into our air and water.

We hear all too often the cries of "burdensome regulation" from those who defend the polluters. But rarely do we hear the cries of "burdensome asthma" or "burdensome cancer" from average Americans who all too often suffer in silence when they are sick because the air, water, or land they need has been poisoned.

My Republican colleagues are very content to cut funding and place riders on the enforcement of environmental standards to make life easier for the polluters.

But what about the families and the communities put at risk? What about the children who are at risk because avoiding environmental regulations to pump up profits is more important than public health?

The role of the Environmental Protection Agency is to protect the public, to protect our health, to protect our water, to protect our air, to protect our land from polluters who are all too willing to cut corners, enabling them to reap larger profits.

Investing in environmental regulation to protect the American people is a government function that is not burdensome. It is essential.

□ 1945

We should all want to protect the public's health and the vital role that the Environmental Protection Agency plays on behalf of the American people, but this bill fails to protect the American people. It fails to protect the public's health, and it fails to provide the tools necessary to hold polluters accountable for poisoning our air, our water, and our land. If this bill ever finds its way to the President's desk, President Obama will veto it.

Mr. Chairman, this is an important bill, and the investments we make together in this Interior-Environmental Appropriations bill speak to our values as a nation. We are the stewards of a bounty of resources, the inheritors of a nation of natural treasures; and there are 300 million Americans who depend on this Congress to ensure those resources, including our clean air and clean water, are protected.

Sadly, Mr. Chairman, very sadly, this bill lets them down. So I will urge my colleagues at the end of the day to vote against final passage, and I yield back the balance of my time.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. PALMER

Mr. PALMER. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. _____. (a) LIMITATION ON USE OF FUNDS.—None of the funds made available by this Act may be used for grants under title VII, subtitle G of the Energy Policy Act of 2005.

(b) CORRESPONDING REDUCTION IN FUNDS.—The aggregate amount otherwise provided by this Act for "Environmental Protection Agency-State and Tribal Assistance Grants", and the amount provided under such heading for grants under title VII, subtitle G of the Energy Policy Act of 2005, are each hereby reduced by \$50,000,000.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 333, the gentleman from Alabama and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Alabama.

Mr. PALMER. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, my amendment limits the funding of the EPA's Diesel Emissions Reduction Program. The Diesel Emissions Reduction Program is part of the National Clean Diesel Campaign. This grant program was created in 2005 as a short-term effort to assist States and local government to meet new diesel emissions standards for older diesel engines.

According to the Obama administration, the overall impact of the program has been marginal. Currently, there are 14 grant and loan programs at the Department of Energy, the Department of Transportation, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, plus three tax activities that have as a goal reducing mobile source diesel emissions. In addition, each of the 14 programs, according to the GAO, overlaps with at least one other program in the specific activities they fund, the program goals, or the eligible recipients of funding.

GAO also identified several instances of duplication where more than one program provided grant funding to the same recipient for the same type of activities. One example identified by GAO showed a nonprofit organization received \$1.1 million from EPA's Diesel Emissions Reduction Act program to install emission reduction and idle reduction technologies on 1,700 trucks, as well as \$5.6 million from a State infrastructure bank established under DOT's program to equip trucks and truck fleets with emissions control and idle reduction devices—essentially the same thing.

Mr. Chairman, the Federal Government has become so large, it is impossible to grasp its true size and scope to pay for its cost. With the country facing unprecedented levels of debt, taxpayers expect the Federal Government to run more efficiently, guarding against careless waste of precious resources. It is essential that Congress, the administration, and Federal agencies do everything in their power to cut spending, reduce duplication, and rein in waste, fraud, and abuse. My amendment does just that, and it would have an annual savings of \$50 million.

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

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the gentleman's amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I know a lot about the DERA program, obviously, from southern California, probably the most controlled air quality area in the United States, and there are a lot of things in EPA that don't work. There are a lot of things that EPA does to regulate, to create paperwork, and to create headaches for small- and large-business people. We have included a great number of policy provisions to address this EPA regulatory overreach in this bill. We have cut the EPA budget dramatically, as the gentlewoman just referred to. However, I believe this specific amendment targets a program that actually yields great benefits.

Many counties across the Nation are currently in nonattainment with EPA's existing standards for the particulate matter and ozone. We are not talking about the standards that are being talked about. We are talking about the standards that were put in place in 2008.

In many instances, these counties have been in nonattainment for years, and those communities need help to improve their air quality. The Diesel Emission Reduction Program, or DERA, is a proven, cost-effective program that provides grants to States to retrofit old diesel engines. So it is a program that supports manufacturing jobs while reducing pollution.

Another benefit is that these grants are highly leveraged, producing \$13 of economic benefit for every Federal grant dollar. Today's newer engines produce 90 percent—let me say that again—90 percent less toxic emissions than the older diesel engines. Remember, I have experience with trucks, and these independent truck drivers, those who have those trucks, get a lot of miles out of those trucks, sometimes well over a million miles off a truck. However, only 30 percent of the trucks and heavy-duty vehicles have transitioned to cleaner technologies, typically because especially these small truck companies just can't afford to get this new technology. We need to follow the science and accelerate the replacement of older engines with these new, clean engines, which, by the way, get better mileage and, at the same time, clean up the air considerably.

This is a program that is actually working. We have seen significant—I know the Obama administration doesn't like this program. They don't like programs that actually work. They want to get rid of the programs that work and have money be put into these esoteric climate change studies and so forth and so on, and I can tell

the gentleman, from experience, that this had significant impacts in the South Coast Air Quality District where I live in, an area that has probably been impacted with all the problems of air quality more than any other region in the United States of America.

Mr. Chairman, I strongly urge Members to vote "no" on the gentleman's amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PALMER. Mr. Chairman, I thank my distinguished colleague from California for his remarks, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, since 1984, the EPA has lowered the amount of pollutants from diesel engines by more than 98 percent. Since 1980, despite the fact that the gross domestic product has grown by over 460 percent, vehicle miles have increased by 94 percent, the population has grown 38 percent, energy production 32 percent, emissions have gone down 50 percent. In regard to the impact of these programs, you have 14 programs that the GAO has identified as overlapping. It will do little harm to the overall effort for air quality to eliminate one program that is clearly a duplication in several instances identified by the GAO.

In addition, Mr. Chairman, in regard to air quality, while air quality has improved dramatically—emissions are down 50 percent since 1980—respiratory illnesses such as asthma have gone up, and that is largely a byproduct of income. So I would commend to you that we need to reduce the number of regulations, the cost of regulations, to allow more economic activity and provide better job opportunities for people, which will have a direct impact on their overall welfare, including their health.

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

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and I thank the gentleman.

Again, Mr. Chairman, I think this is a program that has worked, continues to work, and has had significant improvement in my area in California and, I know, throughout the United States, where we have a program that actually does work.

Mr. Chairman, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from Minnesota (Ms. MCCOLLUM), my ranking member, who has a couple of comments.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of the gentleman from California's opposition to this amendment.

It has been used in my State and States all over to improve air quality, and, yes, pollutants have been cut. But as I just pointed out, Mr. Chairman, we still have a long way to go before we can turn to our children and say that we did everything we could to make sure that respiratory illness is decreased and that the air quality in this country is better.

So I strongly oppose this amendment, and I thank the gentleman from

California for his opposition to it as well.

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I have one point because asthma has been brought up.

When I was chairman of the Environment Committee a number of years ago, we had done significant studies on the increase in asthma. The gentleman is correct on income levels.

The lower income folks are suffering from asthma at greater numbers primarily because of indoor pollution. One of the reasons, if we can get into the specifics of why that has occurred, is because we have carpets now and drapes and we don't use linoleum and so forth that we used to have, and so we have the growth of indoor air pollution, and kids don't get outside as much as they used to.

So I think we sometimes blame other factors for asthma, and sometimes the other factors are more to blame. But this program, DERA, is a program that works, continues to work; and I know it has in my area, and I know it has in other areas throughout the United States.

So, Mr. Chairman, I oppose this amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. PALMER. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I would just like to again point out that it was a study from the University of California, Los Angeles that pointed out that children from low-income households suffer disproportionately from asthma, and as we continue to overregulate our economy and reduce the economic opportunities for people, we are going to continue to see these high rates of respiratory illnesses.

My final point is that we are not eliminating this clean diesel program. We are eliminating one program out of 14.

Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on this amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. PALMER).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. PALMER. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Alabama will be postponed.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. PALMER

Mr. PALMER. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. _____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used by the Environmental Protection Agency to carry out the powers granted under section 3063 of title 18, United States Code.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 333, the gentleman from Alabama and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Alabama.

Mr. PALMER. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, the Environmental Protection Agency spends more than \$45 million a year to fund a criminal enforcement division that employs almost 200 armed Federal agents. These agents have been involved in a number of troubling raids in Alaska, Idaho, Wyoming, Montana, Massachusetts, North Carolina, and in my own State of Alabama.

In Alaska, EPA agents wearing flak jackets and carrying M-16s showed up to review paperwork at a family-owned mining operation. In North Carolina, armed EPA agents visited Larry Keller after he sent an email to the regional administrator. In my home State of Alabama, armed EPA agents took over two waste treatment facilities in Dothan, Alabama. These agents were posted at each entrance to the plant and recorded identification information of all those going in and going out.

Mr. Chairman, more than 70 Federal departments now employ armed personnel, most of which most Americans would never associate with law enforcement. These agencies include the EPA, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Federal Reserve Board, and the National Institutes of Health.

Mr. Chairman, my amendment would prohibit funding for these activities at EPA. I urge my colleagues to support it, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I understand that we have taken a lot of shots at the EPA for their overreach, and I am one of them; however, this amendment reaches just a little too far. We may not always agree on where it is appropriate to draw the line on environmental laws and regulations. Some think standards are too stringent; others will say they are not tough enough. That is a fair policy debate, and we have it.

Back in 1968 when the Environmental Protection Agency was created, we had rivers that would light on fire. We had air that was so thick, back when I played football, you couldn't see the other goalposts on the other end of the football field. So we have made a lot of gains.

□ 2000

At the same time, as it has been discussed, I think the EPA has gone way too far. We get to the point where we start regulating smaller and smaller

numbers and making it very difficult; for instance, when we start talking about 70 parts per billion versus 60 parts per billion, we have gone a long ways.

However, we do know that no matter where the line is ultimately drawn, there are individuals out there that are willingly and knowingly trying to find ways around the law. As such, EPA needs to have the ability to look into criminal activity, whether it is illegal dumping of waste, which unfortunately happens; negligent dumping of toxics or oil, which unfortunately happens; and the illegal transportation or importation of products from other countries by those who would choose to ignore U.S. law.

We can debate the laws and what is appropriate, but we can't give criminals a free pass to ignore the law or the laws that are on the books.

Again, I'm sorry. I must oppose the amendment and strongly urge my colleagues to do the same.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PALMER. Mr. Chairman, with all due respect to my colleague from California, no one is in favor of allowing criminals to commit crimes at any level of the Federal Government or any part of the country.

I do think it should be troubling to every Member of this body that we have gone over the line in regard to becoming what could be viewed as a police state.

In regard to the raid on the Dothan wastewater treatment facility, that is a city facility; that is the Federal Government sending armed agents in full body armor with weapons to a municipal facility. I would beg the question: What was the threat assessment?

This is going on in other parts of the country as well, and I think we have a responsibility to draw a line where law enforcement is involved. If there is a threat assessment that would indicate the need to have armed officers assist the EPA in an investigation or a raid, there is ample law enforcement available to do that.

In that regard, I think this is an area where the EPA has overreached in respect to their responsibilities as regulators of the environment.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Chairman, this is an important debate. I recognize that we have had Federal agencies that have had overreach and have done things that go beyond their training and possibly should be done by other agencies. I won't disagree with that; but doing this in an appropriation bill is not the right place to do this.

The authorizers should have this debate, and we shouldn't be making these determinations with an appropriations bill which just broadly states that we are going to get rid of a whole swath of law enforcement, whether they are good or bad. It doesn't determine that because we can't do that in this type of legislative process.

Mr. Chairman, I yield to the gentleman from Minnesota (Ms. McCOLLUM).

Ms. McCOLLUM. Mr. Chair, if I may inquire how much time is remaining so I don't consume all the gentleman's time?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from California has 45 seconds remaining.

Ms. McCOLLUM. Mr. Chairman, I will just be short and sweet. I support the gentleman from California's strong objection to this amendment and would encourage people not to vote for it.

Let me conclude with this: an EPA law enforcement official deserves the right to come home to their families safe at night, and so they should have the tools that they need in order to do that.

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Chair, I oppose this amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. PALMER. Mr. Chairman, how much time do I have remaining?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Alabama has 2¼ minutes remaining.

Mr. PALMER. Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the gentlewoman from Minnesota's response. I, too, agree that every Federal official deserves to be able to go home safe and sound to their family.

That, though, does not address the specific issue here in regard to what is going on with the EPA. If there is a need for armed intervention with a business or, in this case, with a municipality, there should be a clear threat assessment. There isn't any. There was no reason for anyone to think that they needed to go in, in full body armor, with weapons drawn.

I think that that is part of what is going on here that a lot of American citizens are concerned about, is the overreach of the government and particularly in regard to 70 Federal agencies having armed agents in their employment.

I agree with the gentleman from California; this needs to be a broader discussion. In that regard, I think we should have that.

In respect to my amendment, I think we need to divert this funding away from this armed agency that the EPA is deploying, I think, without proper course.

In that regard, I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on this.

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

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. PALMER).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. PALMER. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Alabama will be postponed.

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Chairman, I move that the Committee do now rise. The motion was agreed to.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois) having assumed the chair, Mr. HULTGREN, Acting Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having 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, had come to no resolution thereon.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 6, 21ST CENTURY CURES ACT

Mr. BURGESS, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 114-193) on the resolution (H. Res. 350) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 6) to accelerate the discovery, development, and delivery of 21st century cures, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 333 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 2822.

Will the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HULTGREN) kindly resume the chair.

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IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of 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, with Mr. HULTGREN (Acting Chair) in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The Acting CHAIR. When the Committee of the Whole rose earlier today, a request for a recorded vote on an amendment offered by the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. PALMER) had been postponed, and the bill had been read through page 132, line 24.

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Chairman, I want to thank Chairman ROGERS for his leadership and support. Under his guidance, the Appropriations Committee is again setting the standard for getting things done in the House. This is the seventh of the appropriation bills that have come to the floor that we, hopefully, will be able to pass tomorrow.

I also want to thank my good friend and Ranking Member McCOLLUM for