

private property rights in our country. This legislation will set the tone for addressing other cases dealing with these rights.

I urge my colleagues to join me in protecting private property and private property rights by cosponsoring the Cooperative Management of Mineral Rights Act of 2015.

LONG RANGE STRIKE BOMBER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. KNIGHT) for 5 minutes.

Mr. KNIGHT. Mr. Speaker, today, I would like to address an issue of critical importance to our Nation's security: the Long Range Strike Bomber.

Since World War II, our defense has relied on the ability to respond quickly to any threats to our national security anywhere in the world. The bedrock of this strategy has always been the strategic bomber.

This past week, it was announced that Northrop Grumman would be producing our next strategic bomber for future generations. Potential adversaries are deterred because only the United States possesses the capability to strike any target in the world with precision weapons within 24 hours.

Last week, the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of the Air Force made the announcement that Northrop Grumman won the contract to build the Long Range Strike Bomber. This bomber will be produced in my district. The B-1, the B-2, and now the Long Range Strike Bomber will all follow in the same role of being built in the Antelope Valley in southern California.

Congratulations to the Air Force and the men and women of Northrop Grumman on this contract. I have seen firsthand the work that Northrop Grumman employees do in support of our men and women in uniform at Plant 42 in my district. I am here to congratulate them on the opportunity to bring the expertise and commitment to the Long Range Strike Bomber.

This means thousands of jobs to this country. It means thousands of jobs to southern California, in a much-needed area in my district where jobs are very scarce. Both Plant 42 and the many surrounding small businesses Northrop Grumman will have a contract with will have support in this area.

The road that led to Tuesday's announcement was a long one paved with hard work by many people in our community and State. The Antelope Valley has long since been the home to the aerospace industry and has built B-1s, B-2s, all of the space shuttles, and currently builds the F-35. Naturally, it would be a good selection for the next bomber being built there.

On any given day, the F-22, F-35, the F-16, B-1, or B-2 will be flying over the Antelope Valley in their test missions. I am confident that the Long Range Strike Bomber will help us continue this legacy, and I thank everyone who has helped bring its production to our community.

The Air Force has called the Long Range Strike Bomber a top modernization priority, and there are sobering facts behind that. Today, only 10 percent of our Nation's bomber force is capable of penetrating sophisticated adversary air defense systems. The average age of our bomber fleet is 32 years old, with most of our bombers more than 45 years old. Only the B-2 stealth bomber, proudly built, maintained, and modernized in my district, can penetrate advanced air defenses; however, we only have 20 B-2s.

Given Northrop Grumman's 35 years of expertise designing, building, delivering, and modernizing the B-2 stealth bomber at Plant 42, I know the men and women who work there are incredibly qualified to build our Nation's next long-range strike aircraft.

WATERS OF THE UNITED STATES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. LAMALFA) for 5 minutes.

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, after a wave of strong bipartisan opposition, after being stayed by two Federal courts, the administration is still pushing its flawed waters of the United States regulatory expansion. However, this week, the Senate will finally consider rejecting this regulatory overreach.

While the administration describes their plan as a minor clarification, it is, in fact, the most sweeping expansion of Federal regulatory authority in our Nation's history.

Mr. Speaker, this map of my home State of California demonstrates exactly how far the EPA's proposal would reach. Fully 95 percent of California, depicted in black, would fall under EPA's jurisdiction, though you will notice that the city of San Francisco, in white, does not. That is because San Francisco, the source of so much of this excessive regulatory mindset, long ago paved over every waterway in the city, and who knows what is in the runoff of rainwater flowing off the streets of that city.

It isn't just farms that would be hurt by the EPA's plan. Virtually every business and homeowner in the State would be faced with regulation at the whim of Federal bureaucrats under a rule written to ensure that the EPA has any jurisdiction anytime it wants.

Do we really believe the Federal Government should play a role in local land use decisions, even down to whether individual homes could be expanded? This is exactly the power the EPA claims that it needs. Dry streambeds, manmade ditches, even temporary puddles which exist only during rainstorms are all locations over which the EPA wishes to claim jurisdiction. Even Imperial County, a desert with virtually no natural waterways, would fall under the EPA's control with this plan.

Perhaps the most concerning isn't just that the EPA is seeking to expand

its authority. That is the nature of any bureaucracy, and it is to be expected from this administration. Most concerning is that we can't even trust the EPA with authority to regulate navigable waterways it already has or to respect exemptions included in the Clean Water Act.

In my northern California district, residents have experienced regulatory actions so ludicrous that we can't make them up. In Tehama County, a farmer was fined for planting wheat in a manner that the government claimed damaged so-called navigable waters, which begs the question anyway: What is or what should be determined to be a navigable waterway? Is it a puddle or is it something you can actually run a boat up and down?

Never mind that the farm I mentioned has been recognized as a wheat allotment by the USDA for decades or that the farmer had simply been continuing to farm the land exactly as it has been farmed for generations. Instead, government bureaucrats wanted this activity stopped, and they used their power to prevent this farming activity.

In another instance, the government used the Clean Water Act to attack a family farm for shifting to a more efficient irrigation system—yes, for shifting to more efficient irrigation system. One might think that is a laudable goal, especially during a drought period in California in the West, but the government claimed this activity would negatively impact the Sacramento River, which is a full 7 miles away from this farm and unconnected to that farm by any waterway.

Of course, in both of these instances, the government sanctioned farmers for activities that are clearly exempt under the Clean Water Act as specified by Congress, who makes the laws. Even in the EPA's only early draft, they exempted mud puddles, but they just couldn't quite leave them out. They had to include them as well in their regulation.

The ongoing efforts of the administration to ignore exemptions for normal farming activities like planting crops and maintaining irrigation systems are in clear violation of the Clean Water Act, as written by Congress. In fact, language I sponsored to defund this sort of regulation of exempt activities was passed by both Houses last year and signed into law in December, yet the EPA persists in its illegal activities.

Mr. Speaker, when Congress can't trust Federal agencies to judiciously use authority they already hold, when we can't trust agencies to follow clear congressional direction, how can we possibly consider granting or allowing them even more power?

It is time the Senate joined the House in rolling back this proposal and remind this administration that Congress writes the law, not bureaucrats.