

115TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# H. R. 6064

To rename the Oyster Bay National Wildlife Refuge as the Congressman  
Lester Wolff National Wildlife Refuge.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 8, 2018

Mr. SUOZZI introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee  
on Natural Resources

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## A BILL

To rename the Oyster Bay National Wildlife Refuge as the  
Congressman Lester Wolff National Wildlife Refuge.

1       *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2       *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3       **SECTION 1. FINDINGS.**

4       The Congress finds the following:

5               (1) The Oyster Bay National Wildlife Refuge  
6       was created in 1968. It is located on the north shore  
7       of Long Island in eastern Nassau County, is the  
8       largest refuge in the Long Island National Wildlife  
9       Refuge Complex, and receives the most public use of  
10       all the refuges in the Complex.

1           (2) The State of New York designated Oyster  
2 Bay a significant coastal fish and wildlife habitat. It  
3 is especially important for wintering waterfowl such  
4 as black duck, greater scaup, bufflehead, canvasback  
5 and long-tailed ducks. Management activities include  
6 wetland restoration and protection of the natural  
7 shoreline and vegetation.

8           (3) The refuge is unique in consisting solely of  
9 bay bottom and adjacent shoreline up to the mean  
10 high-tide mark. Ninety percent of New York's com-  
11 mercial oyster harvest comes from the refuge. Visi-  
12 tors enjoy fishing, wildlife observation, photography  
13 and environmental education. The refuge is truly a  
14 national treasure.

15           (4) Many visitors are unaware that were it not  
16 for the tireless work and advocacy of then-freshman  
17 Congressman Lester Wolff, this area would today be  
18 an 8.5-mile causeway and bridge across Long Island  
19 Sound between Oyster Bay and Rye, New York, con-  
20 necting Nassau and Westchester Counties.

21           (5) The bridge was first proposed by Robert  
22 Moses, the well-known New York City Planner, to  
23 divert traffic from New York City. Former Governor  
24 Nelson Rockefeller signed into law legislation cre-

1       ating the bridge authorized by the New York State  
2       Legislature in 1967.

3               (6) Congressman Wolff, elected in 1964, quick-  
4       ly decided the bridge would be an intrusion in a pris-  
5       tine area, and that Long Island Sound was a very  
6       precious resource that was despoiled. The conserva-  
7       tion threats in the mid-1960s were suburban devel-  
8       opment, wetland filling, and industrial pollution. The  
9       fight to preserve this land became an enormous po-  
10      litical fight and is considered to be a turning point  
11      in New York State's environmental legacy.

12              (7) With State and local political and commu-  
13      nity leaders, and especially the North Shore leaders  
14      and the Committee to Save the Long Island Sound,  
15      Congressman Wolff arranged a meeting with De-  
16      partment of the Interior representatives and local  
17      leaders where the idea of creating a wildlife refuge  
18      from municipal and privately owned wetlands was  
19      created.

20              (8) The Town of Oyster Bay, in which one end  
21      of the bridge was to be located, deeded 5,000 acres  
22      of wetlands to the United States to be maintained  
23      as a Federal wildlife preserve. It was stipulated that  
24      if the Department of the Interior agreed to an intru-  
25      sion of the property, it would revert to the town.

1 Creating a Federal wildlife preserve provided the  
2 land with Federal protection.

3 (9) Because of the vision, dedication, and perse-  
4 verance of Congressman Lester Wolff, all of us and  
5 future generations can enjoy the beauty and mag-  
6 nificence of this refuge.

7 **SEC. 2. RENAMING THE OYSTER BAY NATIONAL WILDLIFE**  
8 **REFUGE AS THE CONGRESSMAN LESTER**  
9 **WOLFF NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE.**

10 (a) RENAMING.—The unit of the National Wildlife  
11 Refuge System known as the Oyster Bay National Wildlife  
12 Refuge and located near Oyster Bay, New York, shall be  
13 known as the “Congressman Lester Wolff National Wild-  
14 life Refuge”.

15 (b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, reg-  
16 ulation, document, paper, or other record of the United  
17 States to the unit of the National Wildlife Refuge System  
18 known as the Oyster Bay National Wildlife Refuge is  
19 deemed to be a reference to the “Congressman Lester  
20 Wolff National Wildlife Refuge”.

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