

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED
AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS
ACT, 2018

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 504 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. 3354.

Will the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JODY B. HICE) kindly resume the chair.

□ 1719

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. 3354) making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2018, and for other purposes, with Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia (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, amendment No. 113 printed in House Report 115-295 offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. GAETZ) had been disposed of.

Pursuant to House Resolution 504, no further amendment to the bill, as amended, shall be in order except those printed in House Report 115-297, amendments en bloc described in section 3 of House Resolution 504, and available pro forma amendments described in section 4 of House Resolution 500.

Each further amendment printed in the report shall be considered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, may be withdrawn by the proponent at any time before action thereon, shall not be subject to amendment except as described in section 4 of House Resolution 500, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question.

It shall be in order at any time for the chair of the Committee on Appropriations or his designee to offer amendments en bloc consisting of amendments printed in the report not earlier disposed of. Amendments en bloc shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for 20 minutes equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations or their respective designees, shall not be subject to amendment, except as described in section 4 of House Resolution 500, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question.

AMENDMENTS EN BLOC NO. 1 OFFERED BY MR.
CALVERT OF CALIFORNIA

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Chairman, pursuant to section 3 of House Resolution 504 and as the designee of the gentleman

from New Jersey (Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN), I offer amendments en bloc. A list of the included amendments included in the en bloc is at the desk and has been agreed to by both sides.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendments en bloc.

Amendments en bloc No. 1 consisting of amendment Nos. 3, 7, 9, 10, 11, 16, 17, 19, 20, 22, 23, 25, 26, 34, 35, 47, 48, 49, 58, and 79, printed in House Report No. 115-297, offered by Mr. CALVERT of California:

AMENDMENT NO. 3 OFFERED BY MR. SOTO OF
FLORIDA

Page 8, line 16, after the dollar amount, insert “(reduced by \$500,000) (increased by \$500,000)”.

AMENDMENT NO. 7 OFFERED BY MR. COURTNEY
OF CONNECTICUT

Page 15, line 13, after the first dollar amount, insert “(reduced by \$300,000) (increased by \$300,000)”.

AMENDMENT NO. 9 OFFERED BY MR. CICILLINE
OF RHODE ISLAND

Page 15, line 13, after the first dollar amount, insert “(increased by \$2,000,000)”.

Page 39, line 1, after the dollar amount, insert “(reduced by \$2,000,000)”.

AMENDMENT NO. 10 OFFERED BY MR. CLYBURN
OF SOUTH CAROLINA

Page 16, line 4, after the dollar amount, insert “(increased by \$2,000,000)”.

Page 16, line 24, after the dollar amount, insert “(increased by \$2,000,000)”.

Page 39, line 1, after the dollar amount, insert “(reduced by \$2,000,000)”.

AMENDMENT NO. 11 OFFERED BY MR. HECK OF
WASHINGTON

Page 16, line 4, after the dollar amount, insert “(increased by \$5,500,000)”.

Page 39, line 1, after the dollar amount, insert “(reduced by \$5,500,000)”.

AMENDMENT NO. 16 OFFERED BY MR.
O’HALLERAN OF ARIZONA

Page 31, line 23, after the dollar amount, insert “(increased by \$10,000,000)”.

Page 39, line 1, after the dollar amount, insert “(reduced by \$10,000,000)”.

AMENDMENT NO. 17 OFFERED BY MS. PLASKETT
OF VIRGIN ISLANDS

Page 39, line 1, after the dollar amount insert “(reduced by \$995,000)”.

Page 40, line 11, after the first dollar amount insert “(increased by \$995,000)”.

Page 40 line 11, after the second dollar amount insert “(increased by \$977,000)”.

Page 40, line 25, after the dollar amount insert “(increased by \$18,000)”.

AMENDMENT NO. 19 OFFERED BY MRS. CAROLYN
B. MALONEY OF NEW YORK

Page 39, line 1, after the dollar amount, insert “(reduced by \$2,000,000)”.

Page 109, line 5, after the dollar amount, insert “(increased by \$2,000,000)”.

AMENDMENT NO. 20 OFFERED BY MR. BRENDAN F.
BOYLE OF PENNSYLVANIA

Page 43, line 15, after the dollar amount, insert “(reduced by \$1,911,000)”.

Page 104, line 20, after the dollar amount, insert “(increased by \$1,911,000)”.

AMENDMENT NO. 22 OFFERED BY MR. WELCH OF
VERMONT

Page 63, line 6, after the dollar amount, insert “(reduced by \$5,399,000)”.

Page 64, line 1, after the dollar amount, insert “(increased by \$4,399,000)”.

Page 64, line 12, after the dollar amount, insert “(increased by \$4,399,000)”.

AMENDMENT NO. 23 OFFERED BY MR. MAST OF
FLORIDA

Page 63, line 6, insert “(increased by \$1,086,000)” after the dollar amount.

Page 64, line 1, insert “(decreased by \$1,086,000)” after the dollar amount.

AMENDMENT NO. 25 OFFERED BY MR. SOTO OF
FLORIDA

Page 64, line 1, after the dollar amount, insert “(reduced by \$468,000) (increased by \$468,000)”.

AMENDMENT NO. 26 OFFERED BY MR. MAST OF
FLORIDA

Page 64, line 1, after the dollar amount, insert “(reduced by \$1,000,000)”.

Page 67, line 20, after the dollar amount, insert “(increased by \$1,000,000)”.

Page 74, line 4, after the dollar amount, insert “(increased by \$1,000,000)”.

AMENDMENT NO. 34 OFFERED BY MR. POLIS OF
COLORADO

Page 81, line 6, after the dollar amount, insert “(reduced by \$12,371,000)”.

Page 85, line 19, after the dollar amount, insert “(increased by \$12,371,000)”.

Page 86, line 11, after the dollar amount, insert “(increased by \$10,989,000)”.

Page 86, line 12, after the dollar amount, insert “(increased by \$1,382,000)”.

AMENDMENT NO. 35 OFFERED BY MR.
O’HALLERAN OF ARIZONA

Page 95, line 13, after the dollar amount, insert “(reduced by \$47,000,000) (increased by \$47,000,000)”.

AMENDMENT NO. 47 OFFERED BY MS. JACKSON
LEE OF TEXAS

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

SEC. ____ None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to limit outreach programs administered by the Smithsonian Institution.

AMENDMENT NO. 48 OFFERED BY MS. JACKSON
LEE OF TEXAS

At the end of division A, before the short title, add the following new section:

SEC. ____ None of the funds made available by this Act for the “DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR—NATIONAL PARK SERVICE—NATIONAL RECREATION AND PRESERVATION” may be used in contravention of section 320101 of title 54, United States Code.

AMENDMENT NO. 49 OFFERED BY MS. JACKSON
LEE OF TEXAS

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

SEC. ____ None of the funds made available in this Act may be used may be used to eliminate the Urban Wildlife Refuge Partnership.

AMENDMENT NO. 58 OFFERED BY MS. POLIQUIN
OF MAINE

At the end of division A (before the short title) insert the following:

SEC. ____ None of the funds made available under this Act may be used to enforce the export permission requirements of section 9(d)(1) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1538(d)(1)) for members of the phylum Echinodermata commonly known as sea urchins and sea cucumbers.

AMENDMENT NO. 79 OFFERED BY MS. SPEIER OF
CALIFORNIA

At the end of division A (before the short title) insert the following:

LIMITATION ON USE OF FUNDS

SEC. ____ None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to finalize, implement, administer, or enforce the proposed rule entitled “Special Regulations, Areas of the National Park Service, Golden Gate National Recreation Area, Dog Management” published by the National Park Service in the Federal Register on February 24, 2016 (81 Fed. Reg. 9139 et seq.; Regulation Identifier No. 1024-AE16).

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 504, the gentleman

from California (Mr. CALVERT) and the gentlewoman from Minnesota (Ms. MCCOLLUM) each will control 10 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

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

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HECK).

Mr. HECK. Mr. Chairman, this amendment helps our local communities preserve and restore important historic sites through a successful Federal-State partnership.

For more than 40 years, the Historic Preservation Fund has helped our States and Native Tribes leverage funds to revitalize communities and create opportunities for economic growth.

In my district, for example, the Historic Preservation Fund was recently used to rehabilitate Olympia's historic Stoker House, which is now home to a small clinic that provides much-needed mental health counseling services.

This year, funds were also used for Washington State's Youth Heritage Project in Tacoma, which introduced high school students to the maritime heritage of the Puget Sound region.

This amendment would simply restore Historic Preservation funding to last year's levels. It is a small but effective Federal program that deserves continued support.

This is a bipartisan amendment, and I am thankful to have the support of the co-chairs of the Historic Preservation Caucus, Congressmen TURNER and BLUMENAUER, along with Congressmen SMITH, COURTNEY, and KEATING.

Mr. Chairman, I urge adoption of the amendment.

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

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Chairman, I have no opposition to this en bloc amendment moving forward, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of the en bloc, and I urge its adoption.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Maine (Mr. POLIQUIN).

Mr. POLIQUIN. Mr. Chairman, I am thrilled to rise today to speak on behalf of my amendment which will remove unnecessary, redundant, and burdensome regulations from our sea urchins and sea cucumbers industry in the great State of Maine.

Now, we have some of the most hard-working people, Mr. Chair, in our State, and some of them—about 600 or so of them—along with the processing part brave the cold, dark waters of the great State of Maine and dive for sea urchins and cucumbers and harvest them on a regular basis year-round. It is a process that is dangerous, but these delicacies are sold all around the world, mostly in the Far East, and we need to make sure our government helps these individuals work this ter-

rific fishery that has been doing so well in the past.

Now, I want to thank my colleague, CHELLIE PINGREE, who represents the First District. I represent the Second District of Maine. She has been very helpful. We have worked together for quite some time on this issue in a bipartisan way to make sure, Mr. Chairman, that we don't have too many regulations that are unnecessary and expensive such that we can make sure this part of our fishery is healthy and goes forward.

So, again, I appreciate, Mr. Chairman, very much your giving me this opportunity to speak on behalf of my amendment.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Chairman, I have no other speakers present at this time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Chairman, I have no other speakers. I rise in support of the amendments en bloc, and I urge its adoption.

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chair, thank you for this opportunity to speak in support of my amendment to Division A of H.R. 3354, the "Interior and Environment Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2018."

Let me also thank Chairman CALVERT and Ranking Member MCCOLLUM for their leadership in shepherding this bill to the floor.

Among other agencies, this legislation funds the Smithsonian Institution, which operates our national museums, including the Air and Space Museum; the Museum of African Art; the Museum of the American Indian; and the National Portrait Gallery.

The Smithsonian also operates another national treasure: the National Zoo.

Mr. Chair, my amendment is simple but it sends a very important message from the Congress of the United States.

The Jackson Lee Amendment simply provides that:

"Sec. _____. None of the funds made available in this Act may be used to limit outreach programs administered by the Smithsonian Institution."

This amendment is identical to an amendment I offered to the Interior and Environment Appropriations Act for FY2008 (H.R. 2822) that was approved by voice vote on July 7, 2016.

Mr. Chair, the Smithsonian's outreach programs bring Smithsonian scholars in art, history and science out of "the nation's attic" and into their own backyard.

Each year, millions of Americans visit the Smithsonian in Washington, D.C.

But in order to fulfill the Smithsonian's mission, "the increase and diffusion of knowledge," the Smithsonian seeks to serve an even greater audience by bringing the Smithsonian to enclaves of communities who otherwise would be deprived of the vast amount of cultural history offered by the Smithsonian.

The Smithsonian's outreach programs serve millions of Americans, thousands of communities, and hundreds of institutions in all 50 states, through loans of objects, traveling exhibitions, and sharing of educational resources via publications, lectures and presentations, training programs, and websites.

Smithsonian outreach programs work in close cooperation with Smithsonian museums and research centers, as well as with 144 affiliate institutions and others across the nation.

The Smithsonian's outreach activities support community-based cultural and educational organizations around the country.

They ensure a vital, recurring, and high-impact Smithsonian presence in all 50 states through the provision of traveling exhibitions and a network of affiliations.

Smithsonian outreach programs increase connections between the Institution and targeted audiences (African American, Asian American, Latino, Native American, and new American) and provide kindergarten through college-age museum education and outreach opportunities.

These outreach programs enhance K-12 science education programs, facilitate the Smithsonian's scholarly interactions with students and scholars at universities, museums, and other research institutions; and disseminate results related to the research and collections strengths of the Institution.

The programs that provide the critical mass of Smithsonian outreach activity are:

1. the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service (SITES);
2. the Smithsonian Affiliations, the Smithsonian Center for Education and Museum Studies (SCEMS);
3. National Science Resources Center (NSRC);
4. the Smithsonian Institution Press (SIP);
5. the Office of Fellowships (OF); and
6. the Smithsonian Associates (TSA), which receives no federal funding.

To achieve the goal of increasing public engagement, SITES directs some of its federal resources to develop Smithsonian Across America: A Celebration of National Pride.

This "mobile museum," which will feature Smithsonian artifacts from the most iconic (presidential portraits, historic American flags, Civil War records, astronaut uniforms, etc.) to the simplest items of everyday life (family quilts, prairie schoolhouse furnishings, historic lunch boxes, multilingual store front and street signs, etc.), has been a long-standing organizational priority of the Smithsonian.

SITES "mobile museum" is the only traveling exhibit format able to guarantee audience growth and expanded geographic distribution during sustained periods of economic retrenchment, but also because it is imperative for the many exhibitors nationwide who are struggling financially yet eager to participate in Smithsonian outreach.

For communities still struggling to fully recover from the economic downturn, the ability of museums to present temporary exhibitions, the "mobile museum" promises to answer an ever-growing demand for Smithsonian shows in the field.

A single, conventional SITES exhibit can reach a maximum of 12 locations over a two- to three-year period.

In contrast, a "mobile museum" exhibit can visit up to three venues per week in the course of only one year, at no cost to the host institution or community.

The net result is an increase by 150 in the number of outreach locations to which SITES shows can travel annually.

And in addition to its flexibility in making short-term stops in cities and towns from coast-to-coast, a "mobile museum" has the

advantage of being able to frequent the very locations where people live, work, and take part in leisure time activities.

By establishing an exhibit presence in settings like these, SITES will not only increase its annual visitor participation by 1 million, but also advance a key Smithsonian performance objective: to develop exhibit approaches that address diverse audiences, including population groups not always affiliated with mainstream cultural institutions.

SITES also will be the public exhibitions' face of the Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture, as that new Museum comes online.

Providing national access to projects that will introduce the American public to the Museum's mission, SITES in FY 2008 will tour such stirring exhibitions as NASA ART: 50 Years of Exploration; 381 Days: The Montgomery Bus Boycott Story; Beyond: Visions of Planetary Landscapes; The Way We Worked: Photographs from the National Archives; and More Than Words: Illustrated Letters from the Smithsonian's Archives of American Art.

To meet the growing demand among smaller community and ethnic museums for an exhibition celebrating the Latino experience, SITES provided a scaled-down version of the National Museum of American History's 4,000-square-foot exhibition about legendary entertainer Celia Cruz.

Two 1,500-square-foot exhibitions, one about Crow Indian history and the other on basket traditions, will give Smithsonian visitors beyond Washington a taste of the Institution's critically acclaimed National Museum of the American Indian.

Two more exhibits, "In Plane View" and "Earth from Space," provided visitors an opportunity to experience the Smithsonian's recently opened, expansive National Air and Space Museum Udvar-Hazy Center.

For almost 30 years, The Smithsonian Associates—the highly regarded educational arm of the Smithsonian Institution—has arranged Scholars in the Schools programs.

Through this tremendously successful and well-received educational outreach program, the Smithsonian shares its staff—hundreds of experts in art, history and science—with the national community at a local level.

The mission of Smithsonian Affiliations is to build a strong national network of museums and educational organizations in order to establish active and engaging relationships with communities throughout the country.

There are currently 138 affiliates located in the United States, Puerto Rico, and Panama.

By working with museums of diverse subject areas and scholarly disciplines, both emerging and well-established, Smithsonian Affiliations is building partnerships through which audiences and visitors everywhere will be able to share in the great wealth of the Smithsonian while building capacity and expertise in local communities.

The National Science Resources Center (NSRC) strives to increase the number of ethnically diverse students participating in effective science programs based on NSRC products and services.

The Center develops and implements a national outreach strategy that will increase the number of school districts (currently more than 800) that are implementing NSRC K–8 programs.

The NSRC is striving to further enhance its program activity with a newly developed sci-

entific outreach program introducing communities and school districts to science through literacy initiatives.

In addition, through the building of the multi-cultural Alliance Initiative, the Smithsonian's outreach programs seek to develop new approaches to enable the public to gain access to Smithsonian collections, research, education, and public programs that reflect the diversity of the American people, including underserved audiences of ethnic populations and persons with disabilities.

For all these reasons, Mr. Chair, I urge adoption of the Jackson Lee Amendment and thank Chairman CALVERT and Ranking Member MCCOLLUM for their courtesies, consideration, and very fine work in putting together this excellent legislation.

Mr. Chair, I also want to thank you for this opportunity to speak in support of my amendments to Division A of H.R. 3354, the Interior and Environment Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2018 and to commend Chairman CALVERT and Ranking Member MCCOLLUM for their leadership in shepherding this bill through the legislative process.

Among other agencies, this legislation funds the U.S. Forest Service, the National Park System, and the Smithsonian Institution, which operates our national museums including the National Zoo.

Mr. Chair, my amendment is simple but it sends a very important message from the Congress of the United States.

The Jackson Lee Amendment emphasizes the importance of Urban Wildlife Refuge Partnerships and urban forests, and preserves our ability to return urban areas to healthy and safe living environments for our children.

Similar amendments were offered and accepted in the Interior and Environment Appropriations Acts for Fiscal Year 2017 (H.R. 2822), Fiscal Year 2008 (H.R. 2643), and Fiscal Year 2007 (H.R. 5386), and were adopted by voice vote.

Mr. Chair, surveys indicate that some urban forests are in serious danger.

In the past 30 years alone, we have lost 30 percent of all our urban trees—a loss of over 600 million trees.

Eighty percent (80 percent) of the American population lives in the dense quarters of a city.

Reforestation programs return a tool of nature to a concrete area that can help to remove air pollution, filter out chemicals and agricultural waste in water, and save communities millions of dollars in storm water management costs.

I have certainly seen neighborhoods in Houston benefit from urban reforestation.

In addition, havens of green in the middle of a city can have beneficial effects on a community's health, both physical and psychological, as well as increase property value of surrounding real estate.

Reforestation of cities is an innovative way of combating urban sprawl and deterioration.

Mr. Chair, a real commitment to enhancing our environment involves both the protection of existing natural resources and active support for restoration and improvement projects.

Several years ago, American Forests, a leading conservation group, estimated that the tree cover lost in the greater Washington metropolitan area from 1973 to 1997 resulted in an additional 540 million cubic feet of storm water runoff annually, which would have taken more than \$1 billion in storm water control facilities to manage.

Trees breathe in carbon dioxide, and produce oxygen.

People breathe in oxygen and exhale carbon dioxide.

A typical person consumes about 38 lb of oxygen per year.

A healthy tree, say a 32 ft tall ash tree, can produce about 260 lb of oxygen annually—two trees supply the oxygen needs of a person for a year!

Trees help reduce pollution by capturing particulates like dust and pollen with their leaves.

A mature tree absorbs from 120 to 240 lbs of the small particles and gases of air pollution.

Trees help combat the effects of "greenhouse" gases, the increased carbon dioxide produced from burning fossil fuels that is causing our atmosphere to "heat up."

Trees help cool down the overall city environment by shading asphalt, concrete and metal surfaces.

Buildings and paving in city centers create a heat-island effect.

A mature tree canopy reduces air temperatures by about 5–10 degrees Fahrenheit.

A 25 foot tree reduces annual heating and cooling costs of a typical residence by 8 to 12 percent, producing an average annual savings of \$120 per American household.

Proper tree plantings around buildings can slow winter winds, and reduce annual energy use for home heating by 4–22 percent.

Mr. Chair, trees play a vital role in making our cities more sustainable and more livable.

The Jackson Lee Amendment simply provides for continued support to programs like Urban Wildlife Refuge Partnerships that reforest our urban areas.

For all these reasons, Mr. Chair, I urge adoption of the Jackson Lee Amendment and thank Chairman CALVERT and Ranking Member MCCOLLUM for their courtesies, consideration, and very fine work in putting together this legislation.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendments en bloc offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. CALVERT).

The en bloc amendments were agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MR. GRIJALVA

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 2 printed in House Report 115-297.

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

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 2, line 25, after the dollar amount, insert "(reduced by \$12,000,000)".

Page 66, line 2, after the dollar amount, insert "(increased by \$12,000,000)".

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 504, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GRIJALVA) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arizona.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chairman, my amendment will restore \$12 million in cuts to the already underfunded Superfund Enforcement program, with an equivalent cut to Bureau of Land Management's oil and gas leasing program.

Superfund Enforcement is the epitome of Federal fiscal responsibility. It ensures that polluters pay for the cleanup and the mess they have caused.

For over 35 years, EPA's Superfund Enforcement program has enabled thousands of site investigations at cleanups and has required viable responsible parties to either conduct the work or pay for the cleanups of these Superfund sites, in other words, hold parties accountable for the action and correction of their activities.

□ 1730

Any cuts to these funds clearly places corporate interests over that of the health and financial well-being of the American people.

According to the EPA, the Superfund Enforcement program's efforts to negotiate settlement agreements and issue order for cleanup work accounts for approximately 69 percent of all the cleanup work currently underway at Superfund sites around this country.

For every dollar the Superfund Enforcement program spends, private parties commit \$8 toward cleanup work. The enforcement funding is essential in saving taxpayer dollars and the scarce resources of the Superfund trust fund to address truly abandoned and orphaned sites.

As of August 1, 2017, there were 1,845 Superfund sites in the country. These sites include dangerous and toxic substances not just in my backyard but in everybody's backyard.

Perhaps not surprisingly, Superfund sites tend to be located near lower income communities and around communities of color. Approximately 53 million people live within 3 miles of a Superfund site in this country, and 46 percent of them live in poorer communities and communities of color. Fifteen percent of those residents live below the poverty level.

According to a National Association of Clean Air Agencies report: "Without EPA's enforcement, companies could avoid reporting, or minimize the reported amount of toxic materials released to the environment."

Following one of the most catastrophic hurricanes to hit Texas, the EPA found that 13 Superfund sites have been flooded or could face damage as a result of Hurricane Harvey.

Administrator Pruitt has repeatedly tried to justify his cuts to the agency by claiming that he wants the agency to go "back to the basics." I can't think of anything more fundamental than cleaning up the most toxic sites in the Nation to protect the health of the people who live nearby in those communities.

Restoring the ability of the EPA to self-sustain its core mission should be a no-brainer for those on both sides of the aisle. In order to restore the funding, my amendment will make a modest cut to the BLM's oil and gas program. This program is a massive giveaway to the very polluters that have made the existence of the Superfund program a necessity.

Currently, 7,950 drilling permits are approved and not being used. There are 14.4 million acres of public land under lease and not producing. There is no justification to dole out more taxpayer money in order to expedite and speed up the permitting or leasing practices when we have that amount not being used and over close to 15 million acres under lease, as we speak.

A report by Oil Change International recently found that the U.S. Government provided about \$6 billion annually in financial support to the oil, gas, and coal industries between 2013 and 2015. Meanwhile, oil giant ExxonMobil's profits more than doubled in the first quarter of this year, which equaled \$4.1 billion in profits for just that one quarter. They certainly did not need more taxpayer money while communities across the United States continue to be exposed to toxic and hazardous pollution.

My amendment restores, in part, EPA's core mission to protect the public health of the American people and to hold all polluters responsible and liable for the environmental and health risks they cause.

Mr. Chairman, I urge a "yes" vote on the amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. MITCHELL). The gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Chairman, I certainly appreciate the gentleman's support for robust funding of the Superfund program, particularly the cleanup program.

There is a need for Congress to make progress to address the backlog of 1,300 sites on the national priority list. The bill proposes to do so with a \$47.6 million increase for cleanup work. However, the amendment proposes merely to increase EPA's enforcement budget by \$12 million, with a stated objective of reducing BLM's oil and gas management program.

The committee wrote a balanced bill, and I support the wise use of Federal oil and gas resources. Therefore, I oppose the amendment and urge my colleagues to vote "no" on the gentleman's amendment.

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

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chairman, this is a prudent, necessary protection of public health and the environment. I urge a "yes" vote on this amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Chairman, I ask Members to vote "no" 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 Arizona (Mr. GRIJALVA).

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

Mr. GRIJALVA. 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 Arizona will be postponed.

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 4 printed in House Report 115-297.

AMENDMENT NO. 5 OFFERED BY MR. BACON

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 5 printed in House Report 115-297.

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

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 8, line 16, after the dollar amount, insert "(increased by \$1,974,000)".

Page 10, line 1, after the dollar amount, insert "(reduced by \$4,000,000)".

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 504, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BACON) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Nebraska.

Mr. BACON. Mr. Chairman, I rise to offer amendment No. 5. I plan to ask unanimous consent to withdraw the amendment. However, before I do, I would ask to engage Chairman CALVERT in a brief colloquy.

Mr. Chair, I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. CALVERT. I would be happy to engage the gentleman from Colorado in a colloquy.

Mr. BACON. The Fish and Wildlife Service has a backlog of 49 species waiting to be down-listed or delisted. This issue is further compounded by the fact that an additional 839 species are overdue for their mandatory 5-year status review to determine if ESA protections need to continue.

It is no wonder why States are frustrated that species are put on the list and rarely removed. To be more effective in species conservation, the Fish and Wildlife Service must address this backlog so States can better focus their recovery efforts.

I respect the committee's progress made on this front, but I hope we can make further efforts to ensure the Fish and Wildlife Service is an effective ally in species conservation under EPA.

Mr. Chair, I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. CALVERT. I thank the gentleman for his comments and for his amendment, and I fully agree with his concerns about the backlogs, but I have concerns with the proposed offset and appreciate the intention to withdraw it.

The committee has made a concerted effort in recent years to fix these problems and has increased the recovery account by almost \$4 million over the last 2 years.

Under House Republican pressure over the past 7 years, the Fish and Wildlife Service has delisted more species than all other previous years combined, but, clearly, we still have a long way to go.

The Service has been directed and funded to complete all 5-year reviews within the period required by law, and the committee will continue to press the Service to see that they eliminate these backlogs.

I thank the gentleman again for raising this issue, and I pledge to work with him on this.

Mr. BACON. I thank the gentleman for his feedback and efforts, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. Chairman, I withdraw my amendment No. 5.

The Acting CHAIR. The amendment is withdrawn.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Chairman, as the designee of Ranking Member LOWEY, I move to strike the last word.

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

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. O'HALLERAN).

Mr. O'HALLERAN. Mr. Chairman, my amendments address critical health needs in Indian Country by providing the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Indian Health Service additional funding to complete projects.

My first amendment ensures communities, including the Hopi Tribe in my district, have resources for funding to complete their arsenic medication project.

My second amendment fulfills part of our trust relationship with federally recognized Tribes by ensuring Indian Health Service clinics and hospitals opening this year receive staffing and operations funding.

In my district, the Gila River Health Care Red Tail Hawk Health Center is scheduled to be opened, but has not received staffing or operation funding. These healthcare facilities are badly needed to increase access to healthcare in the community.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Chairman, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Ms. PLASKETT).

Ms. PLASKETT. Mr. Chairman, I am asking that we include my provision for raising funds for the Department of the Interior's assistance to territories in this en bloc amendment.

This is a very modest uptick of the \$1 million in Federal support for the United States territories, namely the Virgin Islands, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, and American Samoa. It is crucial that the Federal Government keep its commitment to address the pressing needs of Americans living in these territories as we face grave natural disaster and security threats.

Right now, thousands of people are feeling the effects of one of the most catastrophic hurricanes ever to strike the Caribbean region. Hurricane Irma has toppled buildings and leveled many homes. Making the Virgin Islands whole again will require massive and coordinated efforts spanning a long period of time.

Much of the Federal Government's support for Americans in U.S. terri-

tories comes out of this territorial assistance account, with funding channeled toward necessary community facilities like schools, hospitals, and critical infrastructure systems. This support is imperative.

After this hurricane, one of our hospitals is partially destroyed. The other faces egregious deferred maintenance issues due, in part, to an extremely high proportion of uncompensated care because the territories face inequitable treatment in Federal health programs like Medicaid and Medicare.

Construction or repair to schools and hospitals account for much of the capital improvement project expenditures that come directly out of this assistance to the territories' account.

We are asking that the territories receive the same funding that they have received previously, and please approve this amendment to reverse this cut as a simple matter of fairness to the territories.

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

AMENDMENTS EN BLOC NO. 2 OFFERED BY MR. CALVERT OF CALIFORNIA

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Chairman, pursuant to section 3 of House Resolution 504, as the designee of the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN), I rise to offer amendments en bloc No. 2. The list of the amendments included in the en bloc is at the desk and has been agreed to by both sides.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendments en bloc.

Amendments en bloc No. 2 consisting of amendment Nos. 1, 6, 24, 28, 33, 52, 54, and 70 printed in House Report 115-297, offered by Mr. CALVERT of California:

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MS. MCSALLY OF ARIZONA

Page 2, line 25, after the dollar amount, insert "(increased by \$316,000)".

Page 64, line 1, after the dollar amount, insert "(reduced by \$364,700)".

AMENDMENT NO. 6 OFFERED BY MR. MAST OF FLORIDA

Page 8, line 16, after the dollar amount, insert "(reduced by \$1,200,000)".

Page 21, line 07, after the dollar amount, insert, "(increased by \$1,000,000)".

AMENDMENT NO. 24 OFFERED BY MR. MAST OF FLORIDA

Page 63, line 6, after the dollar amount, insert "(reduced by \$979,000)".

Page 104 line 10, after the dollar amount, insert, "(increased by \$979,000)".

AMENDMENT NO. 28 OFFERED BY MS. MCSALLY OF ARIZONA

Page 64, line 1, after the dollar amount, insert "(reduced by \$3,831,000)".

Page 81, line 6, after the dollar amount, insert "(increased by \$3,000,000)".

Page 81, line 10, after the first dollar amount, insert "(increased by \$3,000,000)".

AMENDMENT NO. 33 OFFERED BY MR. MCKINLEY OF WEST VIRGINIA

Page 80, line 21, after the dollar amount, insert "(reduced by \$9,500,000)".

Page 81, line 6, after the dollar amount, insert "(increased by \$5,000,000)".

Page 81, line 8, after the dollar amount, insert "(increased by \$5,000,000)".

AMENDMENT NO. 52 OFFERED BY MR. BYRNE OF ALABAMA

At the end of division A (before the short title) insert the following:

SEC. _____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to propose to repeal section 105(a)(2) or section 105(b) of the Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act of 2006 (43 U.S.C. 1331 note).

AMENDMENT NO. 54 OFFERED BY MR. BURGESS OF TEXAS

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

SEC. _____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used by the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to hire or pay the salary of any officer or employee of the Environmental Protection Agency under subsection (f) or (g) of section 207 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 209) who is not already receiving pay under either such subsection on the date of enactment of this Act.

AMENDMENT NO. 70 OFFERED BY MR. EMMER OF MINNESOTA

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

SEC. _____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to withdraw National Forest System lands within the Rainy River Watershed on the Superior National Forest from disposition under United States mineral and geothermal leasing laws.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 504, the gentleman from California (Mr. CALVERT) and the gentlewoman from Minnesota (Ms. MCCOLLUM) each will control 10 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. EMMER).

Mr. EMMER. I thank the chairman for yielding.

Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to support this en bloc amendment because it contains language I offered to support the hardworking people of Minnesota.

Our amendment halts a last-minute effort by the previous administration that would restrict all leasing, exploration, and potential development of approximately 234,000 acres of Federal land in northeast Minnesota.

If this ban were to take effect, it would have a devastating impact on the economy of my State, as well as our Nation as a whole.

Minnesota's Department of Natural Resources has estimated there are roughly \$500 billion worth of minerals in the area proposed for withdrawal, in addition to nearly \$3 billion in royalty revenues for Minnesota's Permanent School Trust Fund, which would support almost 900,000 K-12 students statewide.

Through this amendment, we have a real opportunity to get the Federal Government out of the way so this land can remain available for future development to bring much-needed jobs and revenue to the great State of Minnesota.

These efforts have garnered the support of more than 60 members of the Minnesota Legislature, from both parties I might add. We also have the backing of Chairman BISHOP of the House Natural Resources Committee, as well as the chairman of the Energy and Mineral Resources Subcommittee, Representative PAUL GOSAR.

□ 1745

The National Mining Association, Mining Minnesota, and the Congressional Western Caucus are in favor of the amendment, and it could not be more in line with the current administration's priorities to create jobs and reinvigorate the American economy.

Because we know that somehow, somewhere, someone will find a way to mine the precious metals in this area in a safe and environmentally responsible way—

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Chairman, I yield an additional 30 seconds to the gentleman from Minnesota.

Mr. EMMER. Mr. Chairman, when that happens, Minnesota deserves to have that opportunity and the jobs and economic prosperity that will ensue.

Again, I thank the chairman for the opportunity to speak in support of my amendment, and I encourage everyone to support the en bloc package.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to this en bloc amendment.

I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. KILMER).

Mr. KILMER. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in opposition to this block of amendments, and I do appreciate that this block seeks to increase funding to address the National Park Service's \$11.3 billion backlog of deferred maintenance.

I firmly believe that we need to increase annual appropriations for our parks, but funding shouldn't come at the expense of other critical agency accounts.

In my neck of the woods, the Olympic National Park, alone, has \$150 million in backlogged maintenance needs, so we are not going to accomplish this enormous goal a few million dollars at a time. The real solution is for Congress to provide a robust and dedicated funding source, and that is why I partnered with Representative HURD and my fellow Washingtonian, Representative REICHERT, to introduce the National Park Service Legacy Act, which will create a dedicated source of funding to address the National Park Service maintenance backlog. This bipartisan and bicameral bill is funded through unobligated mineral royalties and would generate up to \$500 million, annually, through 2047.

So, if we are serious about addressing the overwhelming maintenance backlog in our national parks, I urge my colleagues to oppose this amendment and join me in support of the National Park Service Legacy Act.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Chairman, I am opposed to all these amendments included in the en bloc. Many of them use offsets from accounts in the Environmental Protection Agency of the Fish and Wildlife Service, and they are already severely underfunded.

I am particularly troubled by one amendment to this group that threatens our Nation's most visited wilder-

ness area. Let me tell you why I oppose the Emmer amendment.

The Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness, located in northern Minnesota, is one of the last truly wild places in America. These 1.1 million acres of unspoiled woodlands and more than 1,000 pristine lakes are beloved by adventurers, canoers, and sportsmen from all across our country. This national treasure lies in the vast Rainy River Watershed and flows north into Voyageurs National Park and onward towards Canada.

Recently, there has been a push to conduct sulfide-ore copper mining less than 3 miles from the Boundary Waters Wilderness. This mining threatens to irretrievably damage the waters, the wildlife, and the landscape. Sulfur ore mining is the most toxic industry in America, polluting waterways with acid drainage that contains arsenic, mercury, and lead.

In 2014, the Mount Polley sulfide-ore mine in British Columbia failed, dumping billions of liters of toxic sludge and leaving permanent environmental damage in its wake.

To protect the boundary waters from this type of destruction, the Forest Service acted last December and launched a thorough environmental analysis with public engagement to assess what type of mining, if any, is appropriate on Federal lands and this watershed for the next 20 years. The Trump and the Obama administrations have both agreed we need a thorough, scientific-based assessment of the best management of this sensitive ecosystem and conservation of our boundary waters.

The Emmer amendment upends this careful process. It pushes aside the Forest Service's ongoing study. It mandates that dangerous copper and sulfide mining will be allowed in the watershed, regardless of the conclusions of this environmental study, and it intentionally ignores a public process that hundreds of thousands of Americans weighed in on with comments on both sides of the issue. In my opinion, this amendment sets a horrible precedent, wastes taxpayer dollars already invested in this study, and threatens a national treasure, and it should never become law.

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

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of the en bloc and urge its adoption.

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

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Chair, let me start by acknowledging my colleagues, Representatives EMMER and NOLAN. I'm proud to call both of you my friends, but I'm speaking tonight because I disagree with this amendment.

We can be open to new types of mining in Minnesota when the necessary environmental reviews are met, like in the case of Polymet, which I support.

Taconite mining is part of Minnesota's DNA. However, the copper-nickel mining being proposed on the edge of the Boundary Waters

Canoe Area is not taconite mining, and has never been done before in Minnesota. Earlier this year, the Trump administration said it would allow the current environmental review process to proceed to completion. I support that decision, and I oppose this amendment's effort to defund an ongoing environmental review to protect one of Minnesota's natural treasures. Indeed, it's one of our country's most spectacular wilderness areas.

The Boundary Waters is Minnesota's Yellowstone. Hundreds of thousands of Americans visit on fishing and canoe trips annually. Some of the best memories of my life have taken place in the Boundary Waters, both as a child and now as a parent with my daughters.

The public process that is underway after hundreds of thousands of people weighed in with their comments, should not be ignored and tossed aside. And, a science-based assessment of the best management practices of this sensitive ecosystem should be adhered to. We owe it to future generations to understand the impact copper-nickel mining poses to Minnesota's most precious water and land before we put it at risk.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendments en bloc offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. CALVERT).

The en bloc amendments were agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 8 OFFERED BY MS. MCSALLY

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 8 printed in House Report 115-297.

Ms. MCSALLY. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 15, line 13, after the first dollar amount, insert "(increased by \$9,692,000)".

Page 15, line 15, after the dollar amount, insert "(increased by \$9,692,000)".

Page 64, line 1, after the dollar amount, insert "(reduced by \$12,078,000)".

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 504, the gentlewoman from Arizona (Ms. MCSALLY) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Arizona.

Ms. MCSALLY. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in favor of my amendment to the Make America Secure and Prosperous Appropriations Act.

This amendment would approve access to America's prized treasures by increasing the National Park Service's Facility Maintenance and Operations account by \$9.7 million, bringing the funding amount up to the fiscal year 2017 enacted level. In doing so, this amendment will help address the long-standing deferred maintenance needs of the Park Service.

Currently, the National Park Service has an \$11.9 billion backlog, which is a figure that has increased steadily since 2009. According to the most recent NPS deferred maintenance report, the Yosemite National Park, in Chairman CALVERT's home State, has a backlog of \$555 million. Yellowstone has a backlog of \$716 million across three States.

The Grand Canyon's backlog of \$350 million makes up a large portion of my home State's—Arizona—delayed and deferred projects. In fact, Arizona has one of the largest backlogs of any State in the country: \$565 million.

This problem doesn't only impact the crown jewels of the park system. In my district, maintenance projects require attention at the Saguaro National Park of approximately \$12.9 million, of which the Chiricahua National Monument in Cochise County faces roughly \$10.3 million in needed restoration projects.

Mr. Chairman, this country and my State is home to some of the world's most renowned landscapes and natural beauty. By providing this modest funding increase to address some of the backlog across the Nation, my amendment will ensure Americans have unimpaired access to their national parks and that the enjoyment of these wonders is available for future generations.

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

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition to the amendment.

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

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Chairman, I must oppose this amendment that takes more money away from an already starved Environmental Protection Agency. The EPA's main operating account is already cut by \$240 million.

The EPA plays a critical role in keeping Americans safe both during natural disasters like Hurricane Harvey and on a day-to-day basis. I know this because the EPA, right now, is cleaning up a toxic waste site that has been recently discovered in my congressional district.

Unfortunately, the very air we breathe and the water we drink is endangered by the funding and policy decisions that are made in this bill, and their consequences will be negatively felt in communities across this Nation.

Now, this amendment would increase funding for the National Park Service, something I do support. I have just been to Glacier National Park, where I saw their backlog, and I agree wholeheartedly that we should be investing in our parks, but it cannot be done at the expense of our public health.

Republicans have chosen to put forward an omnibus bill that leaves nearly \$5 billion of nondiscretionary funds on the table. So rather than gutting the EPA farther, we should be using all the resources available to us and working on a bipartisan budget agreement.

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

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Chairman, as the designee of Chairman FRELINGHUYSEN, I move to strike the last word.

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

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of the gentlewoman's amendment. I certainly urge Members to support it.

This bill maintains the increases provided last year for deferred maintenance and increases the construction account by \$10 million. This amendment will further our efforts to address the longstanding deferred maintenance needs.

I urge an "aye" vote on the amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. MCSALLY. Mr. Chairman, I appreciate your support of the amendment, and I would ask all Members on both sides of the aisle to support our national parks and support this amendment.

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

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Arizona (Ms. MCSALLY).

The amendment was agreed to.

The Acting CHAIR. The Chair understands that amendment No. 12 will not be offered.

AMENDMENT NO. 13 OFFERED BY MR. GRIFFITH

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 13 printed in House Report 115-297.

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

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 28, line 17, strike "3" and insert "6".

MODIFICATION TO AMENDMENT NO. 13 OFFERED BY MR. GRIFFITH

Mr. GRIFFITH. Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent that the amendment be modified in the form I have placed at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the modification.

The Clerk read the modification as follows:

Insert at the end the following:

Page 28, line 8, after the dollar amount, insert "(increased by \$75,000,000)".

Page 64, line 1, after the dollar amount, insert "(reduced by \$80,000,000)".

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

There was no objection.

The Acting CHAIR. The amendment is modified.

Pursuant to House Resolution 504, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GRIFFITH) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia.

Mr. GRIFFITH. Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the consideration of what was two amendments that we just merged into one because they went hand-in-glove.

My amendment restores critical funding to three additional Appalachian States, the same number of States currently funded by the Abandoned Mine Reclamation Fund, for the

reclamation of abandoned mine lands in conjunction with economic and community development and reuse goals.

Now, let me explain the program quickly.

This was the brainchild of Chairman ROGERS a couple of years back, and what the idea was, originally, when they did the Abandoned Mine Land program, you could just restore the land. They came up with the concept in the hard-hit devastated areas of central Appalachia that we should not only allow it to be a restoration of the land, but that that land could be used and looked at as an economic purpose, a reuse the community could use for community development or economic development, and that was important.

Funding for these reclamation grants was first established in fiscal year 2016, but it was originally provided only to the three Appalachian States with the greatest amount of unfunded reclamation needs.

Unfortunately, that didn't, of course, reach all the States, and so last year, an additional three States were added, those States being Virginia, Ohio, Alabama, the original three being Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and Kentucky.

This year, as things were working through, Virginia, Ohio, and Alabama were not currently included. My amendment basically makes sure they are included. We have worked with the team on the Appropriations Committee to word it correctly. We think we have got it worded correctly so that we now have the ability to add in all three States.

I think this is important. Folks often say to us: Those of you in coal country, in central Appalachia, need to transition your economy. Well, we can't transition our economy if we have huge blocks of land which we can't use because they are unusable due to prior acts that left them in a condition where we know they need to be reclaimed, but you can't reclaim them looking at economic development.

So this is a way to retool. Chairman ROGERS came up with it. We would like to extend it to the other States that would be greatly helped by this, the three that I mentioned previously, Ohio, Alabama, and Virginia, and that is what my amendments do.

I would ask all to support this amendment to help those areas that are economically devastated in central Appalachia and expand on a program which is already showing signs of success.

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

□ 1800

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition to the amendment.

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

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Chairman, I strongly oppose an amendment that takes more money away from the EPA.

As I mentioned before, this bill already severely cuts the EPA's main operating account by \$240 million. The air we breathe and the water we drink are endangered by the policy decisions that are being made in this bill. The consequences will be felt in communities across the Nation. I understand, for many, cutting the EPA is an easy target, but I want my colleagues to understand what this amendment would actually be cutting, if adopted.

This account funds programs that are important to both sides of the aisle, including permitting for construction projects across the country, toxic risk prevention, parts of the successful Brownfields Program, and pesticide licensing.

So I understand that the money would direct more funding to States in Appalachia. Appalachia is suffering. They are suffering from the raging environmental harm caused by coal mining. But, unfortunately, I cannot support any deeper cuts to the EPA.

Mr. Chairman, I oppose the amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GRIFFITH. Mr. Chairman, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. CALVERT).

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Chairman, I understand the gentleman's overall goal is to continue funding for the AML pilot project, consistent with a fiscal year 2017 enacted level, and structure for the six Appalachian States.

Therefore, we can accept this package of amendments at this time, work toward maintaining funding for 6 States in a final fiscal year 2018 enacted bill. If we are able to achieve that goal, I hope we can count on the gentleman's support to pass both this House package and to enact the 2018 end-of-year spending bill.

Mr. Chairman, I encourage my colleagues to adopt this amendment.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Chairman, once again, I appreciate the challenges that the gentleman is suffering in his State and throughout Appalachia, but I cannot support any more deeper cuts to the EPA, so I must oppose the amendment.

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

Mr. GRIFFITH. Mr. Chairman, I ask my colleagues to help us transition the economy in central Appalachian support to the amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment, as modified, offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GRIFFITH).

The amendment, as modified, was agreed to.

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Chairman, as the designee of Chairman FRELINGHUYSEN, 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 gentleman from Georgia (Mr.

JODY B. HICE) for the purpose of a colloquy.

Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I thank Chairman FRELINGHUYSEN and Interior Subcommittee Chairman CALVERT for their efforts on this legislation, and I thank them for the opportunity to speak today.

I am committed to pursuing a comprehensive all-of-the-above energy strategy, and I would like to take this time to engage in a colloquy on section 438 of this bill, pertaining to offshore wind development. As a representative from a coastal area, I want to ensure that all offshore energy development is pursued in a pragmatic manner.

Section 438 restricts funding for the Department of the Interior to administer offshore wind leases within 24 nautical miles off the coast of Maryland. This language hinders offshore wind development by imposing unprecedented and burdensome requirements on three existing leases.

Typically, offshore wind turbines are constructed roughly 12 nautical miles from the coastline, which is generally out of sight from shore. By doubling the setback, section 438 unreasonably restricts these projects and sets a poor policy precedent for future development.

Furthermore, modifying the terms and conditions of the leases violates the sanctity of the lease and creates considerable uncertainty for companies pursuing any offshore wind project.

It is critical that we establish regulatory and contractual certainty in all areas of natural resource development. America's offshore wind industry is in its infancy, and the policies and precedents that we set today will affect investment long into the future.

The language contained in section 438 is concerning for this reason, and I look forward to working with the gentleman from Maryland in the future to find a more appropriate solution.

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Chairman, I yield to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HARRIS) for the purpose of a colloquy.

Mr. HARRIS. Mr. Chairman, I thank Mr. CALVERT for allowing me time to discuss an issue that is important to my constituents in Ocean City, Maryland.

I am proud that Ocean City is home to beautiful beaches and views and, as a result, a booming tourism industry.

I sought the inclusion of section 438 to respond to concerns of Ocean City residents regarding the visibility of the proposed wind turbines offshore. By siting turbines within 24 nautical miles from the shoreline, I am concerned that our beach economy and tourist experience will be compromised. I believe every effort must be made to minimize the impact of this project on the Ocean City view shed.

This large scale project requires full consideration of the needs and opinions of the local community. I look forward to working with my colleagues to develop a practical solution to this challenge.

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Chairman, as I mentioned at our full committee markup, I understood that my colleague, Dr. HARRIS, was offering his amendment to address local concerns from his residents with respect to the visibility of offshore turbines. With all of these offshore projects, many varying viewpoints need to be taken into account. I appreciate that we have been able to discuss many of these views and concerns here today.

It is my hope that we can work with the authorizing committees of jurisdiction, the administration, and all interested stakeholders to identify some better solutions as we move forward through the fiscal year 2018 process.

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

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. TIPTON). The Chair understands that amendment No. 14 will not be offered.

AMENDMENT NO. 15 OFFERED BY MR. THOMPSON OF PENNSYLVANIA

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 15 printed in House Report 115-297.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 28, line 8, after the dollar amount, insert "(increased by \$32,491,000)".

Page 64, line 1, after the dollar amount, insert "(reduced by \$32,491,000)".

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 504, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Chairman, I thank the chairman of the subcommittee for the opportunity to offer this amendment.

Mr. Chairman, prior to the enactment of the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977, coal mining played an important role in the United States for nearly 2 centuries, providing critical energy and jobs for our Nation.

However, across Pennsylvania and throughout Appalachia, we continue to have great needs in reclaiming our abandoned mine lands and restoring our waters that have been impacted by historical mining activities.

Since 1977, we have made great gains in restoring our historical mine lands, but much more work still needs to be done.

The Federal Office of Surface Mining has estimated that the unfunded liabilities of abandoned mine lands across the Nation exceeds \$10 billion, with nearly half of that obligation located in Pennsylvania.

To complement the funding from the AML trust fund, which was established through SMCRA, this legislation contains appropriations for the AML pilot program in order to support additional

funding for abandoned mine lands for areas that need assistance most.

This program provides grants to States “to accelerate the remediation of AML sites with the economic and community development end uses in mind.”

Unfortunately, this legislation provides \$32 million less for the pilot program compared to last year’s level.

My amendment is simple and would not increase Federal spending. The amendment would restore funding for the Abandoned Mine Land Reclamation pilot program to its 2017 level by reallocating funds from the EPA’s Environmental Programs and Management by the same amount.

Mr. Chairman, where these funds are coming from is very consistent with the mission of that account that it would be taken from. But the difference is that by putting this into the AML pilot program with a laser focus, we are focused on environmental concerns that have been identified, and we are funding remediation techniques that are proven.

We have an obligation to clean up our environment and restore our abandoned mine lands and waters, and this program helps us do just that.

Mr. Chairman, I thank the chairman and ranking member, and I urge my colleagues to vote “yes” on this amendment.

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

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition to the amendment.

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

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Chairman, I strongly oppose this amendment that takes more money, again, away from an already starved EPA.

This is a duplicate from the last amendment offered by the gentleman from Virginia earlier. It cuts another \$32 million from the EPA’s operating accounts.

Our country right now is dealing with two catastrophes caused by hurricanes. The destruction is going to be felt for years. The EPA right now is one of the primary Federal agencies responsible for protecting human health, monitoring air and water, and managing recovery and cleanup, so it would be simply reckless to adopt another amendment that would further cripple the EPA.

These two amendments would cut the EPA by \$108 million.

Mr. Chairman, I strongly oppose the amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentlewoman for those comments.

My point is, though, that this actually takes \$32 million and puts it like a laser on an area where we know that environmental damage is well documented and we have very effective public-private partnership techniques to address.

Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. CALVERT), chairman of the Appropriations Subcommittee.

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I am certainly prepared to accept this amendment. I understand the importance of the program to the gentleman from Pennsylvania and other Members in the Appalachian region. I look forward to working with him and all of the interested Members.

Mr. Chairman, I encourage adoption of the amendment.

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

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Chairman, once again, I understand clearly what the gentleman from Pennsylvania is trying to accomplish.

I wish we could accomplish that goal. But with already a \$240 million cut to the EPA and all of the challenges on the EPA—we just recently agreed on this floor by a voice vote to cut the EPA another \$75 million. This would be another \$33 million.

So I hope that we can reach a place in the funding that the chairman and I have where we can address the serious concerns that you bring to the floor where you had success with programs. But, at the same time, I would be cutting opportunities for cleanup, especially with all of the disasters looming—forest fires, disasters, and cleanup I just had recently in my district that came out of the blue. The EPA wouldn’t have money to respond.

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

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

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 Pennsylvania will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 18 OFFERED BY MR. GRIJALVA

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 18 printed in House Report 115-297.

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

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 39, line 1, after the dollar amount, insert “(reduced by \$1,011,000)”.

Page 64, line 1, after the dollar amount, insert “(increased by \$1,011,000)”.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 504, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GRIJALVA) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arizona.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chairman, my amendment will restore \$1 million in cuts to the Environmental Justice program within the EPA, with an equivalent cut to leadership and administration within the DOI Office of the Secretary.

In 1992, the program was created and originally called the Environmental Equity Office. It was created after a series of releases of reports that revealed polluter sites were disproportionately located in low-income communities and communities of color.

□ 1815

With minimal support, the program has provided communities with leveraged resources to do things like revitalize neighborhoods, build health centers, expand affordable housing, create green space and recreation areas, and, more importantly, raise the awareness of the disproportionate treatment in both affected communities and decisionmakers.

Despite this success within the EPA for decades, we are not even close to dealing with the issue of environmental justice.

In 2016, the United States Commission on Civil Rights found that racial minorities and low-income communities are still disproportionately affected by the siting of waste disposal facilities, permitted emissions facilities, and that they often lack the political and financial clout to properly bargain with polluters when fighting a decision or seeking redress.

A report by the staff of the House Committee on Natural Resources found that clean water access and sanitation infrastructure on numerous reservations across the Nation more closely resemble developing countries than they do the rest of the Nation. Nearly half of all homes on Tribal land lack access to adequate drinking water, sewage, or solid waste disposal facilities. As a result, Native families often end up drinking unclean water that increases disease risks and impairs Tribal economic development.

Additionally, low-income communities of color have been on the frontline of Houston’s petrochemical industry for decades, and when Harvey struck, they were some of the first to feel the effects as chemical plants caught fire, refineries began flaring toxins, and polluted floodwater went into their neighborhoods.

The EPA Office of Environmental Justice helps integrate concerns of these communities within the general activities of the agencies. This is not a program that can afford to be scaled back, especially as concerns of environmental justice continue to arise around Hurricane Harvey and now in Irma’s path. It is critical that we protect frontline communities and communities of color from disparate impacts caused by environmental pollution. One million dollars is not a lot of

money for this task, but it reaffirms the significance of the office and our sense of equality.

Today I ask my colleagues to join in defense of these communities and show them that Congress cares about their public health, their housing, and their importance as people.

Mr. Chair, I urge a “yes” vote on the amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

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

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Chair, given our allocation, which was \$824 million below the fiscal year 2017 level, we had to find areas to trim. It is also important to note that the bill does not support the elimination of the program, as has been proposed in the President's budget. It was the committee's effort to find some middle ground.

While I can certainly appreciate the gentleman's interest to maintain fiscal year 2017 enacted level, the allocation of the committee doesn't support those levels. So, therefore, I urge my colleagues to vote “no” on the gentleman's amendment.

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

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chair, I yield as much time as he may consume to the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MCEACHIN), a member of the Natural Resources Committee, and ranking member of the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee.

Mr. MCEACHIN. Mr. Chairman, I thank the ranking member for yielding.

Mr. Chairman, I am proud to rise in support of this amendment to restore funding to the Environmental Justice program within the EPA. This program enables the agency to better assist frontline communities that are disproportionately impacted by pollution.

Low-income and minority communities face disproportionate levels of hazardous pollution and environmental contaminants due to where their members live and where they work.

The harms are real. For instance, higher levels of air pollution result in members of minority groups having higher death rates and higher numbers of emergency room visits and hospital stays.

As the cofounder and co-chair of the United for Climate and Environmental Justice Task Force, it is my mission to combat these environmental injustices and ensure frontline communities no longer bear the unequal burden of environmental, economic, and health harms.

That is why, Mr. Chairman, this amendment is so important.

The Environmental Justice program leverages Federal funds to greatly improve health and quality of life in our most vulnerable communities. Since the establishment of the program, communities have been better able to revitalize neighborhoods, build health centers, expand affordable housing, and create new green spaces and recreational areas.

I urge my colleagues to show low-income and minority communities that we care about their health, housing, and overall well-being by supporting the amendment.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chair, I urge a “yes” vote on the amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Chair, 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 Arizona (Mr. GRIJALVA).

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

Mr. GRIJALVA. 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 Arizona will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 21 OFFERED BY MR. PRICE OF NORTH CAROLINA

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 21 printed in House Report 115-297.

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 63, line 6, after the dollar amount, insert “(reduced by \$104,235,000) (increased by \$104,235,000)”.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 504, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. PRICE) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina.

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Chairman, my amendment would restore the EPA's Science and Technology account to 2017 levels.

I offer this amendment to underscore the importance of environmental research to the health and safety of the American people, as well as thousands of jobs in my district and across the country.

This amendment is framed in increase-decrease terms for the simple reason that, given the subcommittee's inadequate allocation, there is simply no place to turn for an offset.

The EPA's Science and Technology account funds research and development activities within the agency, supporting the work of the world's leading environmental research enterprise and informing the environmental policies that Congress enacts.

The bill on the floor today would cut this account by \$105 million, a 15 percent reduction. About the only good thing I can say about that is that it isn't as bad as the Trump budget, but it is still a deep and devastating cut. Mr.

Chairman, we have to restore these funds as this bill moves through the remaining stages of the process.

The EPA's Office of Research and Development funded by this account not only supports EPA programs in air, water, toxicology, and energy research, but it also facilitates innovative partnerships with some of the premier higher education and research institutions in the country.

EPA research facilities employ more than 2,000 people, supports some 700 affiliated jobs in my district alone. This includes advanced laboratory scientists, administrative personnel, also blue-collar jobs in maintenance, custodial, and security positions.

The EPA research that this agency conducts, world class research, it allows us to remain proactive in protecting the air we breathe, the water we drink, resources, whose safety we must never, ever take for granted.

Now, I know the EPA is continually a scapegoat when it comes to spending cuts. In times of crisis, however, we don't hesitate to call on them to respond quickly to events that could pose a threat to the environment and public safety.

Just last week in the devastating wake of Hurricane Harvey, sites containing dangerous chemicals and contaminants were severely flooded and damaged. Research from this office, the office being cut in this bill, proved invaluable in putting together a safe and effective response.

In other words, the EPA is part of the first line of defense to respond to events that pose threats to public health and safety. It follows that if we gut the EPA's research budget, we are putting ultimately the American public at risk.

The EPA research cuts underscore, I think, how fraudulent the claim is that this is a bill that would make America secure and prosperous. Really? In reality, it would cripple investments that Americans count on each and every day to keep them safe and healthy.

Mr. Chairman, I remain hopeful that a bipartisan budget agreement will be reached that will allow us to restore this research funding and do right by the people we represent.

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

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

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

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Chair, I certainly appreciate my friend's support for the research conducted at the EPA, and particularly the Research Triangle Park. I am a supporter of the world class research that occurs at RTP with respect to the computational toxicology program. That research has helped to identify alternative high throughput testing methodologies that have reduced the number of animals used in laboratories.

Given the current allocation, however, which is \$824 million below the

fiscal year 2017 level, we had to find areas to trim. We certainly don't have a funding level that can support the fiscal year 2017 enacted levels, but we tried to do the best we could to find common ground.

I certainly look forward to working with the gentleman in the future, if we happily come to some kind of budget agreement, where we can reallocate funds to something as important as this. But, again, because of our allocation, I must oppose the amendment and urge my colleagues to vote "no" on the gentleman's amendment.

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

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Chairman, I have to acknowledge that the chairman did a pretty good job of describing some of the research that we have underway in North Carolina and around the country, and I know he understands that and wants to support it.

I also know that we have got to do better than the allocations represented in this eight-bill omnibus effort. So I pledge to work with him and other colleagues to achieve that kind of agreement, and then also to revisit this account and other accounts that we know need attention if we are to do our duty as representatives of our communities and also maintain the investments a great country must maintain.

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

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Chairman, 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 North Carolina (Mr. PRICE).

The amendment was rejected.

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Chairman, as the designee of Chairman FRELINGHUYSEN, 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 gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. LANCE) for the purpose of entering into a colloquy.

Mr. LANCE. Mr. Chairman, I thank both Chairman CALVERT and Chairman FRELINGHUYSEN for their work on this legislation. I greatly appreciate the committee's efforts to fund the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities.

I stress the importance of Federal investments in the arts and humanities. The numbers speak for themselves. The NEA and the NEH each consist of only .003 percent of a nearly \$4 trillion Federal budget, yet for every dollar the United States spends on Federal arts initiatives, nine nonFederal dollars are leveraged, generating roughly \$600 million in matching support.

Federal arts and humanities funding is a catalyst for the economic development and job creation that we all need, having a powerful multiplier effect not only in New Jersey, the State I rep-

resent, but throughout the entire Nation.

The arts and humanities also engage nearly every community. In April, I visited the Paper Mill Playhouse in Millburn, New Jersey, in the district I serve, to see its "Theater for Everyone" project in action, an autism-friendly program supported by the NEA. It provides a creative outlet for children with developmental disabilities and for their families. Seeing these performances reinforced the importance of our continued investments in the NEA and in the NEH.

Mr. Chair, I also thank both Chairman CALVERT and Chairman FRELINGHUYSEN for including funding for the Delaware River Basin Restoration project authorized just last year to coordinate private investments, regional partnerships, and local knowledge, and develop strategies to protect and restore the watershed's ecological and recreational assets and historical significance.

□ 1830

Throughout the four States that are involved—New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, and Delaware—the Delaware River Basin supplies 15 million people with clean water and supports approximately \$25 billion in economic activity each year. It is imperative that we preserve these resources for future generations, and I look forward to working with the committee on this initiative.

Let me repeat my deep thanks to Chairman CALVERT and to Chairman FRELINGHUYSEN.

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Chairman, I yield to the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. SLAUGHTER).

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Chairman, I thank Chairman CALVERT and Chairman FRELINGHUYSEN for their commitment to the arts. I greatly appreciate the subcommittee's efforts to fund the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities.

The NEA's mission is to strengthen the creative capacity of our communities by providing all Americans with diverse opportunities for arts participation. Of critical importance, the NEA has expanded their reach to help servicemembers who have been diagnosed with TBI, traumatic brain injury, and other psychological conditions. This new partnership is critically important.

The NEA Creative Forces Military Healing Arts Network is a collaboration with the Department of Defense which supports music, writing, and visual art therapy at military care facilities. They are finding that the best treatment for PTSD is yoga, which doesn't cost us anything.

The Creative Forces program places the creative arts therapies at the core of patient-centered care in military medical facilities and invests in research on the impacts and benefits of these innovative treatment methods.

The cost-effective, noninvasive arts therapy of those programs rank consistently in the top five "helpful" and "wish to continue" programs on patient satisfaction surveys of the men and women who have gone through the programs, and over 85 percent of military patients said art therapy was helpful to their healing.

We may even be learning here that this might be the best thing, as Mr. LANCE was pointing out, for autistic children.

But throughout the art therapy programs and the work that they are doing, our servicemen and -women are being able to transition away from the basketful of prescription drugs that they carry around with them and lived on and are rejoining their families and life. So when they wheel out of that healing, that psychological skill-building, self-expression, and self-esteem that comes from these programs, that obviously is certainly something that we need to continue.

As part of the NEA's mission to increase access to the arts for all Americans, Creative Forces enables more servicemembers, veterans, and military families to benefit from creative art therapies and community arts activities.

NEA is so cheap it is surprising. For the small amount of money we put into it, we would get about \$9 billion back and many people who have been employed. We don't do anything with a better return than the money we spend for the arts.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Chair, as the designee of Ranking Member LOWEY, I move to strike the last word.

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

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Chair, I yield to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. PRICE).

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Chairman, I thank the ranking member for yielding. I thank Chairman CALVERT for engaging in this colloquy with Mr. LANCE and Ms. SLAUGHTER and me.

We are highlighting the importance of the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities and the importance of robust funding for the work of those agencies. There is no more efficient dollar spent in the entire Federal budget. I will say in a minute what I mean by that.

I am very happy to be co-chairman, with Mr. LANCE, of the Congressional Humanities Caucus, to be a member of the Congressional Arts Caucus, which Ms. SLAUGHTER and others have led, and proud to support the missions of these two agencies.

Federal support for the arts and the humanities affirms America's rich and diverse cultural and artistic heritage. It really is an investment in the quality of life of our people. I think we should see it that way, and we need to

be steadfast in our support and our investment. It is one of the most efficient we make, as I said. It leverages private, nonprofit, and corporate dollars.

In 2015 alone, for example, Federal NEH museum grants leveraged \$104 million in outside funding from only \$33 million in Federal funds. That is a pretty good return for the taxpayer.

They support millions of jobs, these endowments do, and the projects they fund, hundreds of millions of dollars in direct economic activity, and the American public loves them. Participation all over this country, in communities large and small, rural and urban, is widespread and enthusiastic.

So again, I thank the chairman for his attention to these important lines in the budget. I hope we can bolster our commitment to the arts and humanities and do even better as the appropriations process moves forward.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Chairman, I want to also commend the chairman and working with the whole committee to make sure that the arts and humanities receive the funding that they did.

Mr. Chair, I yield to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

Ms. JACKSON LEE. I want to quickly thank the gentlewoman from the great State of Minnesota, thank the gentleman from California, and just very quickly say that I come with my amendments, but I also come just to acknowledge the pending storm in Florida and Hurricane Harvey because our arts communities were underwater, and they are still underwater.

I offered amendments that deal with preservation of heritage areas, urban reforestation, and the Smithsonian outreach. I thank my colleagues for putting it in the en bloc.

But as I do so, I want to take note of, again, all of the debris and be able to say that, in the course of hurricanes, historic entities are impacted.

We are looking to establish an emancipation trail, and one of my most important amendments is to ensure that there is national policy to preserve, for public use, historic sites, buildings, and objects of national significance for the inspiration and benefit of people of the United States.

My community is looking for that emancipation trail, but it starts from Galveston. We have not yet been able to assess whether any of those historic markers and places were destroyed by Hurricane Harvey. So the funding for the Interior Department and the aspects that come under the Interior Department, the jurisdictional issue is very important to us because we will have to look to see if our historic entities have been preserved.

In the midst of debris and danger that our constituents face, this is equally important, and it is equally important to restore the symphony, to restore the ballet and our theater, all of them underwater in my congressional district.

I hope, as we move forward, H.R. 3686, Hurricane Harvey supplemental appro-

priation that we have filed that will embrace all of these issues, will be considered.

I thank my colleagues for those amendments. And, again, in the course of a storm, the history of people is jeopardized, and my amendments deal with preserving the history of our people. Maybe, as we come out of this, we will create the emancipation trail that is part of my amendment.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Chair, I yield back the balance of my time.

AMENDMENT NO. 27 OFFERED BY MR. LANGEVIN

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 27 printed in House Report 115-297.

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

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 64, line 1, after the dollar amount, insert "(increased by \$1,000,000)".

Page 64, line 12, after the dollar amount, insert "(increased by \$1,000,000)".

Page 67, line 20, after the dollar amount, insert "(reduced by \$1,000,000)".

Page 73, line 23, after the dollar amount, insert "(reduced by \$1,000,000)".

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 504, the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. LANGEVIN) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Rhode Island.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Chairman, before I actually get to my amendment, I just want to say in reference to the previous discussion about properly funding the National Endowment for the Arts and Humanities, I commend the discussion on both sides and the commitment to properly fund those programs.

The National Endowment for the Arts and National Endowment for the Humanities holds a special place in Rhode Island in that both of those programs were championed by and helped to have been created by our late senior Senator Claiborne Pell. We understand the importance of the arts and humanities in Rhode Island, the jobs they create, the quality of life they enhance, and I wholeheartedly support properly funding both of those programs.

I had led a Special Order when the President's budget came out and those programs had been zeroed out in funding. Several of my colleagues and I got together and talked about the impact the arts and humanities have on our States, on our districts, and on the country as a whole. I just want to reiterate my support for the National Endowment for the Arts and Humanities and all they do for the country.

Mr. Chairman, my amendment that we have before us would restore some funding to the southern New England estuaries program, which is currently zeroed out in the underlying bill.

This program, part of the EPA's geographic programs, has been a thriving success, and anyone who has been to

New England knows the beauty of where the ocean meets the land. Our estuaries are in South County, Rhode Island, and all along the Narragansett Bay; along Mount Hope Bay and Buzzards Bay and throughout Cape Cod.

These areas are the lungs of our coastal areas and sustain the diversity of plant and animal life. These funds are vital to conserving this wetland habitat which is frequently under attack by human and natural damage. So I implore the majority to support this program, as they have supported similar programs for Puget Sound, the Chesapeake Bay, and other areas.

I am proud to be joined by Representatives CICILLINE, KEATING, and KENNEDY as cosponsors of this amendment.

Mr. Chairman, finally, I just want to say that I intend to offer and withdraw this amendment provided that my colleague, Chairman CALVERT, is open to continuing the discussion on the importance of this program.

Mr. Chairman, 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. While the amendment itself is drafted in order as a general increase to EPA geographic programs, the gentleman proposes to fund a program that was not requested in the budget and is not authorized.

Further, he proposes to reduce grants from DERA, the DERA program, which is a key program for improving air quality in areas like mine that are in a nonattainment area with existing standards.

For those reasons, I oppose the amendment and urge my colleagues to vote "no" on this amendment.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Chairman, as I said, I have offered to withdraw the amendment as long as the chairman would continue discussion with me.

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Chair, I am sorry. I didn't hear the gentleman, and I happily accept his offer to withdraw the amendment. I will happily work with him to see if we can't work some time in the future to find room for this program that the gentleman is obviously supportive of.

Mr. LANGEVIN. I thank the chairman, and I am grateful for his consideration, and I look forward to working with him.

I yield back the balance of my time and withdraw my amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The amendment is withdrawn.

The Committee will rise informally.

The Speaker pro tempore (Mr. KATKO) assumed the chair.

FURTHER MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A further message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has agreed to