

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MITCHELL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GROTHMAN).

Mr. GROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to be able to speak on this initiative, given what is going on in the other house today where we have so much partisanship. This is the type of bipartisan work we should be doing.

I am honored to be a cosponsor of the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative. My district goes along Lake Michigan. I know it means so much for the communities of Port Washington, Sheboygan, Manitowoc and Two Rivers.

I would just like to clean up a little something here. I know a few years ago in 2013, there was a great deal of concern that the watermark in Lake Michigan was at an all-time low. People talked about climate change and how bad that was. It was good to report now in 2020 in January on the 30-year high on Lake Michigan. So maybe that is the reason for a crisis as well, but it is interesting to see how things kind of ebb and flow on Lake Michigan.

As previously has been said, about a fifth of the fresh water in lakes in the world is in Lake Michigan by itself. Lake Michigan is the fifth biggest lake in the world. We have had problems with invasive species, which is one of the major reasons why I am on this bill.

We want to keep the lakes clean not only for consuming water, but the fisheries, the fishing going on there is important, and recreation on Lake Michigan is important.

A lot of this money goes into the agriculture in places like Wisconsin. We do have to keep the lakes clean, and as we keep our farms clean, it results in less algae blooms and a healthier lake system.

So, in any event, I am honored to be a cosponsor on this. I am pleased that the Speaker has decided to put such a great bipartisan bill on the floor today.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MITCHELL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Let me close with this: This bill passed committee with strong bipartisan support. As my colleagues have noted, including Mrs. WALORSKI, recreational use of the Great Lakes is an important component of the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative.

As I close, I would like to quote the immortal words of country superstar, Craig Morgan. It is a little unusual, but I think it is appropriate today.

He said in a song:

I'm meetin' my buddies out on the lake
We're headed out to a special place we love
That just a few folks know
There's no signin' up, no monthly dues
Take your Johnson, your Mercury or your
Evinrude and fire it up
Meet us out at party cove
Come on in; the water's fine
Just idle on over, and toss us a line

Support reauthorization of the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative.

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

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I am glad to hear that this has such great bipartisan support. It truly is an amazing bill.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bipartisan legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. NAPOLITANO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4031.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. MITCHELL. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

REAUTHORIZING LAKE PONTCHARTRAIN BASIN RESTORATION PROGRAM

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4275) to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to reauthorize the Lake Pontchartrain Basin Restoration Program, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4275

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. LAKE PONTCHARTRAIN BASIN RESTORATION PROGRAM REAUTHORIZATION.

(a) REVIEW OF COMPREHENSIVE MANAGEMENT PLAN.—Section 121 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1273) is amended—

(1) in subsection (c)—

(A) in paragraph (5), by striking “; and” and inserting a semicolon;

(B) in paragraph (6), by striking the period and inserting “; and”; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(7) ensure that the comprehensive conservation and management plan approved for the Basin under section 320 is reviewed and revised in accordance with section 320 not less often than once every five years, beginning on the date of enactment of this paragraph.”; and

(2) in subsection (d), by striking “recommended by a management conference convened for the Basin under section 320” and inserting “identified in the comprehensive conservation and management plan approved for the Basin under section 320”.

(b) DEFINITIONS.—Section 121(e)(1) of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1273(e)(1)) is amended by striking “, a 5,000 square mile”.

(c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Section 121(f) of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1273(f)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking “2001 through 2012 and the amount appropriated for fiscal year 2009 for each of fiscal years 2013 through 2017” and inserting “2021 through 2025”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(3) ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.—The Administrator may use for administrative expenses not more than 5 percent of the amounts appropriated to carry out this section.”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. NAPOLITANO) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. MITCHELL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 4275, as amended.

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

There was no objection.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD a letter in support of H.R. 4275 to reauthorize the Lake Pontchartrain Basin Restoration Program from the Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation.

LAKE PONTCHARTRAIN
BASIN FOUNDATION,

February 4, 2020.

Re H.R. 4275: Support to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to reauthorize the Lake Pontchartrain Basin Restoration Program.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

Hon. KEVIN MCCARTHY,
Minority Leader, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER PELOSI & MINORITY LEADER MCCARTHY: I would like to express our support for H.R. 4275—the reauthorization of the Pontchartrain Basin Restoration Program within the Environmental Protection Agency. This program provides resources vital to the restoration of the ecological health of the Basin, as well as public education projects.

Although Lake Pontchartrain and its surrounding area continue to face environmental challenges, the Lake and its resources have made a tremendous comeback. Much of this success is due to interested and concerned citizens who want a clean, healthy Lake and Basin for this and future generations, all of which would not be possible without your support of this PRP funding.

Sincerely,

KRISTI L. TRAIL, P.E.,
Executive Director.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 4275 will reauthorize EPA's Lake Pontchartrain Basin Restoration Program for the next 5 years.

Introduced by the gentlemen from Louisiana, Mr. GRAVES and Mr. RICHMOND, it reauthorizes the program for the next 5 years with continued funding of \$20 million annually over 5 years. It also caps EPA's administrative expenses at 5 percent.

At our June subcommittee hearing, we received testimony on current threats to the Lake Pontchartrain region and its watershed. Covering a 10,000-square-mile area, the basin faces

impacts from logging, urban, and agriculture runoff, sewage overflows and nonpoint source pollution.

This is an example of human development having an extreme impact on the entire watershed, capable of causing entire dead zones as we are now seeing. With impaired wetlands prevented from acting as natural filters for these pollutants, the entire lake is at risk.

This program represents a collaborative effort for Federal, State, and local entities to restore the ecological health of the basin.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 4275, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MITCHELL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4275. H.R. 4275 represents good governance to reauthorize the Lake Pontchartrain Basin Restoration Program. The Lake Pontchartrain Basin watershed is home to approximately 2.2 million people and covers 5,000 square miles.

In June of last year when the Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment held a hearing on many of these regional watershed programs, we invited Ms. Kristi Trail from the Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation to testify on the need and importance of reauthorizing this program.

During that hearing, we heard that Lake Pontchartrain and its surrounding watershed play an integral part of the wetland ecosystem of the Gulf Coast, contributing over \$35 million to the local economy.

As a result of the Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation's work through this program, the lake is making a tremendous comeback by constructing multiple reefs for fish habitats, improving previously impaired water bodies, and growing their community outreach programs.

I would like to thank Mr. GARRET GRAVES, the sponsor of this bill, for putting this forward and for his support.

I also would like to recognize the fact that we limit the EPA's administration to 5 percent. So the money goes to restore Lake Pontchartrain.

For these reasons and numerous others, I urge support of this program and this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MITCHELL. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. GRAVES), the sponsor of the bill.

Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I promise to conserve time and conserve the lake.

Mr. Speaker, Lake Pontchartrain is perhaps not a very well-known lake. It is actually the second largest saltwater lake in the United States, but it wasn't always this way.

Lake Pontchartrain, as a result of coastal land loss in Louisiana, has had this intrusion of saltwater that has

fundamentally changed the ecosystem of that lake and the communities.

This is a lake that serves as a watershed for 16 parishes in Louisiana, 4 counties in Mississippi, and most importantly, this lake takes the brunt of the surge from 2 Canadian provinces and 31 States.

Mr. Speaker, what happens is each time we have these high-water years on the Mississippi River system which drains 31 States and 2 Canadian provinces, there is an emergency relief valve that sends water through the Bonnet Carre Spillway into Lake Pontchartrain.

This isn't water that is coming from Louisiana. In fact, less than 1 percent of the water is even coming from the State of Mississippi. It is water coming from all of these States, from Montana, to New York, to Canada, and all of these States in this large watershed funnel in-between.

And so on average, the Bonnet Carre Spillway had been operated once every decade; once every 10 years. Yet, in recent years, we have had to open it four times, including last year. Last year, for the first time ever, it was opened in January, and for the first time ever, it was actually operated twice in 1 year.

And so this is in the State of Louisiana. This is this lake, this basin, this watershed that has been taking it on the chin for the rest of the country.

□ 1445

The reason this is important, Mr. Speaker, is because this lake is an incredibly productive ecosystem with recreational and commercial fishing. You see lots of folks out there in sailboats and other boats out there enjoying the lake.

What has been happening as a result of all the Nation's water's drainage coming into here is that the health of the lake has been compromised and challenged, which therefore affects our fisheries, both recreational and commercial, and the millions of pounds of crabs that are harvested out of the lake.

This lake bounds New Orleans and Jefferson Parish. It bounds the north shore and the river parishes, such as Saint John Parish and Saint Charles Parish over on the west side.

This is an important part of Louisiana. Because of the coastal land loss that we have experienced and the change in this ecosystem, we must make investments to maintain this as we help to manage this rapid and unfortunate transition from a freshwater lake into a brackish and saltwater lake that we now have.

Mr. Speaker, I do want to thank my good friend from California, the chair of the subcommittee, Congresswoman NAPOLITANO, and her staff, Ryan. I want to thank Congressman WESTERMAN, the ranking member of the subcommittee; Ian Bennitt as well as Maggie Ayrea on our staff for all the work they put into this; and, of course, Chairman DEFAZIO and Ranking Mem-

ber SAM GRAVES for all their work in ensuring that we get this bill right and that we have the right caps on here to ensure that the money goes to actually investing in the lake, as Congressman MITCHELL mentioned, as opposed to going toward bureaucracy.

Mr. Speaker, I urge adoption of this bipartisan legislation that we have introduced with my friend, Congressman CEDRIC RICHMOND of New Orleans.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. I am prepared to close, Mr. Speaker, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MITCHELL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume to close.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague, Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana, and all sponsors in support of this bill. As I indicated earlier, it has bipartisan support of the committee.

Mr. Speaker, I urge its adoption, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume to close.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank both sides' staff. They have been doing a marvelous job. Of course, I thank the chairmen and the ranking members of both committees for all the support they have gotten on all these important bills on water.

Water is the economy, and we realize that we have to clean it up and help the communities work with the States and other entities. We will get it done.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bipartisan bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. NAPOLITANO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4275, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

REPRESENTATIVE PAYEE FRAUD PREVENTION ACT OF 2019

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5214) to amend title 5, United States Code, to prevent fraud by representative payees.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5214

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Representative Payee Fraud Prevention Act of 2019".

SEC. 2. REPRESENTATIVE PAYEE FRAUD.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—

(1) CSRS.—Section 8331 of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(A) in paragraph (31), by striking "and" at the end;

(B) in paragraph (32), by striking the period at the end and inserting ";; and"; and