I congratulate Staff Sergeant Abbott on his outstanding accomplishment, and I wish him great success as he continues to represent the Commonwealth of Virginia in the next round of this prestigious competition.

TRANSGENDER DAY OF VISIBILITY

(Mr. STANTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. STANTON. On this Transgender Day of Visibility, I want to speak about a young constituent of mine, an 11-year-old girl from Mesa, Arizona.

She wrote me a few days ago to say that one day she wants to grow up to be a doctor or maybe even President. Her favorite color is pink. She loves cats and the yellow minions. She also wants to play on the local soccer team with her friends.

However, because of the wave of anti-LGBTQ legislation introduced in Arizona and other legislatures around the country and right here in Congress, she is afraid, and so is her family.

To that little girl, I want you to know that you are anything but. You are exceptional and you are deserving of every opportunity to pursue your passions and your dreams. Please know that you are loved and you are not alone, and that I and many of my fellow colleagues right here in Congress will continue to work to protect your rights.

Trans youth are kids and they should be able to spend their time being kids, not writing their Congressman to defend their basic rights.

SUPPORTING INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS

(Mr. ROBERT GARCIA of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. ROBERT GARCIA of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the International Human Rights Defense Act, which I am honored to have joined with Senator MARKEY and Representative JACOBS in introducing just this week.

Now, this is the first bill I have introduced as a Member of Congress and it is an issue that is very personal to me. As the first LGBTQ+ immigrant to serve in this body, I know how important it is for the U.S. to stand for human rights around the world.

Right now, there are nearly 70 countries around the world where LGBTQ+ people are criminalized just for being themselves. In 11 countries, you can be executed for loving your partner, and we know that discrimination exists all across the country and the globe.

Here in the U.S., even our freedoms are being rolled back as we see what happened just this last week in this very Chamber attacking trans people. Our bill ensures that regardless of who sits in the Oval Office, our foreign policy should always reflect a strong commitment to human rights.

This bill permanently creates an LGBTQ+ global envoy office at ambassador-rank level and codifies numerous goals and initiatives within the State Department. LGBTQ+ rights are human rights.

CORRECTING THE ISSUE OF CHILD LABOR IN WEST MICHIGAN

(Ms. SCHOLTEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. SCHOLTEN. Mr. Speaker, this week I am introducing bipartisan emergency legislation to correct the devastating issue of child labor in west Michigan and across the country.

In west Michigan, we believe in protecting kids. When big companies and corporations go against that goal, we take the necessary steps to hold them accountable. I have heard from my constituents, and I am responding.

Here is what my bill, the Justice For Exploited Children Act, will do and why it is important. Right now, the maximum fine per violation of child labor laws is around $15,000, and there is no minimum. No minimum.

If you think that is an embarrassingly low price to pay for exploiting a child, you are right. That is because these are the fines that have been on the books since this law was first introduced almost 100 years ago, and they have not been raised.

These meager penalties, effectively pennies for big corporations, allow guilty parties to evade meaningful consequences, and as a result, continue these shameful practices. It is unacceptable. This legislation makes clear that exploiting kids cannot be the cost of doing business.

USING THE TEXAS LEGISLATURE AS A TESTING GROUND

(Mr. CASAR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CASAR. Mr. Speaker, I am GREG CASAR, and I represent the heart of Texas. I rise today to sound the alarm. Extremist Republicans are using the Texas legislature as a testing ground for their most extreme policies that they plan to spread across the country.

Right now, top Texas officials are considering new laws to, one, create vigilante bounty hunter groups to go after immigrant families; two, defund our public schools; three, bar doctors from providing healthcare to transgender Texans; four, cap how much renewable energy our State can create; five, ban books and drag shows; six, block water breaks for construction workers; seven, ban citizens from Asian countries from attending public college; eight, they have already banned abortion and now they are going after emergency contraception.

This vile blueprint may be the Republicans' plan for our State and our country, but they are not representative of Texas values. Texans take care of our neighbors, look out for each other. Americans want decent healthcare, housing they can afford, and a decent future for their kids.

As public servants, we should lead with love and integrity. After all, Texas is a native word that means friendship, not cruelty. I may yield back my time, but not my efforts.

LOWER ENERGY COSTS ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 260 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. 1.

Will the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. FLOOD) kindly take the chair.

□ 0911

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. 1) to lower energy costs by increasing American energy production, exports, infrastructure, and critical minerals processing, by promoting transparency, accountability, permitting, and production of American resources, and by improving water quality certification and energy projects, and for other purposes, with Mr. FLOOD (Acting Chair) in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The Acting CHAIR. When the Committee of the Whole rose on Wednesday, March 29, 2023, amendment No. 29 printed in House Report 118–30 offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Mrs. LUNA) had been disposed of.

AMENDMENT NO. 30 OFFERED BY MR. OGLES

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 30 printed in part B of House Report 118–30.

Mr. OGLES. 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:

Add at the end of title I of division B the following:

SEC. 20115. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON OIL AND GAS ROYALTY RATES.

It is the sense of Congress that the royalty rate for onshore Federal oil and gas leases should be not more than 12.5 percent in amount or value of the production removed or sold from the lease.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 260, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. OGLES) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Tennessee.

Mr. OGLES. Mr. Chairman, Amendment No. 30 expresses the sense of Congress that the royalty rate for onshore Federal oil and gas leases be 12½ percent. This amendment establishes that it is the sense of Congress that the royalty rate of onshore Federal oil and gas

leases be 12½ percent, the pre-Inflation Reduction Act level. The so-called Inflation Reduction Act was filled with horrific policy and has only made things worse.

The Inflation Reduction Act is geared to severely harm American energy independence by, among other things, increasing royalty rates and fees while restricting access to energy resources.

Our country needs to produce more energy, not less, but Democrats designed their extreme climate agenda to restrict oil and natural gas production.

One measure of the so-called Inflation Reduction Act enabled the Biden administration to raise the oil and gas royalty rate for certain offshore leases from the current 12½ percent to 16.67.

This measure will only result in less oil and gas production, harming consumers and our national security.

The Biden administration doesn't even pretend otherwise. Interior Secretary Deb Haaland said, It resets how and what we consider to be the highest and best use of American resources.

This is about the use of the land, and the Biden administration clearly wants to block all of our lands from the use for oil and gas production.

My amendment simply returns onshore royalty rates to what it was 2 years ago, before this radical Democrat intervention.

This amendment would affirm the intent of the underlying bill, which would reset the royalty rate for onshore leases to 12½ percent.

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

□ 0915

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

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

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chair, the underlying legislation would already roll back all the positive reforms Democrats have made to the oil and gas leasing program in the Inflation Reduction Act.

For too long, Big Oil paid the taxpayers a pittance for publicly owned gas and oil they extracted and sold for an enormous profit. In the IRA, Democrats fixed our outdated royalty rates, bringing them in line with the royalty rates charged by States. Studies have shown that this will have no impact on gas prices, but it will bring a fair return to the taxpayers.

Republicans want to repeal our reforms and lower royalty rates—again, a giveaway to an industry that clearly doesn't need it. These low royalty rates are part of the reason this bill increases the deficit.

So much for that fiscal responsibility and restraint.

Big Oil doesn't need the giveaway. The rich are getting richer.

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

Mr. OGLES. Mr. Chair, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN).

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Chair, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Chair, this amendment says that the sense of Congress is that the royalty rates should be 12½ percent, which was the royalty rate before the very misleading and misnamed bill, the Inflation Reduction Act, was passed by my colleagues on the left.

We all know that it wasn't an Inflation Reduction Act, and they publicly call it their climate bill. President Biden has called it the climate bill.

The increase in the royalty rates was simply another way to attack our energy resources here in America. The Democrats know that. The Biden administration knows that. The officials in the Biden administration know that.

In a bill that they call the Inflation Reduction Act, they actually increased inflation by passing a law to say we are going to raise the costs of energy off of Federal lands. It didn't take the market to do it. It was done by the law passed by my colleagues across the aisle.

If you don't believe what I am saying, take the word of the Biden administration. Earlier this month, the Biden administration confirmed this fact in a leaked Bureau of Ocean Energy Management memo on Cook Inlet Lease Sale 258. This is in response to BOEM trying to do an 18¾ percent rate, trying to put the highest rate they could on this sale. The memo reads: ''A 16–2/3 percent royalty may be more likely to facilitate expeditious and orderly development of OCS resources and potentially offer greater energy security.''

The Biden administration knows this. They know that the lower the royalty rate, the more likely we will have energy security and the more likely we will develop our resources.

They choose to use the highest rate possible to do everything they can to attack American energy, to attack American jobs. It is putting Russia and OPEC over the American people because we are still going to use energy. We are not using less energy. We are just using it from different sources.

Laws like this that were passed on a partisan basis last Congress, that were signed into law by the Biden administration, simply put these bad actors over the American people.

It is time we lower energy costs, pass the Lower Energy Costs Act, and pass it with this great amendment by my friend from Tennessee. I support the amendment.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chair, let me remind everyone that Big Oil giants reported their largest profits in history in 2022, together making over a trillion dollars in sales, all while American families were struggling.

We can't continue to rely on the decades-old Republican ''drill, baby, drill'' mantra to lower prices for Americans. Policies that make us more dependent on fossil fuels will keep subjecting Americans to the whims of dictators and global market shifts, which always means higher energy prices.

Instead, we can invest in clean energy here at home. We can reach our true energy independence, bring stability to the American family, and fight climate change all at the same time.

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

Mr. OGLES. Mr. Chair, it should be noted that the largest oil profit was realized by Saudi Arabia.

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

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chair, I would like to, once again, remind everyone that H.R. 1 is the pinnacle piece of legislation for the Republican majority. This bill, as the debates have shown throughout these last few days, is a boondoggle. It is a giveaway.

H.R. 1 puts us back into the position of less protection for the American people and less protection for our environment, and it sets us back in the struggle with the ticking time bomb of the climate crisis. H.R. 1 and this amendment continue that pattern. I urge a ''no'' vote.

As far as H.R. 1, the polluters over people act, if this is the pinnacle of legislative effort on the part of the Republican majority, one can only wonder why we are not concentrating on giving time to the gun violence that is all around us in this country and the recent deaths of children and adults at the Christian church.

That is not an issue with this Republican majority. In fact, they have said they can't do anything about it, that the sacrosanctity of the Second Amendment prevents them from doing anything.

Yet, H.R. 1, the pinnacle, the zenith of their legislative effort, undercuts basic protections for the American people, fundamental, core environmental laws that have protected the American people since the 1970s.

H.R. 1 and this amendment deserve to be defeated.

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

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

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 31 OFFERED BY MR. OGLES

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 31 printed in part B of House Report 118–30.

Mr. OGLES. 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 74, line 5, insert '', any entity subject to the jurisdiction of the Government of the People's Republic of China, or any entity that is owned by the Government of the People's Republic of China,'' before ''may''.

Page 74, line 9, insert before the period '', or acquire claims subject to the General Mining Law of 1872''.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 260, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. OGLES) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Tennessee.

Mr. OGLES. Mr. Chairman, my amendment provides that any entity subject to the jurisdiction of the Government of the People's Republic of China or any entity that is owned by the Government of the People's Republic of China may not acquire any interest with respect to the land leased for oil or gas under the Mineral Leasing Act, the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act, and may not acquire claims subject to the General Mining Law of 1872.

We need to secure our land and not make it available for foreign governments, especially the CCP, the Chinese Communist Party. The CCP is one of the greatest threats to American democracy and our homeland.

Since at least 2007, the Department of Defense has consistently recognized China's dominance in the mining of key minerals as a leading national security threat.

The Biden administration is recklessly pursuing a green agenda that makes the United States economy more dependent on critical mined minerals used to make things like batteries.

We cannot continue to allow the genocidal CCP to control that supply chain. We certainly must ensure that the CCP cannot expand its market power by controlling mines even in our own country.

Mr. Chairman, I urge adoption of my commonsense amendment for the sake of our people and our national security, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to claim time in opposition, though I am not opposed.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of the amendment.

During our markup of this bill in the committee, Representative GOSAR offered a similar amendment to this one, though it applied only to oil and gas, not mining. I asked if he would consider adding mining to that ban, but that was declined.

I also had an amendment to this bill to include mining in this ban, which was not made in order. However, this Republican amendment, which is very similar to my own, was made in order.

I am glad to see that at least some Republicans have come around to the point of including mining as part of the ban.

If we don't want the Chinese Communist Party developing oil and gas leases on Federal land and water, then we shouldn't be supportive of the CCP mining our publicly owned minerals.

It isn't hard to find that many foreign-owned parent companies have terrible records of human rights abuses, environmental degradation, harming indigenous communities, and destroying sacred sites.

Some foreign companies, specifically several owned by the Government of China, are known to have horrible records on all of these fronts, yet they can operate freely on our Federal land, including in my home State of Arizona, through their subsidiaries.

I have repeatedly heard from my colleagues that we agree that human rights and environmental abuses are wrong, but so far, they have refused to address the problem.

As the demand for these minerals increases, let's not rush to open our lands to just anyone who wants to mine. Let's take a closer look at who is operating on our Federal lands and work to raise the global standard.

Let me remind Members that under our outdated 150-year-old mining law, mining claimants do not pay a cent, not one penny, for the public's valuable resources that they extract and turn around and sell—nothing. That is a better deal than even oil and gas get.

We absolutely should not be handing our public mineral resources over to the CCP with no fair return to the American people, no return to the American people at all, where the result would be simply just to destroy our lands.

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

Mr. OGLES. Mr. Chairman, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN).

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Chair, I thank the gentleman for yielding. I thank the ranking member and appreciate bipartisan support on this very important amendment.

I think this is a sign that we are making progress. This is a sign that America is coming together to stand up against the Chinese Communist Party. We need to stand up not only against them but we need to continue standing up against Russia, against OPEC.

That is what H.R. 1 does. It is a bold step in the right direction, and this is a small part of it. I commend the gentleman from Tennessee for crafting this amendment and for getting it made in order.

I support the amendment for a very good reason: We simply cannot let the Chinese Communist Party continue to dominate and take control of not only mineral supply chains but energy supply chains as they are trying to make a move in that area as well, where they are cozying up with the Saudis. They are working with Russia to buy the oil and gas that we have banned from there.

Their objective is dominance. They have made great strides in the minerals area, and they are working very hard to do that in energy.

The way we push back against China and the CCP is we produce our energy and minerals here, and we, for sure, don't let China come to America and own any kind of lease on Federal lands or private lands. We produce it ourselves. We send it to our allies.

There was a delegation recently in Germany, and the message they brought back from Germany was gas equals peace. They want us to send them our gas, and we have ample supplies of it.

We just need the pipelines. We need the ports. We need the LNG facilities. We need the vessels to send gas to Europe that is much cleaner than the gas they are getting from Russia. It will help bring peace in Europe if they can get more of our energy here.

Mr. Chair, I again commend the gentleman, and I support the amendment.

□ 0930

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chair, let me just give one important example of what this amendment addresses.

In my home State of Arizona, at Oak Flat, an area sacred to the Apache people and other indigenous Tribes in Arizona and in New Mexico, there was a deal made to give Federal land to a foreign-owned mining company, Rio Tinto. It is a domestic, local subsidiary but owned by Rio Tinto, which is also partially owned by the Chinese Government. This company has a horrible track record around the globe.

In 2020, it demolished a 46,000-year-old Australian aboriginal site, an irreplaceable cultural site, an artifact and sacred site, to expand an iron mine. This amendment stops rolling out the welcome mat for these mining companies.

Mr. Chair, I urge support of the amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. OGLES. Mr. Chair, I thank Chairman WESTERMAN and my colleague across the aisle for their support.

It should be noted that it is the CCP that launched a reconnaissance balloon across our country. It is the CCP that is flooding our country with fentanyl and killing our kids and poisoning our country.

I urge adoption of this amendment. Let's send a message to China that we have had enough.

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

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

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the ayes 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 Tennessee will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 32 OFFERED BY MR. PERRY

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 32 printed in part B of House Report 118–30.

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Chair, I have an amendment at the desk as approved by the Committee on Rules.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

At the end of section 20209, insert the following:

(d) PROHIBITION.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary of Agriculture (acting through the Forest Service) and the Secretary of the Interior may not accept contributions, as authorized by subsection (a), from non-Federal entities owned by the Communist Party of China (or a person or entity acting on behalf of the Communist Party of China).

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 260, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PERRY) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Chair, this amendment simply ensures that no undue influence can be wielded by the Chinese Communist Party using an existing provision, which I think reflects the overall sentiment behind this anti-CCP and forced labor provision of the entire bill.

The underlying section allows the Secretaries of Agriculture and the Interior to accept and expend funds from non-Federal entities in order to pay for staff and information technology system development to expedite permit processing. They are authorized to accept funds in fiscal years 2023 through 2025.

This amendment prohibits those Secretaries from accepting contributions from non-Federal entities owned by the Communist Party of China or a person or entity acting on behalf of the Communist Party of China. Seems pretty common sense.

There are already provisions in the bill which would prohibit the CCP's involvement in certain parts of our energy market. They should not be allowed to participate in this one any more than they do in the others. There is no reason that our government should be accepting money from this well.

Let's remind ourselves that we are not talking about the people of China who wish to breathe free, like all people in the world do. We are talking about the Communist Party of China. We don't need anything from them.

Mr. Chair, I urge support and adoption of this amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chair, I ask unanimous consent to claim the time in opposition to the amendment, even though I am not opposed.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chair, I rise in support of this amendment.

Environmental reviews are how we learn about a project's potential impacts on our lands, water, and public health. They are a critical safeguard against harmful industry practices.

The section of the bill this amendment amends says that project sponsors can fund their own environmental reviews. The entire section is wrong, and this amendment begins to recognize that.

It would ban the Department of Agriculture and the Department of the Interior from accepting funds for environmental review from the Chinese Communist Party.

But my question is: Why stop there?

What about other foreign adversaries?

What about the entities that have committed human rights abuses?

What about the entities that have lobbied the Federal Government?

How do we ensure that any outside funding will be clear of conflicts of interest?

From my view, we can't.

The Federal Government should have the sole responsibility to conduct unbiased environmental review, because the Federal Government is responsible for protecting its citizens.

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

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Chair, I thank my colleague from the other side of aisle that we are finally willing to get together, Democrats and Republicans, and be tough on the Communist Party of China.

Mr. Chair, I yield as much time as he may consume to the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN), the chairman of the full committee.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Chair, I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania for bringing this amendment that makes very clear a stark reality that we don't need the China Communist Party. America does not need the CCP.

They need us to buy the goods they are producing. They need us to buy the minerals that they are mining out of mines they have developed with child slave labor in Africa. They need us to buy the stuff they are producing with slave labor in China.

But we don't need them, and we sure don't need their money here.

I appreciate the ranking member realizing that. I appreciate that the people are speaking. The House of Representatives is the voice of the people, and I believe this is how America feels.

But we need to go further. We need to put actions to our words. We need to show the CCP that America is strong, that we have our own resources, that we can develop these resources better than they can develop them. We can put these resources out on the world market.

Instead of being dependent on others, we can be the ones exporting our goods, growing wealth and jobs here and being a deterrent to the spread of communism, the spread of dictatorships, and all of those things that we as Americans deplore.

At the end of the day, this is about freedom and about promoting those values that our country was founded on.

Mr. Chairman, again, I support this amendment. I appreciate the gentleman bringing it.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chair, I concur with much of what Chairman WESTERMAN said. I support the amendment. I don't think it goes far enough.

I think that as we confront the question that he brought up of Chinese communism and their influence and their participation in activities on our public lands and waters, that we need to make sure that that doesn't occur.

But I would extend that further. I would extend it to cronyism. I would extend it to insider trading. I would extend it to large corporate interests, many times foreign-owned companies, dictating our energy policy and production for this country.

The point that we have here, as Representatives of our constituents and the Federal Government, is to protect the American people. To protect the American people is to make sure that their public health and their right to know and their right to seek redress is protected.

H.R. 1 does not do this. This amendment is a step in that direction, but the underlying bill does not.

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

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Chair, I urge support of 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. PERRY).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 33 OFFERED BY MR. PERRY

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 33 printed in part B of House Report 118–30.

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Chair, I have an amendment at the desk approved by the Committee on Rules.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

At the end of section 20209, insert the following:

(d) REPORT ON NON-FEDERAL ENTITIES.—Not later than 60 days after the end of the applicable fiscal year, the Secretary of Agriculture (acting through the Forest Service) and the Secretary of the Interior shall submit to the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate a report that includes, for each expenditure authorized by subsection (a)—

(1) the amount of funds accepted; and

(2) the contributing non-Federal entity.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 260, the gentleman

from Pennsylvania (Mr. PERRY) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Chair, this amendment simply extends existing reporting requirements. The underlying section allows the Secretaries of Agriculture and the Interior to accept and expend funds from non-Federal entities in order to pay for staff and information technology system development to expedite permit processing. They are authorized to accept funds in fiscal years 2023 through 2025.

In the original bill text, both Secretaries are required to submit annual statements to the committees of jurisdiction explaining why one or both of the following scenarios occurs:

They do not accept funds contributed; or

They accept but do not expend the funds contributed.

This amendment adds the requirement that both Secretaries submit a report to the committee of jurisdiction that includes, for each expenditure authorized:

The amount of funds accepted, and

The contributing non-Federal entity.

I know most folks probably don't read these reports, and they throw them in a pile. However, for future oversight efforts, it is important for the U.S. Congress to both specifically enumerate that agencies retain this information and then require them to provide it to us so not only we can see it but the American people can see how the money is being spent and who is spending it and who is giving it.

Mr. Chair, I urge adoption of the amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chair, I claim the time in opposition to the amendment.

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

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chair, this amendment requires the Department of the Interior and the Forest Service to do very basic reporting on funding that the agency would start receiving under the bill from outside groups for processing permits.

The agencies would only have to report at the end of each year how much money they got from which outside groups, not which permits that money funded. This won't do much, if anything, to prevent conflicts of interest and corruption in permitting.

The section that this amendment amends is very, very bad. To me, this amendment demonstrates that some Republicans are noticing the absurdity.

Instead of requiring after-the-fact reporting on outside money influencing our permitting process, why not prevent conflicts of interest in the first place?

Again, the Federal Government should have sole responsibility to conduct unbiased environmental reviews, because the Federal Government is responsible for protecting its citizens.

Mr. Chair, I urge a ''no'' vote, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Chair, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN), the chairman of the full committee.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Chair, again, I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania for yielding. I do rise in support of this amendment.

H.R. 1 would allow non-Federal entities to provide money to certain Federal agencies to improve permitting efficiency. This good-governance amendment, offered by my friend from Pennsylvania, would require the Secretaries who accept this money to report on where it came from and how much was provided.

I think there is some confusion about the intent of what is in H.R. 1 about speeding up permitting. Mr. Chair, before I came to Congress, I did engineering work for over two decades. I am a professional engineer, so I worked on a lot of projects where permits were required. Fortunately, we were working with State permitting agencies, and we would hear the same argument from the State permitting agencies: We don't have enough resources and enough people to do these permits. It is going to take longer.

A lot of States have programs where they allow the entity trying to attain the permit to pay money to the agency so their employees can work overtime. It is really a way to increase the resources and get more out of the resources. It is not degrading the environmental protections at all. It is just moving the process forward at a faster rate.

That is what the intent of H.R. 1 is: to move permitting at a faster clip so we can build all kinds of energy; so we can build solar farms and windmills and high-voltage transmission lines; so we can build pipelines; so we can extract minerals and resources here in America. We can process those and we can manufacture things from them.

This is important to making our country a leader in the world by overcoming the position we are in with China on minerals and the position we are in with Russia and OPEC.

Mr. Chair, I support the underlying principle in the bill, and I support the good-governance amendment by my friend from Pennsylvania.

□ 0945

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Chair, I thank the chairman for his comments. Again, the provision also exists. All we are saying is that we should be able to—the American people—should be able to follow the money. If there is a report that says this is where the money came from and this is where it was spent or it wasn't spent, then we can follow the money and we know. That is all we are asking for. That is all this does.

It doesn't slow anything down. It doesn't speed anything up. It just says you are capable; you are able. There is a way to follow the money.

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

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chair, there is a way to speed up and deal with the backlog. We, Democrats, in the Inflation Reduction Act fought for and included $1 billion to deal specifically with NEPA and the review process to bring it up to capacity and staff it. The same can be done for the other agencies that do species reviews, marine reviews, et cetera. It can be done and it needs to be done by the government.

I think the Federal Government should have the sole responsibility to conduct unbiased environmental reviews. That would deal with the backlog. With the $1 billion under NEPA, we will reach that 2-year threshold that the Trump administration wanted, that the Republican majority wanted, and Senators, including Manchin, wanted. We can do the same with the other agencies as well.

It is about backlog. It is not about continuing a self-fulfilling prophesy. The prophesy has been to starve these departments so that you can claim that things are not being done in a timely fashion.

This is an opportunity. The President has recommended it in his budget to fully allow the transfer of money from the IRA to this review process with other agencies, not just NEPA.

I think this amendment is redundant in the sense that we establish a dependency on outside funding from potential claimants to leases and permits within our Federal lands and waters and depend on them to be able to deal with that backlog.

If we are going to speed this up, let's do it correctly. Let's do it with the taxpayer and the American public's rights and public health in mind and fund them fully. We should allow the President and the departments to transfer money to the areas in which they are needed. That is what speeds it up.

What we are doing today in terms of requiring a report will have no real effect on the backlog and opens the doors to conflicts of interest and corruption in our permitting process.

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

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

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 34 OFFERED BY MR. PERRY

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 34 printed in part B of House Report 118–30.

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Chair, I have an amendment at the desk as approved by the House Rules Committee.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

In section 20305(a), strike ''subsection (c)'' and insert ''subsection (c) or (d)''.

In section 20305, add at the end the following:

(d) EXCEPTION FOR CERTAIN ACTIONS UNDER THE DEFENSE PRODUCTION ACT OF 1950.—An action taken by the Secretary of Defense pursuant to Presidential Determination 2022–11 and described in subsection (b) may not be treated as a covered project or be included in the Permitting Dashboard under subsection (a) if the action was related to the production, separation, processing, construction, or procurement of—

(1) solar panels;

(2) electric vehicles;

(3) electric vehicle batteries; or

(4) electric vehicle charging stations or infrastructure.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 260, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PERRY) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Chair, the FAST Act provides for certain projects to be covered, which means projects that meet statutory requirements can gain voluntary access to a permitting timetable that contains all the necessary Federal environmental reviews and authorizations in one centralized location.

The underlying text ensures certain Defense Production Act projects also receive that covered status unless the project sponsor opts out. This amendment specifically excludes the Defense Production Act projects related to solar panel and EV projects from that preferential treatment.

This amendment does not alter the actual authorities provided in the Defense Production Act; it just says that the administration—any administration—can't get special treatment for projects that have absolutely nothing to do with national security.

Solar energy is often unreliable and cannot compete without subsidies. EVs cannot compete in the competitive market without subsidies.

Mr. Chairman, as far as I know, Congress hasn't declared war since I have been here. Using wartime authorities to subsidize these technologies simply doesn't change those facts. Worse yet, the projects empower the Chinese Communist Party and exploit their regime of slave labor.

Roughly 50 percent of the world's polysilicon necessary to produce solar components comes from Xinjiang and Turkmenistan where they have the slave labor operation. Industry representatives have actually acknowledged the major disruption caused by this Congress' efforts to stop forced labor in the region. We should try to stop it every way we can, and this is one of the ways. Again, the solution is not to abuse wartime authorities to prop up domestic industry incapable of making a profit without generous taxpayer subsidies.

Finally, while this amendment is relatively narrow in scope, I hope we have a broader conversation about the Defense Production Act on our side of the aisle to prevent abuses from this and future administrations.

Mr. Chair, I urge adoption of the amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

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

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chair, this amendment says that if the Secretary of Defense takes any action under the Defense Production Act related to solar panels or electric vehicles, it can't be treated as a covered project under FAST–41. I have my own concerns about FAST–41, specifically around ensuring that communities have proper input in project permitting. This amendment is a blatant attack on clean energy infrastructure, and I cannot support it.

Mr. Chair, I urge a ''no'' vote, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Chair, again, this is about using wartime powers, and we haven't declared war.

Mr. Chair, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN), the chairman of the full committee.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Chair, I rise in support of this amendment. As we know, this bill is about permitting streamlining, including for domestic mineral projects.

The underlying bill allows for mining projects that have received funding under the Defense Production Act to be placed on the existing FAST–41 permitting dashboard.

My colleague's amendment states that mineral projects that contribute to certain technologies, such as electric vehicles, cannot be placed over and above other mined projects.

This amendment also supports responsible deployment of funds under the Defense Production Act.

Mineral production is vital to our national security, and H.R. 1 creates multiple opportunities to streamline the process for mineral development.

Mr. Chair, I recognize at this time the Natural Resources Committee staff who worked tirelessly to advance H.R. 1, the Lower Energy Costs Act.

I thank Ashley Nichols, Rebecca Konolige, Rob MacGregor, Tom Connally, Chris Marklund, Rebekah Hoshiko, Madeline Bryant, Kiel Weaver, Aniela Butler, Murray Miller, Sophia Varnasidis, Will King, Nancy Peele, and Vivian Moeglein.

I also thank the Members of the Republican Conference and their staff for all the work that they have put into this legislation. This has really been a team effort to get this bill to the floor in a record amount of time to address an issue that is very prevalent in our country: to lower energy costs, to make America energy independent, to increase our national security, to break supply chains on China, and to make America be the leader of the world in the future.

H.R. 1 is the first step to that, and we should be proud to have put it on the floor.

Mr. Chair, I urge my colleagues to support this amendment and to support the underlying bill.

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Chair, I thank the chairman and would echo his gratitude for the staff. There are long nights and a lot of details to be worked through. To get these things right, we rely on folks that oftentimes are more the experts than we are. We sure appreciate their sacrifices on our behalf and on behalf of the Nation.

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

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chair, I would be remiss, after the chairman's acknowledgement of his staff, not to do the same.

I thank the Democrats on our committee for their hard work and their effort to keep the worst from happening with H.R. 1. Their work has been phenomenal and all of us on the committee, as members, are very appreciative.

Let me just go back to polluters over people act, H.R. 1. H.R. 1 is supposed to be the pinnacle, the apex of legislative action on the part of the Republican majority. While we are having this discussion, looming over the Nation is the default—the debt ceiling—and the negotiations being promoted by the Republican majority and the cuts that are being promoted to the basic services and programs that the American people not only depend on, but rely on for their lives.

We are not talking about that. All we are hearing is that if permitting doesn't happen the way that the industry wants it in terms of changing the basic laws that protect the American people, their health, and our environment, then we will make that part of the hostage-taking in any discussion and any negotiations that we have around the debt ceiling.

We will continue to work hard, the Republican majority are saying, to gut NEPA, to gut basic environmental and public health laws in this country because that is the zenith of the effort.

H.R. 1 is not a legislative effort; it is a giveaway. It is empowering Big Oil and Big Gas to once again control the energy policy of this Nation, ignore climate change, and cost the American people more and more through the cuts that are being anticipated and through the fact that we are not concentrating on their needs and concentrating on the needs of Big Oil and Big Gas—an industry that doesn't need our attention, doesn't need our help, and certainly does not need the handouts in H.R. 1.

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

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

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

Mr. GARBARINO. 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 Pennsylvania will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 35 OFFERED BY MR. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 35 printed in part B of House Report 118–30.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Chair, I rise in support of the amendment and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 75, after line 3, insert the following:

SEC. 20115. OFFSHORE WIND ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS STUDY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this section, the Comptroller General shall conduct a study to assess the sufficiency of the environmental review processes for offshore wind projects in place as of the date of the enactment of this section of the National Marine Fisheries Service, the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, and any other relevant Federal agency.

(b) CONTENTS.—The study required under subsection (a) shall include consideration of the following:

(1) The impacts of offshore wind projects on—

(A) whales, finfish, and other marine mammals;

(B) benthic resources;

(C) commercial and recreational fishing;

(D) air quality;

(E) cultural, historical, and archaeological resources;

(F) invertebrates;

(G) essential fish habitat;

(H) military use and navigation and vessel traffic;

(I) recreation and tourism; and

(J) the sustainability of shoreline beaches and inlets.

(2) The impacts of hurricanes and other severe weather on offshore wind projects.

(3) How the agencies described in subsection (a) determine which stakeholders are consulted and if a timely, comprehensive comment period is provided for local representatives and other interested parties.

(4) The estimated cost and who pays for offshore wind projects.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 260, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Chair, like canaries in coal mines, the recent spate of tragic whale and dolphin deaths and a well-founded suspicion that geophysical surveys, including the use of sonar may be a contributing cause, has brought new light and increased scrutiny to the fast-tracking of approximately 3,400 offshore wind turbines covering 2.4 million acres by 2030, more after that by 2040—all embedded into the ocean floor by massive pile drivers—in the North Atlantic Planning Area that includes New Jersey's coast.

The offshore wind industrialization approval process has left unaddressed and unanswered numerous serious questions concerning the potentially harmful environmental impact on whales, marine life, and the ecosystems that currently allow all sea creatures great and small to thrive.

Cindy Zipf, executive director of Clean Ocean Action, pointed out in testimony at a field hearing chaired by my good friend and colleague, JEFF VAN DREW, that the National Marine Fisheries Service has said, ''Offshore wind is a new use of our marine waters, requiring substantial scientific and regulatory review.''

So she asks: So, where is the substantial review?

My amendment, Mr. Chair, requires the U.S. Accountability Office, or GAO, to investigate the sufficiency of the environmental review process for offshore wind projects of the Marine Fisheries Service, the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, and any other relevant Federal agency.

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Among other concerns, GAO would be required to investigate and report to Congress on the impacts of offshore wind projects on whales, finfish, and marine mammals; commercial and recreational fishing; recreation and tourism; invertebrates; essential fish habitat; benthic resources; cultural, historical, and archeological resources; sustainability of shoreline beaches and inlets; military use and navigation/vessel traffic; and the impacts of hurricanes and other severe weather on offshore wind projects.

The GAO would also be tasked to reveal how the agencies determine which stakeholders are consulted, whether a timely and comprehensive comment period is provided for local representatives and interest parties, and the estimated costs and who pays for the offshore wind projects.

Mr. Chair, if and when the wind turbines go online, vessel navigation—including U.S. Navy ships, merchant and cargo ships, fishing boats, and search and rescue operations by the Coast Guard—may be significantly hampered due to radar interference.

The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine released a report in 2022—a year ago—titled ''Wind Turbine Generator Impacts to Marine Vessel Radar'' and found that wind turbine generators ''obfuscate the marine vessel radar for both magnetron-based and solid-state radar . . . and can cause significant interference and shadowing that suppress the detection of small contacts.''

The study also found that wind turbine mitigation techniques for marine vessel radar have not—I repeat, have not—been substantially investigated, implemented, matured, or deployed.

That study was from 1 year ago.

The vulnerability of massive structures the size of the Chrysler Building to hurricanes, nor'easters, and superstorms has not been adequately investigated and vetted.

Yet one study in 2012 found that there is very substantial risk that Category 3 and higher hurricanes can destroy one-half or more of the turbines at some locations.

Remember, Mr. Chairman, these are about 1,000 feet tall. They could topple like dominoes.

Any surface appeal argument made by the industry or by the government comparing it to the survivability of ocean wind turbines on the East Coast of the United States to the U.K. or Norway fails because Europe doesn't get hurricanes. They get remnants of our hurricanes. They get bad weather, but they don't get hurricanes.

In like manner, the devastating impact on commercial and recreational fishing has been largely ignored. One expert, Meghan Lapp, gave tremendous testimony at Mr. VAN DREW's hearing. She said: ''We are facing the annihilation of our industry at the hands of the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management.''

New Jersey's amazing shore tourism industry is also being put at grave risk.

Mr. Chairman, with so much at stake and out of an abundance of caution and concern, support my amendment to require a comprehensive and independent review by the GAO. It is absolutely warranted.

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

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

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. WEBER of Texas). The gentleman from Arizona is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chairman, this amendment requires the Government Accountability Office to study the sufficiency of the current environmental review process for offshore wind projects.

I think we can all agree that offshore energy projects, including offshore wind projects, need to be studied thoroughly before being built, and the National Environmental Policy Act helps us do that review. However, H.R. 1, the polluters over people act, guts the National Environmental Policy Act.

If I lived in a coastal community, I would be pretty nervous about how H.R. 1 makes it harder for stakeholders to weigh in on projects that might affect my community. This amendment scrutinizes the environmental review process for renewable energy development, but the underlying bill guts the review process for all offshore development.

As we have seen in the Gulf, the infrastructure needed for oil and gas drilling has decimated wetlands, and oil spills like the BP disaster close beaches and kill wildlife.

Scientists have found that seismic surveys for offshore oil exploration are far more damaging to marine mammals than surveys for offshore wind.

A couple-page GAO study on whether environmental reviews of offshore wind are strong enough doesn't make up for the cuts to those reviews in H.R. 1. A better path forward is to reject the polluters over people act and, instead,