

What services would be provided?

Who would be liable to accidents to visitors or damage to resources? Governor Symington of Arizona tells us he thinks Federal taxpayers should indemnify States for damages and injuries caused when States operate Federal facilities. An interesting feature of the new federalism!

If you are serious seeking the answers to these and other questions about this hastily developed bill, do not look to the Committee on Resources. We have held one, perfunctory hearing, on a day when the House was not even in session; multiple questions about the bill went unanswered. We held no subcommittee mark up; no full committee mark up; there is no report on this bill.

And today, the House is being given no opportunity to amend this bill to address the many concerns and criticisms that have been raised about it.

H.R. 2677 is really a pretty poor solution to the Republican failure to provide an appropriations bill to fund our national parks and wildlife refuges. If you were really serious about this problem, we would be better off passing a law declaring all national park and wildlife refuge employees as emergency employees for the duration of a shutdown. Instead, you are going to have States determine what parks and refuges are open in a shutdown and what services will be provided. I note Governor Symington's offer to assist with Grand Canyon National Park, but what about Saguaro National Park, Petrified Forest National Park, or any of the 17 other national park units in Arizona? The Governor did not answer that one.

Let me tell you what this bill is really about.

It is not about keeping the parks open, because it is so poorly drafted and ill-conceived that no one seriously believes it is going to become law. It is polemics, not policy.

No, what this bill is about is the Republican leadership, who demanded that it be prematurely brought to the floor this week, wanting to immunize itself against charges that it shut down the national parks again because Republicans cannot figure out how to pass an Interior appropriations bill. And this bill is a little insurance policy, so they can go home and tell their disappointed constituents: "Oh, I didn't vote to close the parks. Those nasty Democrats did because they refused to pass H.R. 2677."

But the Republicans know, and the American people know, this bill could not become law in time for the possible shut-down this week, and so there is really no rush. It should be given much fuller consideration.

And last, let me mention that many of those who are promoting this bill are also advocates for turning over Federal lands, including protected national parks, to the States so that

miners, loggers, and others can exploit them free from the management policies developed on behalf of all Americans by past Congresses.

H.R. 2677 has been conceived as a first step towards the dismantling of our parks, refuges, wilderness areas and other Federal lands. And that is exactly how passage of H.R. 2677 will be interpreted by its supporters.

Do not let the Republicans play dangerous political games with our national parks! Vote "no" on H.R. 2677.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, how much time do I have left?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman has 1½ minutes.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume to say that the gentleman that just spoke voted twice to recommit the bill. We brought a bill to the floor, an appropriations bill that could pass, to send to the President, and then if he vetoed it, we would know really where the differences lie. But the gentleman was in the minority. He was in the minority. And this House has not done its job because the minority says they know what is best for the majority.

The minority will have an opportunity this week to vote on the same bill. Hopefully, it will pass and it will go to the President and he will probably veto it. Then that is in his ballpark. But the big thing right now is, again, I want to stress that for the first time in history this Secretary, the arrogance of this individual, has taken away the rights of the American people.

All this bill does is say if a State wishes to do so, in the case of a conflict between the Congress and the President of the United States, they, in fact, can offer their services to keep these areas open for the general public.

Mr. Speaker, may I suggest, and correct the gentleman from California, that in 1987 the majority on that side passed, for a full year, 13 continuing resolutions for all 12 months for all 13 agencies. Do not tell me about the law. In fact, in 1974, when Mr. Carter was running around here, 1975 and 1976, in that period of time, 1978, I cannot remember all the years he has been there, each time they, in fact, passed continuing resolutions. They never met the time frame.

I have heard this argument again and again about the Republican party not doing this. The Democrats have failed

miserably, and in the meantime put us \$6 trillion in debt.

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to the bill before us. This bill would temporarily place the management of national parks and wildlife refuges under State control, and it raise several concerns. First, as author of the underlying legislation for the National Wildlife Refuge System, I have long opposed any giveaways in Federal authority to the States.

These lands belong to the people of the United States—not any one State, and they must be managed according to the purposes established through Federal legislation.

Second, as a long-time hunter, I, too, wish to see the refuges remain open. There is a simple way to achieve this, and one which the majority has twice failed to do by bringing an appropriations bill to this floor which is so extreme that it cannot pass. The Interior appropriations bill is over 2 months late.

Third, there are unresolved questions about the liability and other matters when the Federal Government hands over the keys of these treasures to the States.

The majority is right! It is irresponsible to close down our national parks and the refuge system. It is a shame that we are facing a second Government shutdown later this week because the majority is unable to pass a reasonable funding bill for parks and refuges.

Now I must say that I have the most respect for the chairman of the Resources Committee, with whom I have worked diligently to assemble a bill which will make improvements in our Refuge System. H.R. 2677 is bad legislation which goes against those things which Chairman YOUNG and I are trying to achieve with legislative reforms to improve our refuges, and does so to try to carve out exemptions for hunters.

As a hunter, I want refuges open. As a legislator, I want good legislation for our refuge system. H.R. 2677 might be good politics, but it is terrible policy. I urge defeat of this bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time has expired.

The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Alaska [Mr. YOUNG] that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2677, as amended.

The question was taken.

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

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 5 of rule I and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

NOTICE

Incomplete record of House proceedings. Except for concluding business which follows, today's House proceedings will be continued in the next issue of the Record.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 1977, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1996

Mr. REGULA submitted the following conference report and statement on

the bill (H.R. 1977) making appropriations for the Department of the Interior and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1996, and for other purposes:

CONFERENCE REPORT (H. REPT. 104-402)

The committee of conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendments of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 1977) making appropriations for the Department of the Interior and related agencies, for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1996, and