

produce a bill that is much better than last year's legislation; I believe that it still falls short of the important needs of our children and schools.

Let me first commend the efforts of the subcommittee for their efforts in the field of health research. Given the many funding restrictions, I am pleased that the National Institutes of Health have received an increase of 6.9 percent. NIH is the world's leading biomedical research institution and funding such research is today's investment in America's future.

However, I am troubled by the cuts the bill makes to the education budget. These cuts fall below the level necessary to keep up with inflation and projected future growth. Moreover, such decreases would result in a total cut to education programs of 7 percent below the fiscal year 1995 levels at the same time that school enrollment is projected to increase by 7 percent. Similarly, Perkins loans and State student incentive grants are eliminated, affecting over 220,000 college students. Goals 2000 education reform and Eisenhower teacher training grants are also eliminated.

The bill provides \$475 million less for title I funding than the president requested; \$307 million less for special education; and \$729 million less for student financial assistance. Funding for Safe and Drug Free Schools is cut \$25 million below last year's level, and bilingual education is cut \$11 million below last year's amount.

These proposed cuts in education funding run the risk of creating a real crisis in education for the Nation's children. State and local governments already face difficult challenges in educating our children given the growing demands placed on schools at a time of constrained budgets and aging facilities.

I believe that these cuts are dangerously short-sighted. Funding education programs and initiatives should be one of the top priorities in creating a better future, both for the Nation and for individual families everywhere. Indeed, a better educated citizenry and workforce are critical to competing in the changing global economy and in maintaining a strong democracy.

In addition to the cuts in education, the bill also contains unnecessarily harsh cuts in programs needed to enforce labor, wage, and health standards for American workers. For example, the bill provides \$43 million less than the President requested for OSHA, and \$46 million less for enforcement of employment standards, including wage and hour standards. Funds for the National Labor Relations Board are cut \$25 million or 15 percent below last year's level.

The American worker has been under attack since the first day of this Congress. These men and women are the engine of our economy and they deserve to be treated with dignity and respect. They also deserve a safe workplace. I am very pleased that the amendment offered by my colleague from California, Mrs. PELOSI, was accepted by the House. This important amendment deleted a rider that would have banned OSHA from protecting workers from musculoskeletal disorders, which represent America's fastest growing workplace health problem. In spite of our budget constraints, we must not retreat from worker protection laws that have benefited thousands of American workers.

As I stated at the outset, this bill is much improved over last year's Labor-HHS bill.

However, critical funding deficiencies remain and I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on this bill.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. CHARLES E. SCHUMER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 12, 1996

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to vote on the final passage of H.R. 3005, Securities Amendments of 1996, when the yeas and nays were ordered on June 19, 1996. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on the bill.

NATIONAL PARKS CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS ACT OF 1996

HON. JIM KOLBE

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 12, 1996

Mr. KOLBE. Mr. Speaker, this week I introduced legislation that would help alleviate the enormous \$4.5 billion backlog of capital needs in America's national parks. I believe this is a problem that demands the immediate attention of Congress, even as we seek to balance the Federal budget and struggle to reduce the Nation's staggering \$5.2 trillion debt. Congress has increased funding for national parks in fiscal year 1997, but the need is growing much faster. Park utilization is rising rapidly, and infrastructure needs replacement. We cannot expect appropriated funds to meet all of these needs. The time has come for us to explore more creative solutions to this vexing problem.

One thing Congress can do is to make it possible for substantial funds to be raised in the private sector for parks. The bill I am introducing today does just that. It provides an innovative mechanism for the public to invest directly in the preservation and enhancement of our national parks.

Specifically, my bill enables private, nonprofit organizations associated with the National Park Service to issue taxable capital development bonds that would be paid for by park entrance fees, that are not to exceed \$2 per visitor. Money collected in a particular park will be used to secure bonds that fund improvements in that park. I think the preceding statement is the cornerstone of this legislation and it bears repeating. Money collected in a particular park will be used to secure bonds that fund improvements in that park. Any national park with capital needs in excess of \$5 million will be eligible to participate in the revenue bonds program.

I believe park officials will enthusiastically embrace this program, and the Director of the National Park Service has already informed me that he is excited about the prospects of this legislation. After all, the needs are real, immediate, and nationwide. Moreover, my bill offers a practical solution to a serious dilemma. Rangers at Grand Canyon National Park, for example, are obliged to live in squalid conditions because funds have not been available to build sufficient housing. Saguaro National Park has an estimated \$10 million backlog in infrastructure needs, while Rocky

Mountain National Park has deferred \$50 million in needed improvements.

Yellowstone National Park has had to close a major campground and two museums for lack of funds, and this year, Great Smoky Mountains National Park shut down 10 campgrounds and adjoining picnic areas. The national cemetery at Vicksburg National Military Park has been forced to defer \$6 million in restoration and stabilization work, while Shenandoah National Park reports a \$12 million backlog in facility maintenance.

My legislation is similar to a bill recently introduced by my distinguished colleague and friend, Senator JOHN MCCAIN. It allows private, nonprofit groups to enter into partnership agreements with individual parks and the Secretary of the Interior, to act as authorized organizations for the benefit of the parks they serve. These organizations will work with park superintendents to prepare lists of capital improvement projects that are to be financed by taxable capital development bonds. These nonprofit groups, also, would be authorized to issue and manage such bonds on behalf of the parks.

My bill adds a stipulation that no part of the bond proceeds, except interest, may be used to defray administrative costs. Bond holders and the visiting public will be assured that every dollar raised will actually be spent on in-park improvements. Also, the bill will allow memoranda of agreement between nonprofit entities and the National Park Service to be modified in the event funding priorities change. Perhaps most importantly, bonds issued by the nonprofit associations will be backed by the full faith and credit of the U.S. Government in the event that Congress should remove the authority to assess the \$2 entrance fee.

Mr. Speaker, in these fiscally austere times, we simply must become more creative in finding ways to address the needs of our National Park System. The concept of issuing revenue bonds to fund capital improvements is not new. Private industry, municipalities, and other sectors of local government have used revenue bonds for decades and with great success. We can successfully apply this approach to fund capital development needs in our national parks, as well.

My bill also encourages real, beneficial partnerships between the Federal Government and the private sector. Many groups, like the National Park Foundation, the Fish and Wildlife Foundation, and the nearly 70 cooperating associations that presently serve the National Park Service, already provide invaluable financial support to the National Park Service. Their success proves that public-private partnerships can and do in fact work for the benefit of our public institutions. My legislation will greatly expand the ability of these organizations to aid the parks we cherish, and I believe they are ready and eager to rise to the challenge.

Some have suggested that we should allow corporations to become commercial sponsors of the National Park Service. Indeed, legislation to this effect has been introduced in the Senate, and some park supporters have voiced qualified support for the proposal. But I, for one, take a dim view of the prospect that we should commercialize America's crown jewels—our precious national parks—in order to save them.

Mr. Speaker, my friend Senator JOHN MCCAIN recently noted that "Americans are