

research community and over 40 national and international scientific, conservation, and academic organizations. I urge my colleagues to join me in expressing our support for the preservation of coral reefs by voting "yes" on House Concurrent Resolution 8. I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of House Concurrent Resolution 8, the Coral Reef Protection Resolution of 1997.

Interestingly enough, Alaska has the distinction of being the northernmost point in the Pacific which supports coral growth. A variety of corals live in the Gulf of Alaska, along the Aleutian chain, and in the Bering Sea. However, due to cold water temperatures, these corals are unable to create extensive reef structures.

House Concurrent Resolution 8 is non-controversial and has broad bipartisan support. It deserves favorable consideration in both Chambers of Congress, and I urge you to vote "aye" on this important measure.

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased that we are considering House Concurrent Resolution 8 today. The global crisis in coral reef health is an important issue that has received little recent attention in Congress. I commend the Fisheries Subcommittee Chairman, Mr. SAXTON, for introducing the resolution, of which I am an original cosponsor.

Coral reefs are one of nature's wonders. While they provide important physical habitat for ecologically and economically important species, the reef itself is also a living structure. And, as a living structure, thousands—perhaps millions—of individual coral animals are dying and others are taking their place on the reef at any one time.

The problem is that now human activities have shifted that balance and coral reefs are dying off at an alarming rate worldwide. Corals are very sensitive to water pollution, sedimentation, damage from boat groundings, and even simple physical contact by divers. Coral reefs are, in a sense, the canary in the coal mine of the oceans.

A great deal of injury is being inflicted on coral reefs, mainly in southeast Asia, through easily preventable, largely illegal fishing techniques. Cyanide and other poisons are being used to stun and capture fish for the aquarium trade and for the live food fish trade. These chemicals kill nearby coral, and divers scrambling to get fish out of nooks and crannies in the reef often inflict further damage on the reef.

Most of the aquarium fish captured in this way end up in hobbyists' tanks in the United States. So this is not just a foreign problem; we have to take some responsibility for our consumer actions that are driving these practices.

I have introduced legislation myself, House Resolution 87, to address the specific problem of unsustainable coral reef fisheries. I understand that the Fisheries Subcommittee will hold a hearing on that resolution next month, and I hope that it will be marked up shortly thereafter.

Both of these resolutions share a common purpose. They are intended to bring the global plight of coral reefs before Congress, raise the level of awareness of policy makers, and ask us to do more. The scientific and environmental communities have declared 1997 the International Year of the Reef. What better

time for us to pay attention to the many problems plaguing coral reefs, and seek practical solutions to those threats? If we don't do something soon, there may not be any reefs left to save.

I urge the House to support the resolution and I hope we will continue in the coming months to take action to address the coral reef crisis.

Mrs. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my strong support for House Concurrent Resolution 8, the Protect Coral Reef Ecosystems resolution.

I am particularly moved to speak on this subject because, my State, Florida, is the only State in the continental United States with natural coral reef communities.

This resolution seeks to preserve this natural marine resource by providing comprehensive protection from natural and manmade destruction.

This measure articulates Congress' recognition of the importance of maintaining the health and stability of coral reef ecosystems.

The bill also encourages research, education, and management efforts by Federal agencies, academic institutions, nongovernmental organizations, and private industry to further this effort.

Although most people know that coral reefs are one of our most precious and fragile marine resources, the benefits derived from coral reefs are probably less known.

Coral reefs are valuable sources of biomedical chemicals. The use of coral reefs as a source of new chemicals for anticancer treatments is especially promising.

The life of coral reefs are at once fragile and dynamic. It takes 100 years to grow one inch of coral reef—and decades to rehabilitate damaged reefs. This kind of sustained instability is further justification for strong protective measures.

We are now certain that the loss of these natural wonders has implications for other organisms. Without coral reefs, many lesser organisms would disappear. Likewise the abundance of other valuable marine species would also be substantially affected.

The world's coral reefs are subject to a myriad of threats including natural damage caused by humans and extreme weather conditions, as well as damage resulting from tourism activities, commercial harvests, vessel groundings, and pollution.

Even though underwater national parks have been established by Congress in the Gulf of Mexico and the Florida Keys, it is still critical that we move decisively to protect this vital natural resource.

The protection of coral reefs is good for tourism, biomedical research, pharmaceutical production, and good for the future of our children.

I urge support for this measure.

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SAXTON. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. SAXTON] that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, House Concurrent Resolution 8, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the concurrent resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

The title of the concurrent resolution was amended so as to read: "Concurrent resolution recognizing the significance of maintaining the health and stability of coral reef ecosystems."

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SAXTON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous matter on the concurrent resolution just agreed to.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New Jersey?

There was no objection.

#### REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 1031

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to have my name removed as a cosponsor of H.R. 1031.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

#### AFRICAN ELEPHANT CONSERVATION REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 1997

Mr. SAXTON. Mr. speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 39) to reauthorize the African Elephant Conservation Act.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 39

*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 "African Elephant Conservation Reauthorization Act of 1997".

#### SEC. 2. REAUTHORIZATION OF AFRICAN ELEPHANT CONSERVATION ACT.

Section 2306 of the African Elephant Conservation Act (16 U.S.C. 4245) is amended by striking "fiscal years" and all that follows through "1998" and inserting "fiscal years 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, and 2002".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. SAXTON] and the gentleman from Hawaii [Mr. ABERCROMBIE] each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. SAXTON].

(Mr. SAXTON asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

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

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in support of this bill. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 39 was introduced by our full committee chairman, the gentleman from