

We can't change nature, but we can change the rules to help not hinder our farm families.

Mr. Speaker, my friends and neighbors look to Congress for help. And, that's what this bill would deliver. I agree with Chairman BOB SMITH and I'm a cosponsor of this important legislation. I urge Members to support this legislation. It's good for the environment, good for the farmer, and good for the taxpayer.

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

□ 1445

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SNOWBARGER). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Oregon [Mr. SMITH] that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1342, as amended.

The question was taken.

Mr. SKEEN. 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.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SMITH of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the bill just considered.

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

There was no objection.

AWARDING CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL TO FRANK SINATRA

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 279) to award a congressional gold medal to Francis Albert Sinatra.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 279

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

SECTION 1. CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL.

(a) PRESENTATION AUTHORIZED.—The President is authorized to present, on behalf of the Congress, to Francis Albert "Frank" Sinatra a gold medal of appropriate design, in recognition of his accomplishments as an entertainer and humanitarian, which include—

(1) having a career in the entertainment industry spanning 5 decades where he produced, directed, or appeared in more than 50 motion pictures, recorded thousands of songs with annual sales numbering in the millions, and won many major awards in American popular entertainment including 7 Grammys, a Peabody, an Emmy and a Best Supporting Actor Oscar; and

(2) earning the Life Achievement Award of the NAACP, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences' Jean Hersholt Humanitarian Award, and the Presidential Medal of Freedom for his humanitarian and social justice efforts.

(b) DESIGN AND STRIKING.—For purposes of the presentation referred to in subsection (a), the Secretary of the Treasury shall strike a gold medal with suitable emblems, devices, and inscriptions to be determined by the Secretary.

(c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATION.—There are authorized to be appropriated not to exceed \$30,000 to carry out this section.

SEC. 2. DUPLICATE MEDALS.

(a) STRIKING AND SALE.—The Secretary of the Treasury may strike and sell duplicates in bronze of the gold medal struck pursuant to section 1 under such regulations as the Secretary may prescribe, at a price sufficient to cover the cost thereof, including labor, materials, dies, use of machinery, and overhead expenses, and the cost of the gold medal.

(b) REIMBURSEMENT OF APPROPRIATION.—The appropriation used to carry out section 1 shall be reimbursed out of the proceeds of sales under subsection (a).

SEC. 3. NATIONAL MEDALS.

The medals struck pursuant to this Act are national medals for purposes of chapter 51 of title 31, United States Code.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Delaware [Mr. CASTLE] and the gentleman from New York [Mr. FLAKE] each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Delaware [Mr. CASTLE].

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

This afternoon, I rise in support of H.R. 279, the bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to Francis Albert Sinatra, a man who is perhaps better known to many Americans as Old Blue Eyes, the Chairman of the Board, or simply the Voice.

Mr. Speaker, the standard for a Congressional Gold Medal is that the recipient must be someone who has performed an achievement that has an impact on American history and culture that is likely to be recognized as a major achievement in the recipient's field long after the achievement itself. Frank Sinatra's career in music and entertainment clearly meets and exceeds this standard.

Frank Sinatra is perhaps the greatest singer of popular American music of this century. His career spans over 6 decades. Sinatra's style, phrasing, timing and of course his voice have influenced and set the standard for American singers since World War II. In my home State of Delaware and across the country, there are radio stations that for years have devoted weekly shows of 3 hours or more to the music of Frank Sinatra.

There are few musicians or singers whose music can inspire and sustain that type of long-term interest and enthusiasm. From his big band days with the Harry James and Tommy Dorsey orchestras to his seminal work on the Capitol label with the Nelson Riddle orchestra in the 1950's, Frank Sinatra became the preeminent American popular singer.

He made the swinging Sinatra style of the 1960's and the 1970's the standard and continued to gain new fans in the 1980's and 1990's. Frank Sinatra helped define what Americans listen to and what people all over the world consider to be American music. From his own contemporaries to rock musicians today, everyone recognizes the impact Frank Sinatra has had on American popular music and culture.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation did not materialize overnight. It represents the hard work of a number of Members, particularly the gentleman from New York [Mr. SERRANO], the sponsor, with bipartisan help from his colleagues the gentleman from New York [Mr. KING], the gentleman from California [Mr. BONO], and others. The gentleman from New York [Mr. SERRANO] has been a longtime advocate of a Congressional Gold Medal for Frank Sinatra.

This legislation has not received any special treatment. I told the gentleman from New York [Mr. SERRANO] that it must demonstrate broad support by getting 290 cosponsors in the House. To their credit, the gentleman from New York [Mr. SERRANO], the gentleman from New York [Mr. KING], the gentleman from California [Mr. BONO], and other Members went to work to develop the support necessary to give Frank Sinatra the highest civilian honor this Congress can award. The bill has 302 cosponsors, including bipartisan support from Members of the House leadership, and the gentleman from California [Mr. HORN] wants to be a sponsor, too. He just asked me.

Mr. Speaker, before the ranking member of the subcommittee is recognized, I urge the House to show its high hopes, think of a summer wind, say I get a kick out of you and make 1997 a very good year by awarding this gold medal to the man who did it my way. I urge the immediate adoption of H.R. 279.

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

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

First of all, let me thank the gentleman from Delaware [Mr. CASTLE] for expediting getting this bill to the floor. As always, the gentleman has been most gracious with his time and flexibility to allow us to bring this bill out today. I also wish to congratulate the gentleman from New York [Mr. SERRANO] for his sponsorship, his diligence, his tenacity. I am grateful that the gentleman has expedited this bill coming, furthermore, because the gentleman from New York [Mr. SERRANO] has driven me crazy trying to make sure that at the point that he had his 290 signatures we would be willing to bring it to the floor.

So I think this is a great day for us and a great day for the Sinatra family, Frank especially, and a great day for the gentleman from New York [Mr. SERRANO] and the leadership that he has provided.

I do not intend to take much time. Several Members have comments and remarks about Mr. Sinatra to make. But let me just say that although Mr. Sinatra is from Hoboken, NJ, he has always identified with the State and city of New York. Everyone knows his rendition of "New York, New York."

Few, however, realize his accomplishments as a complete entertainer. He has won an Emmy, Grammy, Peabody, and an Oscar. He has also been honored