

they are especially important from a cultural and economic point of view to Americans and Asians alike.

I want to salute the many organizations that had a role in moving this bill, such as the World Wildlife Fund, Safari Club International, the Sierra Club, and our former colleague Andy Ireland of Feld Enterprises. The bill was supported by representatives of the Indian Institute of Science and the Wildlife Preservation Trust International. The model of protection in this bill is appropriate, flexible, and carries a reasonable cost.

Madam Speaker, I reiterate my support for this important legislation and yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Madam Speaker, I believe everyone who wishes to speak on the issue has done so, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. EMERSON). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. SAXTON] that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1787, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SAXTON. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous material on H.R. 1787, as amended.

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

There was no objection.

CONCURRING IN THE SENATE AMENDMENTS TO H. CON. RES. 8, REGARDING CORAL REEF ECOSYSTEMS

Mr. SAXTON. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and concur in the Senate amendments to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 8) recognizing the significance of maintaining the health and stability of coral reef ecosystems.

The Clerk read as follows:

Senate Amendments:

Strike out all after the resolving clause and insert:

That the Congress recognizes the significance of maintaining the health and stability of coral reef ecosystems, by—

- (1) promoting comprehensive stewardship for coral reef ecosystems;
- (2) discouraging unsustainable fisheries or other practices that are harmful to coral reefs and human health;
- (3) encouraging research, monitoring, and assessment of and education on coral reef ecosystems;
- (4) improving the coordination of coral reef efforts and activities of Federal agencies, academic institutions, nongovernmental organizations, and industry; and

(5) promoting preservation and sustainable use of coral reef resources worldwide.

Strike out the preamble and insert:

Whereas coral reefs are among the world's most biologically diverse and productive marine habitats, and are often described as the tropical rain forest of the oceans;

Whereas healthy coral reefs provide the basis for subsistence, commercial fisheries, and coastal and marine tourism and are of vital economic importance to coastal States and territories of the United States including Florida, Hawaii, Georgia, Texas, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands;

Whereas healthy coral reefs function as natural, regenerating coastal barriers, protecting shorelines and coastal areas from high waves, storm surges, and accompanying losses of human life and property

Whereas the scientific community has long established that coral reefs are subject to a wide range of natural and anthropogenic threats;

Whereas a wide variety of destructive fishing practices, including the use of cyanide, other poisons, surfactants, and explosives, are contributing to the global decline of coral reef ecosystems;

Whereas the United States has taken measures to protect national coral reef resources through the designation and management of several marine protected areas, containing reefs of the Flower Garden Banks in the Gulf of Mexico, the Florida Keys in south Florida, and offshore Hawaii, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and American Samoa;

Whereas the United States, acting through its agencies, has established itself as a global leader in coral reef stewardship by launching the International Coral Reef Initiative and by maintaining professional networks for the purposes of sharing knowledge and information on coral reefs, furnishing near real-time data collected at coral reef sites, providing a repository for historical data relating to coral reefs, and making substantial contributions to the general fund of coral reef knowledge; and

Whereas 1997 has been declared the "International Year of the Reef" by the coral reef research community and over 40 national and international scientific, conservation, and academic organizations: Now, therefore, be it

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. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

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

Mr. SAXTON. Madam Speaker, on April 23rd, the House of Representatives unanimously approved House Concurrent Resolution 8, a resolution that I introduced along with my colleague, the gentleman from Hawaii [Mr. ABERCROMBIE].

This measure expresses strong support for research, monitoring, and education related to the coral reef ecosystems. Healthy coral reefs help provide numerous benefits to the United States and other nations. For example, coral reefs support important com-

mercial and recreational fisheries, as well as a large tourism and vacation industry, provide natural storm protection in coastal communities, and have recently become an important frontier for biomedical research.

The other body has now approved an amended version of House Concurrent Resolution 8. The amendment takes note of the alarming damage to coral reefs caused by destructive fishing practices, as unbelievable as the use of cyanide and dynamite in fishing in some areas of the globe. It further expresses the sense of Congress that international action to eliminate these unbelievably harmful practices is much needed.

I believe that this amendment is not only acceptable, but strengthens the resolution, and I am sorry that I did not think about it to begin with.

Madam Speaker, I urge the House to approve this measure as amended, and complete Congressional recognition of the importance of the coral reef ecosystems and the need to conserve them. I urge my colleagues to vote "aye".

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Madam Speaker, before I rise in strong support of the Senate amendments to House Concurrent Resolution No. 8, I want to assure the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. SAXTON] that in the statement of the gentleman from California [Mr. MILLER], that I submitted on the Asian elephant resolution, that it did not contain a statement, as rumored, that while he was in favor of increasing the number of Asian elephants in South Asia, that he was for decreasing the number of elephants on the Committee on Resources.

Madam Speaker, this resolution brings much-needed attention to the crisis that coral reefs are facing worldwide. I commend yet once again the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. SAXTON] for his leadership in introducing and passing House Concurrent Resolution No. 8, and for focusing on the subcommittee's attention on the value of and threats to coral reefs.

I also want to praise the efforts of the ranking member, the gentleman from California [Mr. MILLER] for his concern over cyanide fishing and the need to promote sustainable coral reef fisheries, ideas incorporated in the Senate amendments to the resolution.

Coral reefs, as I have every opportunity to observe, being from Hawaii, Madam Speaker, are vital to the environment and the economy of many islands and coastal States, territories, and nations. They are among the most biologically diverse and productive ecosystems on Earth, rivaling the tropical rain forests on land. The hard structure of the reef is built up over thousands of years by the secretions of tiny living coral animals, so a coral reef is truly a living structure. As a