American Wetlands Conservation Act is a critical part of this effort. The bill, as amended at subcommittee, is strongly supported by Ducks Unlimited and the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies.

The Partnerships for Wildlife Act was enacted to ensure that nongame, non-endangered wildlife did not slip through the cracks between existing conservation programs. It also matches Federal dollars with State and local funds to support a wide variety of wildlife conservation and appreciation projects.

H.R. 2556 reauthorizes the North American Wetlands Conservation Act at its current authorization levels for three years. I urge Members to vote aye on this important environmental bill.

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

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

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

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 2556. This bill helps protect wildlife habitat and will enhance the management of nongame wildlife. I want to thank the subcommittee chairman, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SAXTON) for bringing this legislation before the House. The bill reauthorizes the highly successful North American Wetlands Conservation Act and will improve the management of nongame species of wildlife by reauthorizing the program of Federal matching grants for such activities.

In the seven years of its existence, the North American Wetlands Conservation Act has resulted in the protection of millions of acres of wetlands in the United States, Canada and Mexico. $244 million in North American wetlands programs grants for this voluntarily, non-regulatory program have been matched by more than $510 million in funding by conservation partners, conserving valuable habitat for migratory birds and many non-migratory species as well.

The amendment also reauthorizes the Partnerships for Wildlife Act, which provides matching grants for nongame wildlife conservation and appreciation. Unfortunately, we do not have a dedicated source of funding like the Wallop-Breaux Fund for nongame conservation. Lacking a dedicated source of funding, conservation needs for these species are mounting. For example, the states currently estimate their unmet needs for management and conservation of nongame species at over $300 million annually.

Mr. Speaker, I hope we have the opportunity to give permanent funding for nongame species serious consideration in the near future. But, in the meantime, we will continue doing what we can under the Partnerships for Wildlife Program.

In summary, this is sound legislation to benefit wildlife through non-regulatory programs that leverage scarce Federal resources, and I urge the House to support H.R. 2556.

Mr. SAXTON. Mr. Speaker, the North American Wetlands Conservation Act is a program that has proven itself in many ways. The law was designed to be a catalyst for partnerships between various levels of government and the private sector to accomplish incentive-based wetlands conservation. It demanded a non-federal match in order to level federal dollars and the match that has been produced has more than doubled that required threshold. This high match level is one evidence of the success of partnership the Act intended and delivered.

Another group of very important partners are the members of the North American Wetlands Council. These unpaid volunteers contribute incredible numbers of man hours to this process. Ducks Unlimited is an excellent example of a Wetlands Council member. From the beginning of the program DU has volunteered to serve. They not only commit the equivalent of a full time staff member to assist in carrying out Council business, they play a key role in communicating support for the program on Capitol Hill. They have contributed by far and away more match funding continentally for these projects than any other partner group. It is partners like DU with a demonstrated level of commitment that the Act envisions should serve on the North American Wetlands Conservation Council. That kind of commitment is what creates this program's level of success.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HEFLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. HEFLEY) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2556, 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. HEFLEY. 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 material on H.R. 2556, as amended.

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

There was no objection.

NEW WILDLIFE REFUGE AUTHORIZATION ACT

Mr. POMBO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 512) to prohibit the expenditure of funds from the Land and Water Conservation Fund for the creation of new National Wildlife Refuges without specific authorization from Congress pursuant to a recommendation from the United States Fish and Wildlife Service to create the refuge, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 512

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 ''New Wildlife Refuge Authorization Act''.

SEC. 2. REQUIREMENTS RELATING TO DESIGNATION OF NEW REFUGES.

(a) LIMITATION ON APPROPRIATIONS FROM LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—No funds are authorized to be appropriated from the land and water conservation fund for designation of a unit of the National Wildlife Refuge System, unless the Secretary of the Interior has—

(A) completed all actions pertaining to environmental review that are required for that designation under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969;

(B) provided notice to each Member of and each Delegate and Resident Commissioner to the Congress elected to represent an area included in the boundaries of the proposed unit, upon the completion of the preliminary project proposal for the designation; and

(C) provided a copy of each final environmental impact statement or each environmental assessment resulting from that environmental review, and a summary of all public comments received by the Secretary on the proposed unit, to—

(i) the Committee on Resources and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives;

(ii) the Committee on Environment and Public Works and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate; and

(iii) each Member of or Delegate or Resident Commissioner to the Congress elected to represent an area included in the boundaries of the proposed unit.

(2) LIMITATION ON APPLICATION.—Paragraph (1) shall not apply to appropriation of amounts for a unit of the National Wildlife Refuge System that is designated, or specifically authorized to be designated, by law.

(b) NOTICE OF SCOPING.—The Secretary shall publish a notice of each scoping meeting held for the purpose of receiving input from persons affected by the designation of a proposed unit of the National Wildlife Refuge System. The notice shall be published in a newspaper distributed in each county in which the refuge will be located, by not later than 15 days before the date of the meeting. The notice shall clearly state that the purpose of the meeting is to discuss the designation of a new unit of the National Wildlife Refuge System.

(c) LIMITATION ON APPLICATION OF FEDERAL LAND USE RESTRICTIONS.—Land located within the boundaries (or proposed boundaries) of a unit of the National Wildlife Refuge System designated after the date of the enactment of this Act shall not be subject to any restriction on use of the lands under Federal law or regulation based solely on a determination of the boundaries, until an interest in the land has been acquired by the United States.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. POMBO) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. POMBO).

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

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

Mr. POMBO. Mr. Speaker, a little history on this particular legislation. I

introduced this legislation four years ago in Congress in response a problem that had arisen and come to my attention over the creation of a new wildlife refuge.

Over the past several years, Congress has authorized 70 new wildlife refuges throughout this country of the 513 current. The rest of the 443 refuges were created with little or no oversight by Congress. I feel it is very important that Congress fulfill its responsibility as a watchdog of the taxpayer money in the creation of a new wildlife refuge.

Currently, the refuge system is suffering a construction and maintenance backlog of over $600 million. At the same time, every single year we create new wildlife refuges throughout the country.

During the effort that has been made over the past year to bring this legislation to the floor, compromise legislation was reached with the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. DINGELL) and the chairman of the Committee on Resources, the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG), that we believe everyone has agreed to at this point.

What it does is it in essence requires that upon the creation of a new wildlife refuge, that Members must be notified if a refuge is being created in their district; that all the environmental documents, the environmental assessment, the environmental impact statement and a summary of the public comments relating to the proposed new refuge must be given to the Congressional committee of authority, as well as the appropriating committee; and that notices of scope and meetings required under the NEPA process are published in local newspapers notifying the people who live in that particular area that there is the possibility of creation of the new wildlife refuge in that area.

Mr. Speaker, we also clarify, and I believe this is very important, that the determination of the boundary for a new refuge does not impose any additional Federal land use restrictions as a result of simply determining the proposed boundary until the land is acquired by the Federal Government.

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

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

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

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the substitute amendment to H.R. 512. I opposed the bill as it was reported from the Committee on Resources because it imposed unjustified restrictions on the use of the Land and Water Conservation Fund to establish national wildlife refuges. This issue was debated on several occasions within the committee and on the floor over the last two years and, in my opinion, the supporters of this proposal never made a convincing case that there was something fundamentally flawed with the process used to establish new wildlife refuges.

Increasingly, land and water fund monies are used to acquire refuge lands to protect endangered species or threatened wetlands. In fact, Federal ownership of habitat for threatened and endangered species is one of the best ways to relieve the burden on landowners of endangered species protection and to avoid costly controversial endangered species listings. Further, there is often a need to act expeditiously to acquire land to prevent harmful development. Yet, because of the Fish and Wildlife Service's policy of acquiring only from willing sellers, property rights are respected. In summary, the bill, as reported from the Committee on Resources, was unnecessary and harmful in my opinion to the National Wildlife Refuge System.

We have now, however, worked out a compromise that addresses concerns about public notice of and Congressional oversight over new refuge designations without unduly hampering the designation process. Through NEPA and at the Administrative Procedures Act, there is already a process for providing public notice and soliciting input into the establishment of a new refuge. In addition, Congress has control over refuge land acquisition through appropriations from the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

Mr. Speaker, no process is perfect and there is always room for improvement. The bill before the House today provides for even better public notice and input, as well as making sure that any Member of Congress whose district includes lands being considered for inclusion in the new refuge will be amply notified.

It also explicitly states what is already the case under current law, that the designation of a proposed refuge boundary does not give the Fish and Wildlife Service any regulatory authority over private lands within the proposed boundary unless and until that land is acquired by the government. In other words, the proposed boundary is a wish-list for acquisition, and nothing more.

By ensuring that the local community is fully vested in any new refuge and by laying to rest landowners' fears that their property rights will be compromised, it is hoped that H.R. 512 will actually facilitate the establishment of new refuges.

So, Mr. Speaker, I support the substitute. I commend the chairman of the Committee on Resources, the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG) for working with the minority and the administration to craft such a reasonable compromise, and I urge the House to support the bill.

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

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS).

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I am in full agreement with the original intent of this measure. In fact, I wish the bill even went further toward making Federal agencies accountable for their actions.

Mr. Speaker, I think it would surprise many people to know that current law allows Federal bureaucrats to create national wildlife refuges at will without the consent of Congress and without thorough public debate that should accompany any allocation of taxpayer money. The creation of wildlife refuges is particularly important in my district, where we are currently debating the future management of a stretch of the Columbia River called the Hanford Reach.

The Department of Energy, which currently owns the land on both sides of the river where the Hanford Reach is, has stated that it no longer needs to own, manage or maintain the land on the opposite side of the river from the Hanford nuclear reservation. However, back in 1971, the Department of Energy had already decided that they did not need to manage their own lands and signed a lease agreement with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to manage a portion of the lands as a national wildlife refuge. No act of Congress, no public commented, no discussion whatever. Instead, the Saddle Mountain National Wildlife Refuge was created through a simple lease agreement with the Department of Energy.

Now, I am not suggesting that the national wildlife refuge system has not benefitted our wildlife, and I am not suggesting that this particular refuge has not been important to our area. In fact, far from it. However, continuing to allow the purchase of private property by the Federal Government without thorough and open discussion and the involvement of Congress really belies the national nature of these refuges.

The American people must have some level of confidence that our national wildlife refuges are created not only for scientific reasons, but with the appropriate consideration of local concerns and priorities.

Because I know that the distinguished chairman of the Committee on Resources shares my concerns on refuge designations, I would like to engage in a colloquy with the gentleman so he might indicate whether the committee plans to address this issue in the future.

□ 1530

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will yield, I am pleased to respond to that inquiry.

I certainly understand the gentleman's concern, and I can assure the gentleman that the committee is fully committed to strengthening the congressional role on national wildlife refuge systems as well as designations and other what we call acquisition of lands by any other Federal agency.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the Chairman's strong leadership on national resource issues generally and, in particular, on his commitment to focus further committee action on the increasing issues

of concern to the West. I look forward to helping in any way that I can.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume to say that I speak in support of H.R. 512, and I can only suggest that this is just a small step forward in the right direction.

I often suggest in this legislative work that nothing happens without a reason. The reason I introduced this bill, we did have cases where the Fish and Wildlife Department, especially in the district of the gentleman from California (Mr. POMBO), there is another one in another district, one of the Members came to me the other day where they do it by action of the agency without any input from the Congress. Under our Constitution, we are the only ones that should have the authority to make designation of lands.

This is a small step forward and requires the agencies to go forth and at least identify the representative of that area and also have consultation with public input and then having to come back to the Congress for the identification of those refuges that would take place. I think it is important that we must keep the integrity for the refuge system in place, and I hold no second place to anyone when it comes to refuge creations by act of Congress.

The gentleman from Michigan (Mr. DINGELL), a dear friend of mine, and I worked on this legislation for over 28 years. So I am confident that this is the right step. But I will, as the gentleman from Washington asked me, continue, as chairman of the committee, to watch what the agencies are doing. How does this affect the community? Is the community supportive? And, really, who is asking for this refuge? If it is scientifically backed up, people back it up, then it ought to go forward and go through the congressional action.

I rise in support of this modified version of H.R. 512, which is the product of successful negotiations between the Department of the Interior, our colleagues, JOHN DINGELL, GEORGE MILLER, RICHARD POMBO, and me.

While this compromise is not as comprehensive as a Congressional authorization, it will improve the refuge land acquisition process and establish additional safeguards for private property owners.

Under the terms of this proposal, no money can be authorized to be appropriated from the Land and Water Conservation Fund to create a new refuge unless: The environmental reviews required by the National Environmental Policy Act are completed; a copy of the final environmental impact statement or environmental assessment and a summary of all public comments on the proposed refuge are provided to the House and Senate authorizing and appropriations committees; and the Department of the Interior provides notice to each Member of Congress representing a district in which the proposed wildlife refuge will be located when a preliminary project proposal is completed.

The bill also requires that notice be provided in the local newspapers of an affected community of any public meetings to discuss the scope of a proposed new refuge. In fact, according to NEPA regulations (40 CFR 1501.7), ''There shall be an early and open process for determining the scope of issues to be addressed and for identifying the significant issues related to proposed action. This process shall be termed scoping.''

Finally, H.R. 512 clarifies that no additional land use restrictions shall be imposed on property included within the acquisition boundary of a National Wildlife Refuge until that land is purchased by the Federal Government.

This compromise does not provide the same level of oversight that is afforded to Bureau of Land Management lands, National Forests, Parks, or Scenic Rivers. It does, however, provide an increased opportunity for Congressional review when necessary, fairness to property owners who are waiting to sell their land to the government, better notice to the public when new refugees are proposed, and statutory protection to private landowners whose property is located within a refuge boundary.

With a $600 million backlog of critical resource management needs, reasonable people can ask why the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is obsessed with buying more private land, which by their own admission they are incapable of managing effectively. Nevertheless, I recognize that many members of this body want additional land acquisitions and because of their support, this process is likely to continue in the future. At the same time, there are thousands of Americans who want to keep and use their private property without the shadow of Federal land control. This measure strikes a balance between those groups.

It allows the creation of new wildlife refuges while ensuring that the local community and its elected representatives in Congress are informed of the Service's plans for new refuges. Finally, this institution will have a full and complete record of information in order to assess the merits of the various land acquisition requests.

I urge an ''aye'' vote on this important legislation.

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of this legislation, as amended in response to an agreement between Chairman YOUNG, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. TANNER), the gentleman from California (Mr. POMBO) and myself.

As agreed to, H.R. 512 will codify several existing practices of the Fish and Wildlife Service to make absolutely certain that property owners, local governments, concerned citizens, and Members of Congress are brought into the public comment and review process when a new wildlife refuge is added to our National Wildlife Refuge System using Land and Water Conservation Act funds.

The compromise before us today is substantially different than the bill as reported by Committee. Had the reported measure been presented here for debate without amendment, I would have fought vigorously against its enactment. However, I am pleased to report to my colleagues that the bill as presented today does not create needless roadblocks in creating new refuges, will not tie the hands of the Fish and Wildlife Service in proceeding with land acquisition, and does not establish a new Congressional review and approval process for the creation of new wildlife refuges.

Instead, H.R. 512 would enact a requirement that all environmental analysis required under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) be completed prior to acquisitions of new LWCF refuges, and that Members of Congress in affected areas be notified early in the acquisition process.

Last year, through the sustained efforts of my dear friend, Chairman YOUNG, Ranking Member GEORGE MILLER and Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt, Congress approved long-overdue legislation to specify the mission and management direction of the Refuge System. The original text of H.R. 512 was deliberately left out of the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act because of intense and broad opposition to what was rightly viewed as tying the hands of our Nation's refuge managers.

However, the Fish and Wildlife Service has acknowledged isolated cases in which its personnel could have acted with more sensitivity and accountability to the local citizens and property owners within refuge acquisition boundaries. The Service has indicated to me that it has strong public participation policies in place when new wildlife refuges are created. I urge the Director and her subordinates to place a high priority on responsiveness in such cases, so that answers are provided, fears are allayed, and property owners can count on a positive relationship with their refuge system neighbors.

Mr. Speaker, while the legislation before us today will not prevent every future complaint or problem, it will hopefully be a gentle reminder that citizens have every right and expectation to fair, prompt and just treatment by the Federal agencies that serve them.

I hope that the passage of this bill will eliminate the need some have felt to legislate solutions to rather confined sets of problems on our National Wildlife Refuge System. As a Member of the Migratory Bird Conservation Commission, I take great pride in serving this body to assure that our wildlife refuges live up to the vision of their founder, President Theodore Roosevelt, when he created the first refuge almost a century ago. When writing legislation, we must keep the best interests of the whole system in mind.

Finally, I want to remind my colleagues that the Fish and Wildlife Service is a modest-sized agency with a large and important mission, and that we are fortunate it provides the American taxpayers with a group of highly skilled, dedicated and motivated employees who take pride in preserving our Nation's ecological heritage. To my colleagues who never have visited a wildlife refuge in your home states, I urge you to do so, to meet your refuge managers and express your interest in helping form a strong partnership between your constituents and those who manage their wildlife refuges.

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in support of the substitute to H.R. 512, the New Wildlife Refuge Reauthorization Act. I feel that it is appropriate for the Congress to be a part of the process in the purchasing of land by the United States Fish & Wildlife Service. I fully support the requirement in the bill that the Congressional member, whose district is directly affected by the decision to establish a wildlife refuge, be notified in advance of the transaction.

I understand that we are here today to improve upon a procedure which has existed

since the establishment of the Land and Water Conservation Fund by Congress in 1965. I caution my fellow colleagues, however, that as we seek to become active participants we are still neglected in other processes that the Fish & Wildlife Service can and has exploited.

The reacquisition in Guam, by the United States, at the close of WWII resulted in large tracts of land condemned at the expense of landowners on Guam. U.S. officials reasoned with locals that the condemnations were in the interest of National Security. At that time, approximately one-half of Guam's land mass were taken. Today, one-third is still held by the Department of Defense. The people of Guam have lived with this reality for the better part of this century.

Though this situation has been one in which the people of Guam have had to endure, it was not widely questioned. After all, the security of your liberators is important to the security of yourself and at the time, threats to democracy were still clearly visible in the era of the Cold War. With the close of the Cold War era, however, the mindsets of individuals and families began to change. It was logical to think that if land takings were a result of National Security, and the threats to American democracy ceased to exist as another world power, then maybe someday the United States may give some land back to the people of Guam.

Perhaps this logic was too simple, but it was not far off. The focus of U.S. demilitarization and transition to opening up America to a global economy prompted downsizing of America's military services. Each of us here with a military base in their district are all too familiar with the Base Realignment and Closure Commission, which was created to close military installations based on need and not want.

In my district of Guam, this news was difficult for civil service employees who designed their careers around military presence on our island. After all, the military's years of presence and integration with the local community was accepted and welcomed. For landowners and their descendants, the news of base closures was a glimmer of hope that military land would be returned to anxious families.

Aside from being second-class citizens or regularly put-off in aspirations to seek a new political relationship, Guam does have something in common with other states of the Union. Not all the lands acquired by the Fish & Wildlife Service, for purposes of establishing a Wildlife Refuge, come from tapping the Land and Water Conservation Fund or the Migratory Bird Conservation Fund, nor does all the land come from private donations. My colleagues, our commonality is that the Fish & Wildlife Service can take lands from our districts without our knowledge . . . without our consultation . . . even without notice to our respective local governments.

In the case of my island of Guam, the Fish & Wildlife Service seized more than 300 acres of land to be deemed excess by the US Air Force. This figure may seem small upon first hearing but if added to the additional 28,000 acres designated as an overlay for the refuge. Proportionately, this is akin to condemning 12 states and making them off limits. Fish & Wildlife arranged for this possession to occur with no notice to myself or any other local government leader. Fish and Wildlife hid behind procedural nonsense which leaves for no consideration to any entity other than themselves.

Often, Mr. Speaker, I express to the Congress circumstances that are unique to Guam's situation. In many cases, the experiences of my island and people have not and will not be duplicated or relived in any other territory or state, or by any other American citizen. I must remind my colleagues, however, that this is not the case in this case.

In light of these concerns, I am in agreement with the substitute to H.R. 512 and am appreciative that we are working to correct problems with current land acquisition procedures. In the future, I am hopeful that the issues I raised can be addressed in discussions with my colleagues.

We want to protect our resources; we want to protect the endangered species. But we must do so in a collaborative manner and in a way which takes into account local leadership and concerns.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SHIMKUS). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. POMBO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 512, 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.

The title was amended so as to read: ''A bill to establish requirements relating to the designation of new units of the National Wildlife Refuge System.''.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. 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 material on the bill just passed and just debated.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SHIMKUS). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Alaska?

There was no objection.

NATIONAL EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES MEMORIAL SERVICE

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 171) declaring the memorial service sponsored by the National Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Memorial Service Board of Directors to honor emergency medical services personnel to be the ''National Emergency Medical Services Memorial Service,'' as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 171

Whereas in 1928 Julian Stanley Wise founded the first volunteer rescue squad in United States, the Roanoke Life Saving and First Aid Crew, and Virginia has subsequently taken the lead in honoring the thousands of people nationwide who give their time and energy to community rescue squads through the establishment of To The Rescue, a museum located in Roanoke devoted to emergency medical services (EMS) personnel;

Whereas to further recognize the selfless contributions of EMS personnel nationwide, the Virginia Association of Volunteer Rescue Squads, Inc., and the Julian Stanley Wise Foundation, in conjunction with To The Rescue, in 1993 organized the first annual National Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Memorial Service at Greene Memorial United Methodist Church in Roanoke, Virginia, to honor EMS personnel from across the country who have died in the line of duty;

Whereas the annual National EMS Memorial Service has captured national attention by honoring 119 providers of emergency medical services from 35 States;

Whereas the singular devotion of EMS personnel to the safety and welfare of their fellow citizens is worthy of the highest praise;

Whereas the annual National EMS Memorial Service is a fitting reminder of the bravery and sacrifice of EMS personnel nationwide;

Whereas according to the Department of Health and Human Services, 170,000 Americans require emergency medical services on an average day, a number which projects to over 60,000,000 people annually; and

Whereas the life of every American will be affected, directly or indirectly, by the uniquely skilled and dedicated efforts of EMS personnel who work bravely and tirelessly to preserve America's greatest resource—people: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring),

SECTION 1. OFFICIAL SITE OF NATIONAL MEMORIAL SERVICE.

The Congress declares the City of Roanoke, Virginia, to be the official site of the National Emergency Medical Services Memorial Service to honor emergency medical services personnel who have died in the line of duty.

SEC. 2. RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.

Nothing in this resolution shall be construed to place the National Emergency Medical Services Memorial Service under Federal authority or to require any expenditure of Federal funds.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS) and the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BILIRAKIS. 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 material on H. Con. Res. 171, the resolution now being considered.

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

There was no objection.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to approve H. Con. Res. 171 introduced by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODE), which designates the city of Roanoke, Virginia, to be the official site of the National Emergency Medical Services Memorial Service.