

By Mr. GRAHAM (for himself and Mr. MACK):

S. 2711. A bill to authorize the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to make grants to the Florida Keys Aqueduct Authority and other appropriate agencies for the purpose of improving water quality throughout the marine ecosystem of the Florida Keys; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. THOMPSON (for himself and Mr. LIEBERMAN):

S. 2712. A bill to amend chapter 35 of title 31, United States Code, to authorize the consolidation of certain financial and performance management reports required of Federal agencies, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Governmental Affairs.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. LAUTENBERG (for himself and Mr. TORRICELLI):

S. Res. 321. A resolution to congratulate the New Jersey Devils for their outstanding discipline, determination, and ingenuity, in winning the 2000 National Hockey League's Stanley Cup Championship; considered and agreed to.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. GRAHAM (for himself and Mr. MACK):

S. 2711. A bill to authorize the Administrator of the Environment Protection Agency to make grants to the Florida Keys Aqueduct Authority and other appropriate agencies for the purpose of improving water quality throughout the marine ecosystem of the Florida Keys; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

THE FLORIDA KEYS WATER QUALITY IMPROVEMENT ACT

• Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, the Florida Keys are a unique natural resource area that we must value and protect. This 158-mile-long string of islands at the southern tip of Florida attracts two and a half million visitors each year to fish, swim, snorkel, dive, and otherwise enjoy the beautiful surroundings.

One of the most striking characteristics of the Florida Keys is their pristine marine environment. The Keys support one of the largest sea grass communities in this hemisphere and more than 6000 species of plants, fish, and invertebrates. The diversity of this reef ecosystem is considered the underwater equivalent of the tropical rainforests.

But that ecosystem—and the economy it supports—is at grave risk. The degradation of water quality in the Florida Keys threatens the health of the living coral reef, sea grasses, fisheries, and other marine life. This decline threatens to transform the Keys from one of Florida's most treasured resources to one of its most poisoned.

Mr. President, the great irony is that we are loving the Florida Keys to

death. While we are pleased that these islands attract new residents and visitors from all over the world, improvements in wastewater treatment and management practices have not kept pace with population and tourism growth.

Why is this significant? Ongoing research has determined that nutrients from wastewater have significantly contributed to the decline of water quality in the Florida Keys. It will take a strong partnership of federal, state, and local governments working in conjunction with environmental advocates and other interests to build the better sewage treatment systems needed to improve canal and nearshore water quality.

Fortunately for the Florida Keys, such a partnership is already in place and at work. In 1990, Congress established the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary to protect the marine habitat while continuing to allow for its appropriate use. The sanctuary program has brought together representatives of necessary interests to develop a plan for challenges like water quality.

Central to this effort is the Monroe County government, which has developed a Wastewater Master Plan to identify long-term solutions to the water quality problem. The plan estimates that infrastructure projects implemented to improve water quality will incur total capital costs of \$346 million—a major undertaking that will require funding at every level.

Mr. President, I have long said that any federal assistance for Keys wastewater improvements would first require a strong show of local support. Monroe County has done its fair share. Through a combination of revenue bonds, user fees and an infrastructure sales tax, the County has made a commitment of over \$150 million over 10 years.

Mr. President, it is time for this Congress to hold up its end of the bargain. Today, Senator MACK and I are introducing the Florida Keys Water Quality Improvements Act of 2000. Similar legislation passed the House on May 4, 2000 with almost unanimous support.

The Florida Keys Water Quality Improvements Act authorizes the Environmental Protection Agency to make grants for construction of wastewater treatment works. These grants are only awarded to projects that already have a significant investment. Successful applicant projects will be those that have completed the planning and design phase, demonstrated substantial water quality benefits and proven compliance with the Marine Sanctuary and other master plans for the area. And as is appropriate in a partnership, these grants will fund a portion of project costs, with an least 25 percent of the cost paid by local and state entities.

Mr. President, the prospect of treating wastewater for an increasingly crowded 158-mile-long string of islands is not a simple one. But it is vital that

we preserve this beautiful area not just for current residents and visitors—but also for our children and grandchildren. With this legislation, we can put the federal government on the side of this worthy goal, and support the investment that has been made by the residents and protectors of the Florida Keys.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 2711

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 "Florida Keys Water Quality Improvements Act of 2000".

SEC. 2. FLORIDA KEYS WATER QUALITY IMPROVEMENTS.

Title I of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"SEC. 121. FLORIDA KEYS.

"(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator may make grants to the Florida Keys Aqueduct Authority, appropriate agencies of municipalities of Monroe County, Florida, and other appropriate public agencies of the State of Florida or Monroe County for the planning and construction of treatment works to improve water quality in the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary.

"(b) CRITERIA FOR PROJECTS.—To be eligible for a grant for a project under subsection (a), an agency described in subsection (a) shall demonstrate that—

"(1) the agency has completed adequate planning and design activities for the project;

"(2) the agency has completed a financial plan identifying sources of non-Federal funding for the project;

"(3) the project complies with—

"(A) applicable growth management ordinances of Monroe County, Florida;

"(B) applicable agreements between Monroe County, Florida, and the State of Florida to manage growth in Monroe County, Florida; and

"(C) applicable water quality standards; and

"(4) the project is consistent with the master wastewater and stormwater plans for Monroe County, Florida.

"(c) CONSIDERATION.—In selecting projects to receive grants under subsection (a), the Administrator shall consider whether a project will have substantial water quality benefits relative to other projects under consideration.

"(d) CONSULTATION.—In carrying out this section, the Administrator shall consult with—

"(1) the Steering Committee established under section 8(d)(2)(A) of the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary and Protection Act (16 U.S.C. 1433 note; 106 Stat. 5054);

"(2) the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force established by section 528(f) of the Water Resources Development Act of 1996 (110 Stat. 3771);

"(3) the Commission on the Everglades established by Executive Order of the Governor of the State of Florida; and

"(4) other appropriate State and local government agencies.

"(e) FEDERAL SHARE.—The Federal share of the cost of a project carried out using amounts from grants made under subsection (a) shall be not more than 75 percent.