

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The previous question was ordered.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

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#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. REGULA. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks, and that I may include tabular and extraneous material, on the bill, H.R. 4578.

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

There was no objection.

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#### DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2001

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 524 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 4578.

□ 2153

#### IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 4578) making appropriations for the Department of the Interior and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2001, and for other purposes, with Mr. LATOURETTE in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered as having been read the first time.

Under the rule, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. REGULA) and the gentleman from Washington (Mr. DICKS) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. REGULA).

Mr. REGULA. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

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

Mr. REGULA. Mr. Chairman, tonight I bring before the House the fiscal year 2001 interior appropriations bill. Before I begin, however, I would like to take the opportunity to reflect upon the previous, including this year, 6 years. Under the rules of the House, this year is my last year as chairman of the House Subcommittee on Interior of the Committee on Appropriations. I have served on this subcommittee for the past 26 years, first as a junior member, later as its ranking member and most recently as chairman.

This committee has been a labor of satisfaction for me. I believe it is a vitally important committee in the Congress; and even though I will not serve

as its chairman next year, I intend to remain very involved in it and hope to continue the many positive initiatives begun over these years.

Upon reflection, three themes come to mind. First, I have tried to improve management within the agencies funded in the bill. Too often, government managers do not focus on the difficult issues of responsible and accountable actions and decisions. Over my tenure as chairman, I have held 25 oversight hearings with the underlying focus on improving management. I believe these efforts are producing results. We have brought management reform to the national parks services construction program ensuring that the American taxpayer will no longer be asked to foot the bill for a \$784,000 outhouse in a national park. We have eliminated duplication in our Federal agencies with the abolishment of the Bureau of Mines which had jurisdiction over programs already being conducted by OSHA, the Department of Labor and the Department of Energy.

Next, over my years of service, I have grown increasingly concerned about our lack of attention to maintaining our federally owned lands and the facilities on them. Through an oversight hearing conducted by our subcommittee, I learned that I was correct in my concern. The four land management agencies, the National Park Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management, provided estimates that the maintenance backlog totals nearly \$13 billion. To address this unacceptable situation, our committee initiated a recreation fee demonstration program in fiscal year 1995.

Under the program, the land management agencies are permitted to collect a nominal fee at up to 100 sites. The fee stays at the site where it is collected and is used at that site for maintenance or other projects to enhance the visitors' experience. The fees are expected to generate \$500 million over the period of this demonstration.

The fee program is working well as facilities and trails are now being maintained better today than we would have been able to do so through appropriations alone. Further, we have evidence that vandalism is down in sites where people are paying fees as they feel they have a stake in the park or forest they are visiting.

Let me emphasize, however, that recreation fees are not carrying the sole responsibility for maintenance of our public lands. Under my chairmanship, our committee has set maintenance funding as a priority and over these past 6 years we have provided several hundred million dollars in maintenance funding and, most importantly, we have required the land management agencies to assess their maintenance requirements, establish common criteria for what deferred maintenance is and develop 5-year master plans to address the situation. Our attention to the maintenance issue is making a difference.

Finally, each year I have brought the bill before this body for consideration, we have been faced with the difficult challenge of meeting the countless needs of the 35 agencies within the constraints of a tight budget environment. We have tried to balance these needs with the simple test: Must do items, need to do items, and nice to do items.

We have always done the must do. We have done many of the need to do and some of the nice to do. Using this test as our guide, I believe our committee has done our best over these years to use the taxpayers' money wisely while meeting our Federal responsibilities.

I want to express particularly my appreciation to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. DICKS), who has served as the ranking member of the subcommittee. He has been a real partner, as we have worked together on a number of policy priorities of the committee, including the backlog maintenance issue.

Next I would like to compliment the able staff members who have assisted during my tenure as chairman. I particularly express my appreciation to our clerk, Debbie Weatherly, as well as other subcommittee staff members, Loretta Beaumont, Joe Kaplan and Chris Topik. On the minority side, I want to thank Leslie Turner on the staff of the gentleman from Washington (Mr. DICKS), and welcome Mike Stephens, a long-time committee veteran who returned to the Committee on Appropriations this year following the retirement of Del Davis.

I appreciate the professionalism of each of these people and the many dedicated hours they have provided this House over the years.

Mr. Chairman, today I present before the House the fiscal year 2001 interior appropriation bill. This year, the subcommittee received more than 550 letters from Members of the House requesting funding for more than 3,400 individual items totaling \$152 billion, all for interior and related agency programs.

For fiscal year 2001, we received an allocation of \$14.6 billion, which is \$300 million below the fiscal year 2000 enacted bill. As we can see, we have had to make some tough choices, and the bill reflects this challenge.

Again, I want to say the gentleman from Washington (Mr. DICKS) has been a real teammate in addressing these. I know that he has not agreed with the allocation. In some respects, I have not myself but we have made the best of what we had to work with. I think that took a real team effort.

I think the fact that we have had the requests of over \$152 billion demonstrates the popularity of this bill and the important projects that are out there if we had the means to provide the funding.

Within the constraints of our allocation, we were unable to fund the President's lands legacy initiative.

□ 2200

However, we have included \$164 million in Federal acquisition funding and