

I think this commendation of the staff on both sides of the aisle is entirely appropriate and well in order. I thank the gentleman very much for doing so.

Mr. NUSSLE. I thank the gentleman.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. NUSSLE. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the conference report just agreed to.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. BIGGERT). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Iowa?

There was no objection.

#### PERMISSION FOR MEMBER TO REVISE REMARKS

Mr. FROST. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to revise my statement made on the consideration of the rule today to make it in compliance with the precedents of the House.

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

There was no objection.

#### PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 581, WILDLAND FIRE MANAGEMENT ACT

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Madam Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 135 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

##### H. RES. 135

*Resolved*, That at any time after the adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 581) to authorize the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture to use funds appropriated for wildland fire management in the Department of the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2001, to reimburse the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service to facilitate the interagency cooperation required under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 in connection with wildland fire management. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. Points of order against consideration of the bill for failure to comply with section 311 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Resources. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. The bill shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. During consideration of the bill for amendment, the Chairman of the Committee of the Whole may accord priority in recognition on the basis of whether the Member offering an amendment has caused it to be printed in the portion of the Congressional Record designated for that purpose in clause 8 of rule XVIII. Amend-

ments so printed shall be considered as read. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Madam Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. FROST), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

(Mr. HASTINGS of Washington asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Madam Speaker, House Resolution 135 is an open rule providing for consideration of the bill H.R. 581, the Wildland Fire Management Act. The rule waives section 311 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 against consideration of the bill and provides for 1 hour of general debate equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking member of the Committee on Resources.

The rule further provides that the bill shall be open for amendment at any point and waives all points of order against the bill. Finally, the rule authorizes the Chair to accord priority in recognition to Members who have preprinted their amendments in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, and provides one motion to recommit, with or without instructions.

Madam Speaker, the Wildland Fire Management Act would authorize the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture to use funds appropriated for wildland fire management in the Department of the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Act of 2001 to reimburse several Federal agencies for costs associated with the interagency cooperation required under the Endangered Species Act when managing wildland fires.

In response to devastating fire seasons in 1999 and 2000, Congress appropriated \$2.9 billion to reimburse funds borrowed by agencies for wildfire emergency suppression efforts, to rehabilitate and restore damaged lands and waters, to increase wildfire fighting readiness, and to provide State and local community assistance.

Subsequently, however, the U.S. Forest Service requested legislation to clarify that funds appropriated under the National Fire Plan can also be used for reviews of fire management plans required under the Endangered Species Act. Accordingly, H.R. 581 was introduced by the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. HEFLEY) in February of this year, and it was reported favorably by the Committee on Resources without amendment on March 28, 2001.

The Congressional Budget Office estimates that enacting H.R. 581 would increase direct spending by \$3 million in 2001 and decrease direct spending by the same amount in 2002. Because the bill would affect direct spending, pay-as-you-go procedures would apply. Members should also be advised that the bill contains no governmental or private sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act.

Madam Speaker, I am pleased that, consistent with the request of the gentleman from Utah (Mr. HANSEN), the Committee on Rules has reported an open rule on this bill so that Members wishing to offer amendments may have every opportunity to do so.

As the fire season out West approaches, those of us who represent western States are particularly aware of the need for a coordinated Federal approach to wildfire suppression. The gentleman from Colorado's bill would certainly advance that important goal. Accordingly, I encourage my colleagues to support both the rule and the underlying bill, H.R. 581.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Madam Speaker, H.R. 581, the Wildland Fire Management Act, is a worthy legislative proposal which will facilitate Federal interagency cooperation in the control and abatement of wildland fires and fuel load reduction. The Committee on Rules has reported an open rule and Democratic members of the committee have no objections. We would like to point out, however, this noncontroversial bill could have been considered under suspension but is being brought to the floor today to serve as filler in order to give the House some business to conduct.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. HEFLEY), the sponsor of the bill.

Mr. HEFLEY. Madam Speaker, I stand in strong support of the rule and thank the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. FROST) for their work in crafting this rule.

H.R. 581 is a noncontroversial, I believe, and a nonpartisan bill that is strongly supported by the administration. It deserves our immediate consideration and support.

It is imperative, especially for those of us who represent districts in the West and Northwest, that the U.S. Forest Service be able to transfer national fire program funds as soon as possible to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and National Marine Fisheries Service so that they can complete their consultation requirements under the Endangered Species Act. Once this work is complete, the Forest Service will have the opportunity to reduce dangerous high levels of fuel load.