

Mr. Speaker, I am attaching a recent column from the Denver Post that further acknowledges Charles's accomplishments at the Land Board. I want to personally thank Charles Bedford for his years of dedicated service.

UNCOVERING HIDDEN LANDS

(By Joanne Ditmer)

Sunday, April 22, 2001.—When Colorado became a state in 1876, the federal government gave land to the new state to raise funds for eight trusts, the largest being K-12 education.

The state Land Board owns 3 million acres and manages an additional 1.5 million acres of mineral rights. These are "hidden lands," for few of us know how they or the money they generate are managed. Many have grazing leases, giving us the "country" look we value while they bring in dollars.

Charles Bedford, a fourth-generation Coloradan, is resigning after four years as Land Board director. A highly capable and competent administrator, he's given considerable thought to what changes could improve the management and benefits of those state lands.

The past decade, Colorado's citizens have become aware that state lands have additional value beyond their revenue; they are even more precious when development covers other landscapes. Decisions on state lands made solely for money, for one-time gain, frequently are disasters.

With this new perception, in November 1997 voters passed Amendment 16, which provided that a portion of those state lands must be put into permanent stewardship. Generally, the sites were chosen for their value as natural resources and open space, and were not to be sold for development. In 1998, 200,000 acres were designated for the Stewardship Trust; another 100,000 acres were added in 2000.

Bedford recalled that implementing the Stewardship Trust meant overcoming much suspicion; ranchers and farmers thought it was an attack on agricultural lands; school systems feared a cut in income; and environmentalists charged it wasn't what was promised.

Other accomplishments since then, Bedford said, included the partnerships forged with local communities to utilize state lands in ways that benefit the communities as well as raise money. These include the purchase by Routt County and Steamboat Springs of Emerald Mountain; the 400 acres sold to Larimer County Open Space; convening neighboring ranchers and natural-resource experts to help design a plan for the 85,000-acre Chico Basin Ranch in Pueblo and El Paso counties; and other innovative ideas that address the public's desire for open space while raising money for education.

Bedford recommends his successor continue to work to achieve local government priorities, perhaps by pushing legislation that would allow the Land Board to sell property directly to local governments or other state agencies for its appraised value, instead of pitting them in a bidding war against developers.

The Land Board produces between \$30 million and \$40 million per year, or less than one-half of one percent of the total state school appropriation for education (and that appropriation is itself about half the total expenditures on education, with local funding making up the balance).

Amendment 16 mandated that money generated by the Land Board be "in addition to" funds appropriated to education through the School Finance Act, but the Legislature has not changed the method through which board funds are distributed. Bedford believes

legislation should be supported that more clearly channels funds directly to schools and implements the "in addition to" language of Amendment 16. Finally, Bedford said the Land Board is "unconscionably" understaffed, with the lowest staff-to-acreage ratio of any comparable land board in the West. That means there can't possibly be adequate and thoughtful management of these valuable and irreplaceable lands.

"We own about 4 percent of the surface area of the state," Bedford concluded. "It's a huge asset, worth a lot of money, worth a lot of thinking. It's been on the back burner for much too long."

Bedford served Gov. Roy Romer as Natural Resources Policy analyst for two years and as legal counsel for one year. On June 1, he becomes associate director of the Nature Conservancy of Colorado, where his dedication and expertise will continue to benefit the state.

The international non-profit conservation organization preserves ecologically significant landscapes for future generations. In Colorado, it protects more than 425,000 acres of the state's Last Great Places.

CENTRAL NEW JERSEY RECOGNIZES THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF FLEMINGTON BOY SCOUT TROOP 194

HON. RUSH D. HOLT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 6, 2001

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Flemington, New Jersey-based Boy Scout Troop 194's twenty-fifth anniversary.

Troop 194 was originally chartered with St. Magdalen's R.C. as its sponsor. In 1988, the troop was re-chartered at the Flemington Baptist Church. Currently, Troop 194 enrolls approximately 100 scouts, as participation in its summer camp program continues to increase.

Throughout its existence, Troop 194 has boasted a number of accomplishments. These include a dramatic increase in the troop's size, as well as the honoring of some twenty-two young men with the rank of Eagle Scout since 1981. Troop 194 has also undertaken various projects, which include cleaning up nearby Morales Park, working at local churches, and volunteering with the local Food Pantry. The troop continues to thrive as it continues to welcome new scouts and to contribute to the health of the surrounding community.

Once again, I congratulate Boy Scout Troop 194 on its accomplishments, and I ask my colleagues to join me in praising the scouts' record of achievement.

COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS AT WENTWORTH MILITARY ACADEMY

HON. IKE SKELTON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 6, 2001

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, I had the privilege to give the commencement address at Wentworth Military Academy on May 19, 2001. As a graduate of Wentworth and a lifelong resident of Lexington, Missouri, Wentworth's home, it was a distinct honor. Accompanying me was General John Abrams, Commanding

General at United States Army TRADOC, who commissioned 14 Second Lieutenants. My speech to that group is set forth as follows:

First, let me thank General John Abrams for being with us today. His participation in this event marks this as an historic moment for Wentworth, but more importantly honors the 14 new Army second lieutenants. This day will be a treasured memory for all of us for years to come, and we are truly grateful for General and Mrs. Abrams' presence this morning. Thank you.

Whenever I come to the Wentworth campus, my alma mater, memories of yesteryear flood my mind—rounding the far corner of the cinder track, the staccato history lectures of Captain Bob Heppler, standing in formation with my fellow cadets, and reading the inscription on the Administration Building—"Achieve the Honorable"—and wondering what in the world it meant.

But as Kipling wrote, that was "long ago and far away."

I am honored to have the opportunity to speak at today's ceremonies, but I have to confess that a graduation speech is a difficult assignment. With all of the excitement, and with the pride of individual and class-wide achievement that surrounds graduation day, few can be expected to remember what the speaker had to say. But I am not going to let that prevent me from sharing a few words of wisdom that have meant something to me and I hope will give you something to think about as you leave here and move into the next adventure of your lives.

Graduation day celebrates the steps each of you have completed to prepare for the future. It is a day to look forward. I can remember when I was in school, a guest speaker at an assembly told the students, "you are the leaders of tomorrow." At that point in my life, it was very easy to shrug off that statement. It's hard to imagine your buddies grown up and raising families, operating their own businesses, participating in civic life, leading a platoon of soldiers, or running for political office. But somehow it happens. Today, with your degree, you are on the brink of that tomorrow, and people will be looking to you for leadership.

Some time ago, I hosted a small breakfast for the famous historian and author Stephen Ambrose. You will recall that he wrote the books, *D-Day*, *Citizen Soldier*, and a book entitled *Undaunted Courage*, which details the saga of Lewis and Clark, who traversed the continent from 1804 to 1806.

That morning, I asked Professor Ambrose what it was that made America so great and so different. I was expecting his answer to be something along the lines of America's frontier westward movement, or our abundance of natural resources, or our great diversity of people. But this was his answer.

"Look at Russia. Russia has more natural resources than all of North America. Russia has a hearty workforce. But Russia did not have a George Washington, a John Adams, a Thomas Jefferson, or a James Madison, all of whom established our American values."

So what makes America so different and so great? Our values. We have been uncommonly blessed with leaders whose vision has allowed America to grow and prosper for over 200 years. The democratic system of government that our Founding Fathers set into motion has served us very well.

It is a common creed, not common ancestral roots, which binds us together as a nation. These are lasting values. They do not change. These are values that were instilled in me growing up in Lexington and during my time at Wentworth.

As we approached the year 2000, a great deal of attention focused on millennium celebrations all over the world. Any time we