

of where one resides, if they can pay or have insurance. They are vital in insuring that America's forgotten are being kept healthy.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2004

SPEECH OF

HON. JIM MATHESON

OF UTAH

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 17, 2003

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2691) making appropriations for the Department of the Interior and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2004, and for other purposes:

Mr. MATHESON. Mr. Chairman, I rise as a sixth generation Utahn. I come from the West, and I come from a State with public lands. Quite frankly, public lands in the West are what this issue is all about. I have grown up with a legacy of the use of those public lands in my State. My roots are in southern Utah.

Utah is a remarkable State. It is like a lot of the Western States, and it has got a lot of remarkable public lands, some places that are very special. As time has evolved, a lot of people around the world have discovered those lands as well; and I think it is safe to say, and I think there would be consensus at some point, that there is a lot of land out there that is worthy of protection because of its remarkable value.

When I talk about the public lands debate, I know tonight we are talking about the issue of RS 2477 and designation of roads, but it is really part of the overall public lands debate we have in our State and in the West. I look back over my lifetime about how that debate has been carried out. When I think about it, I think about so much emotion and so much effort that has gone into this debate, but there has been no progress. I am alarmed by the lack of progress.

As the West continues to grow and the population grows and the pressures develop, it is time for us to try to come together and try to make progress on these issues and resolve these issues as best we can.

There are not just two sides to this issue. It is not that simple. There are multiple stakeholders involved in public land matters in Utah and in the West. I have talked to so many of them. Quite frankly, I have talked to a lot of them just during this week in preparation and anticipation of the amendment from the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. UDALL) that would be introduced today.

I have talked to county commissioners throughout rural Utah, and there is not unanimity among that group, quite frankly. There is a divergence of opinion. I have talked to all kinds of stakeholders. The sportsmen community, the recreation community.

There are many different points of view, and these points of view all have legitimate claims, and it is unfortunate that we have been unable to bring those stakeholders together in a way to resolve these issues.

In some respects, life repeats itself, as was mentioned by the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. UDALL) earlier. The Department of the In-

terior in 1997 under Secretary Babbitt issued rules to deal with RS 2477. Congress did not like it, passed legislation just like we are looking at now to stop the funding of processing under that rule, and Congress said the Department of the Interior should not make any other rules until Congress deals with it.

Now we flash forward to 2003. The Department of the Interior under a different Secretary has issued a new set of rules, and once again we are revisiting the issue of whether or not Congress should be involved in trying to have an inclusive process where we get all the stakeholders together and try to make progress on this issue.

There is no question that there are legitimate claims out there for roads under RS 2477. We all know that. We all know there are roads that are roads. We know there would be some claims out there where we would agree they are really not roads. I would submit to the Members, in fact, that most of the claims in Utah are not controversial. But the problem is that everybody has been scared, everyone has been scared to deal with the non-controversial roads, thinking they would make some precedent that would place them at a disadvantaged position when we deal with the controversial claims.

So we have been involved in one litigation action after another, and one administration promulgates one set of rules, and another administration promulgates a different set of rules, and we are not making any progress.

I bring before the Members tonight an amendment. It is not a perfect amendment. It is not perfect to any stakeholder in this debate. But what it attempts to do is make some progress, some progress in trying to designate the least controversial roads and allow them to move forward. In Utah, we call them class B roads. That is a State classification. But we have adopted that language in my substitute amendment.

These are roads that can be traveled by two-wheel-drive vehicles. These are roads where I would suspect that no one would disagree that there is a legitimate claim. And I am not saying this solves the entire RS 2477 debate, but it is an opportunity to have some people come together on the least controversial part of this whole issue and try to make some progress.

I also want to mention one other component of my substitute amendment, and that is that I specifically talk about the issue of roads that cross private property, and I say that private property rights need to be maintained and that one cannot file claims on that type of land.

Finally, I mentioned earlier the amount of litigation that has been associated with this, and this is not the end of that pattern. It is unfortunate how much litigation we have seen here, and we are going to see it again. We are going to see it on this ruling that came out on January 6, I predict, and I think all of us are a little tired of that. I think we are tired of having that as a way to try to resolve things. It is time for Congress to step up to the plate and do its job.

In 1997, I was not here, but Congress said we have got to do this. Congress did not agree with what Secretary Babbitt did at that time, and it is up to Congress to come together now.

This substitute amendment is a stopgap. It is a stopgap to move forward on one set of the least controversial roads. It is not the solu-

tion. The solution is that we ought to hold hearings, we ought to try to move forward and make progress, bring the interests of all the stakeholders together, and let us make progress and move forward on RS 2477 claims.

RECOGNIZING THE NAPA VALLEY
OPERA HOUSE ON THE OCCASION
OF ITS GRAND REOPENING

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 23, 2003

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of the Napa Valley Opera House, as this venue returns to life after 89 years of being closed to our community.

Built in 1879 and now a national historic landmark, the Napa Valley Opera House was the center of community life during its heyday, playing host to luminaries such as Jack London, John Philip Sousa and the legendary soprano Luisa Tetrazzini. Vaudeville shows, masquerade balls and temperance rallies were regular fare. But the hall went dark in 1914, a victim of changing times. As late as the 1980s, the building had reached such a state of dilapidation that it was on the verge of being condemned.

The grand reopening marks the successful completion of a grassroots preservation campaign that began 30 years ago and ultimately saved the structure from the wrecking ball. The fundraising effort started in earnest in 1986, and received a vital boost 11 years later, when Robert and Margrit Mondavi put forward a \$2.2 million challenge grant. To acknowledge the importance of that gift, the main hall has been named the Margrit Biever Mondavi Theatre.

Indeed Mr. Speaker, the return of this dais represents a rebirth of artistic culture that will help bind our community together. Theatre arts no longer shall be rendered a relic of the past but will be celebrated as an institution of the present; binding young and old, and linking those with artistic passion to those who have long forgotten it.

It is not enough for a community anywhere in this great nation to teach the basics of art through the schools. The arts must be actively practiced in the community to make life richer and less confined by a lack of expression that satisfies the soul. In turn the community should never turn its back and allow those institutions that have so enriched their community to crumble to dust. Truly this is a community that will not let the arts languish in such a way any longer.

The Napa Valley Opera House will be a venue dedicated to fostering an appreciation for the theatre arts where it is most important, in our children. The development of a children's series in the theatre that often incorporates hands on experience will give youngsters confidence in their inherent creativity. Fomenting the imagination through positive outlets such as this can only lead to a well-rounded pool of experience in personal expression.

Mr. Speaker, the Napa Valley Opera House will be once again an integral part of the cultural landscape of our First Congressional District and a true treasure for the people of California. It is therefore appropriate that we acknowledge and honor the Napa Valley Opera

House, and the hundreds of voices who have contributed to the legacy and success of this organization.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. NEIL ABERCROMBIE

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 23, 2003

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, on rollcall vote No. 408, I am recorded as having voted, "No". I would like the RECORD to show that I, in fact, support the Otter amendment and I intended to vote, "Yes". I hope that it is retained in the final version of the Commerce-Justice-State Appropriations Act.

HONORING KGMC-TV

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 23, 2003

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor KGMC-TV in Fresno, CA for their impressive support for our community. In 2002, KGMC-TV donated a total of 464 spots of valuable airtime towards Ad Council public service announcements.

Throughout the Ad Council's 60-year history, stations like KGMC-TV have helped to address the most pressing social issues of the day. Each year, the Ad Council receives approximately \$1.3 billion in donated media for over 40 campaigns to promote awareness about topics ranging from high-school drop-out prevention to AIDS awareness.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to honor KGMC-TV for their ongoing dedication to informing the 19th district of current and socially important issues that improve the lives of our constituents and our Nation.

A TRIBUTE TO ALLEN B. GRESHAM FOR FOUR DECADES OF PUBLIC SERVICE TO SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

HON. JERRY LEWIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 23, 2003

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I would like today to pay tribute to Allen B. Gresham, a legendary attorney and highly respected community leader for more than four decades in San Bernardino County, California. Mr. Gresham is retiring from full-time practice after 41 years of building one of the top legal firms in Inland Southern California, and nearly as long helping make our community a better place.

My friend Allen Gresham grew up in El Centro, California and received his law degree from Stanford University before joining a San Bernardino law firm in 1959. In just 3 years, he was named as a partner, and became the senior partner by 1978. Gresham, Savage, Nolan and Tilden now has 27 lawyers and is one of the most respected and accomplished law firms in Southern California.

Mr. Gresham served as president of the San Bernardino County Bar Association in 1969 and as a fellow of the American College of Trial Lawyers for the past 25 years. He was named one of the "Best Lawyers in America" for the past decade, and was honored as one of the top lawyers in America in 2001. He was selected as one of the top five business litigators in the Inland Empire in that year, as well.

Almost from the beginning, Allen Gresham was active in our community. He has been a member of the Kiwanis Club of San Bernardino since 1960, and has been a director of Arrowhead United Way since 1964. He was a director of the San Bernardino County Symphony Association from 1967 to 1973 and rejoined the board in 1989—serving as its president for the next 4 years.

In 1971, Mr. Gresham stepped up his activities dramatically, beginning 32 years of service in two groups that have helped ensure that San Bernardino County grows economically and in its educational opportunities. He was elected to the Board of Trustees of the San Bernardino Community College District—and has been reelected for 8 consecutive terms. As board chairman for 3 of those terms, Mr. Gresham has helped a sleepy community college of a few thousand students grow into an academic powerhouse that today serves more than 30,000 on two campuses.

In that same year, Mr. Gresham joined Inland Action, Inc., a service group formed by community leaders to maximize the economic development of San Bernardino County, and to ensure that the county retains the benefits of Norton Air Force Base. Over my 25 years in Congress, I have worked closely with Allen Gresham and the other members of Inland Action to keep the Inland Empire high in the attention of the Federal Government. Although Norton was closed in 1988, the group has continued to strive for economic progress, and was a significant factor in winning community control of the former base in 1998. There is no doubt in my mind that the efforts of Allen Gresham and the other members of Inland Action has helped ensure that San Bernardino County is on course to be an economic powerhouse for decades to come.

I have always looked forward to the annual Inland Action trips to Washington—not least because a meeting with Allen Gresham was always a joy. He provides a combination of personal stability with an amazing ability to laugh at himself and bring laughter to those around him. His engaging and informed participation is one of the reasons Inland Action has forged numerous ties to lawmakers and federal officials that have paid off handsomely for the San Bernardino area.

Allen Gresham has received many well-deserved honors over his life of community service. He was named Citizen of the Year by the local board of realtors in 1975, Distinguished Citizen by the Military Airlift Command in 1988, Citizen of Achievement by the League of Women Voters in 1991 and received the San Bernardino County Bar Association's "John B. Surr Award" for outstanding service to the legal profession in 1999.

Mr. Speaker, as Allen Gresham retires from active practice, he is also stepping down from his role in Inland Action to give him more personal time with his wonderful wife of 49 years, Clara Thompson Gresham. Please join me in wishing them well in their retirement years, and thanking them for all of the many, many years they have devoted to their community.

INTRODUCTION OF THE WORKERS WITH DISABILITIES OPPORTUNITY ACT

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 23, 2003

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the "Workers with Disabilities Opportunity Act of 2003" with Representative MATSUI (D-CA) and 34 other colleagues. This bill will remove a persistent employment barrier facing Social Security beneficiaries with disabilities who want to attempt to return to work—the fear of losing their health insurance. Right now, these workers lose their Medicare health insurance coverage if they remain in the workforce more than 8.5 years. This legislation would make Medicare coverage permanent for them.

There is a glaring problem with the American workforce today. There are a disproportionately small number of workers with disabilities in it. According to the Census Bureau's 2002 report, only 24 percent of American adults with disabilities are employed compared to 77 percent of other Americans. The National Organization on Disability reports that despite major advances in disability services and technologies, less than 1 percent of Social Security Disability Insurance enrollees leave the rolls each year to return to work. When the non-working adults with disabilities were asked in the National Health Interview Survey why they were discouraged from working over one-fifth of them replied that it was out of fear of losing their health insurance. With this piece of legislation we can remove this barrier.

People who receive Social Security disability insurance benefits risk losing the health insurance coverage they currently have if they return to work. While you may think that their job's health benefits may cover what they need, many employers do not offer health insurance and even if they do, the treatments workers with disabilities require may well not be covered by a standard employer-provided plan. This puts many Social Security beneficiaries in a dilemma. They must choose between staying at home and keeping their health insurance or going to work and losing it. There is no question about it; this Hobson's choice is keeping disabled Americans out of the workforce.

Some of you may ask: "Well, what about existing law?" The answer is that existing law does not do nearly enough. Under current law, Medicare coverage only extends for 8.5 years after a Social Security beneficiary returns to work. While this may sound like an adequate amount of time to become integrated into the workforce, keep in mind that people with a physical or mental disability often require ongoing care. Their health, often their lives, and certainly their ability to sustain work, depend on that care.

The Workers with Disabilities Opportunity Act is critical for removing the fear of returning to work for the millions of Americans with disabilities. We had bipartisan support for the original House version of the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act that extended Medicare coverage to 8.5 years for workers with disabilities. We hope to have bipartisan support for making this improvement