

In Lunawade village in Panchmahal district of Kashmir, during the last week of December 2005, a mass grave was discovered. It contained the bodies of at least 26 victims of the Indian government's pogrom against the Muslims. Their crime? The Kashmiri people were promised a referendum on their status in 1948, but that vote has never been held. In 1989, when all hope of that promise being fulfilled had evaporated, violent resistance began that is being ruthlessly crushed resorting to pogroms and genocide that has led to 100,000 resistance fighters being killed by the Indian military.

The Sikhs were promised their own sovereign state by the leaders of the Congress Party (which rules India today) in exchange for their active support to the freedom movement led by it. The Sikhs have continued to press that the promise be kept. Their representatives did not sign and endorse the Indian constitution for it did not fulfill that promise. Instead of respecting "the glow of freedom" that Nehru and Patel promised to the Sikhs, the government declared them a "criminal class" as soon as the ink was dry on the constitution. It is because of betrayal of such promises that currently there are 17 freedom movements going on within India's borders.

Some Members of the U.S. Congress have called for sanctions against India and for an end to American aid. Some have also endorsed self-determination for the peoples seeking freedom from India through a plebiscite on independence. The Indian government's negotiations with the freedom fighters in predominantly Christian Nagaland have taken a turn for the worse lately, as the ceasefire there has been called off. Former Home Minister L.K. Advani said that once Kashmir achieves freedom, it will cause India to break apart. The truth is India can only survive if it conceded the right of self-determination to those areas where peoples have been betrayed. India must fulfill its promises to the people of Punjab, Khalistan (the Sikh homeland), predominantly Christian Nagaland, predominantly Muslim Kashmir, and the tribal peoples of Assam.

India clearly has a problem with its untouchables who are a majority in many states of India. It has failed to assimilate or integrate them. Since they do not belong to a single race, caste or religion, they are increasingly drawn towards Christian egalitarianism to throw off the yoke of slavery imposed by the caste system. I believe that those who ignore the oppression of the low castes and foreign faiths in India and declare India a 'natural ally' and the friendship of the 'biggest democracy' a state objective of the U.S., do not understand India at all. They help perpetuate systematic oppression and humiliation of a vast segment of humanity—700 million people—who have nothing, not even hope for anything. Even if India continues to make rapid economic rise as it is doing, this segment of humanity would be completely bypassed.

#### CAHABA RIVER NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE EXPANSION ACT

SPEECH OF

**HON. SPENCER BACHUS**

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, July 24, 2006*

Mr. BACHUS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the leadership, Chairman POMBO, Subcommittee Chairman GILCHREST and Ranking Member PALLONE for allowing the House to consider this legislation. The bill before us today, H.R.

4947, represents a 2nd major step by this Congress in protecting and preserving one of the most biologically diverse areas of the United States.

In 2000, I introduced the legislation that created the Cahaba River National Wildlife Refuge. That bill passed this Congress and was signed into law. Since that time, each year the Appropriations Committee has dedicated funding for land acquisition. The initial 3,500 acres authorized in that bill have been completely purchased by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The strong support of local elected officials and property owners, coupled with that of many environmental organizations such as The Nature Conservancy, The Cahaba River Society, and The Land Trust has fostered plans to expand the existing boundaries of The Cahaba River National Wildlife Refuge.

Alabama is the 5th most biologically diverse State in the country, but it also has the unfortunate distinction of being the most extinction-prone State in the continental United States, with at least 98 species extinct. The Cahaba River basin alone supports 69 rare and imperiled species. The river is recognized nationally for its unique biological diversity; the Cahaba Shiner, a federally endangered species is just one of more than 131 species of fish that call the Cahaba home. That is more species of fresh water fish than inhabit the entire State of California. The Cahaba's wealth of fish species is greater than any other river of its size in North America.

The Cahaba River also harbors the world's largest population of the imperiled shoals lily, known locally as the "Cahaba Lily." Recently a population of Cahaba pebble-snails was discovered in the refuge. Once thought to be extinct, this marked the first time this species had been seen since the 1960s, an accomplishment that can be attributed to the protection offered by the Cahaba's designation as a Wildlife Refuge.

The proposed expansion of the Cahaba River National Wildlife Refuge would:

Increase direct protection of the banks of the mainstem Cahaba River from the current 3.5 miles to approximately 8 miles, thereby giving additional protection to additional large populations of the globally imperiled shoals spider lily (aka Cahaba lily), and many other rare species.

Provide large enough areas of forest to support viable breeding populations of declining Neotropical migratory birds, both in the longleaf pine forests (e.g. Northern Bobwhite Quail, Brown-headed Nuthatch) and in hardwood forests (e.g. Swainson's Warbler, Louisiana Waterthrush, Acadian Flycatcher).

Provide significant increase in public access to the Cahaba River for canoeing, fishing and other riverine recreational activities.

Provide a significant increase in acreage available to the public for hunting, hiking, birding and other outdoor wildlife-based activities (Alabama has only about 3 percent public land, less than most other States in the Nation).

Provide a significant boost in revenue to Bibb County, one of the poorest counties in the Nation. Due to low prevailing property tax rates, the revenue to the County coffers from the Federal Refuge Revenue Sharing Program (payments in lieu of taxes) have averaged about \$6 per acre per year (versus a yield of about \$1 per acre per year as privately owned timberland).

H.R. 4947 authorizes the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to purchase up to an additional 3,600 acres of land and waters. This would double the number of protected acres of the Cahaba, all of which will be purchased from willing sellers. Protecting the land upstream from the original refuge will add to the buffer zone needed to shield this critical habitat and watershed.

The bill before us will help protect one of the greatest natural treasures in my State of Alabama and I urge a "yes" vote.

#### JUMPSTART'S READ FOR THE RECORD

**HON. JOE WILSON**

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, July 25, 2006*

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, literacy development begins at the early stages of a child's life and is the building block to future success. If we as a nation want to enhance our competitive edge in the global marketplace, we must ensure that our children have the basic reading skills to become successful in the classroom and later in the workplace.

On August 24, 2006, people around the country will participate in Jumpstart's "Read for the Record." This unique event will attempt to set the world record for the number of children reading a single book, or being read to, and at the same time allow people of all ages to work together in overcoming the school readiness issues facing our country.

This reading experience will use one of the best known child motivational stories ever produced—The Little Engine That Could. In honor of this day, a special edition of the story was created to include proven reading techniques to help our children grasp core reading foundations. This custom edition was funded solely by a private company dedicated to reading excellence.

Mrs. Laura Bush is the Honorary Chair of Jumpstart's "Read for the Record" project. As a former teacher, Mrs. Bush understands the need for strong reading development.

Demonstrating this project's importance, NBC's Today Show will host a special segment to cover proven reading techniques. Matt Lauer will then read this classic book to children.

I would like to thank Principal Mary Ellen Parks Shell Point Elementary School in Beaufort, South Carolina, for inviting me on August 24th to read to a group of kindergarten students. As an award-winning school dedicated in closing the achievement gap in learning, I am extremely encouraged that the faculty and staff at Shell Point are totally committed to early childhood development through enhanced reading skills.

Jumpstart's "Read for the Record" will raise the necessary awareness and emphasize the importance of early learning in every family. Participation in this event will support the goal that every child can read at grade level by the end of 3rd grade. For more information on how you too can foster stronger reading skills in our children, please visit [www.readfortherecord.org](http://www.readfortherecord.org).