

Little wonder then that business people have been among the voices urging that we designate these new wilderness areas. More than 100 southern Arizona businesses have endorsed the proposal. In giving their formal support, the board of directors of the Tubac Chamber of Commerce pointed out that protecting open space and wild landscapes such as the Tumacacori Highlands contributes directly to a high quality-of-life and is a key component in drawing local business patrons and tourists dollars to the area.

This is the wildest land in the spectrum of the open spaces and recreational lands we have to offer our increasingly urban population. In this sense, I think of these new wilderness areas as lungs for our city dwellers, and as their preserved public lands where they can go to recreate, to reconnect with family, friends, or personal spirituality. And I think of them, too, as particularly vital classrooms. In these wildest expanses of the natural world, we offer our children the opportunity to experience nature in its most unspoiled state and to learn first-hand how the natural world works. Wilderness inspires awe and offers a living, breathing learning environment that cannot be replicated in a classroom. More than 80 professors and graduate students in fields such as wildlife and fisheries, natural resources management, and environmental science have endorsed designation of these new wilderness areas.

These wildest places in the rapidly growing southern Arizona region offer our people sanctuaries—refuges of quiet offering outstanding opportunities for solitude, high quality recreation, and spiritual reflection. Many of my constituents express the great value they place on protecting these wild sanctuaries, feeling that doing so is part of our responsibility in caring for God's creation and fulfilling the obligation we share to preserve such places for the benefit of future generations. This has led both the Arizona Ecumenical Council and the National Council of Churches to support this proposal.

KEY ISSUES IN THIS LEGISLATION

As we have perfected these wilderness proposals, my staff and I have addressed two major issues that we are sure to discuss carefully when we hold hearings in the Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests and Public Lands, which I have the honor to chair.

First, livestock grazing: my goal is to assure that in protecting these Wilderness areas, we reaffirm the longstanding congressional policy of respecting the use privileges held by local ranchers who have Forest Service permits to graze livestock on these public lands.

This is a common situation in the West, and it is one that Congress understood and accounted for when the Wilderness Act was enacted in 1964. That Act provides that where it was established prior to the designation of an area as wilderness, such existing grazing use shall continue. Over the years, there have been some problems in the practical conformance with this policy by the U.S. Forest Service, prompting complaints from ranchers, some of whom even worked against designation of new wilderness areas for this reason. Our committee has responded to those complaints, and the leader in that response was my revered predecessor, Rep. MORRIS UDALL, the long-time chairman of what is now the Committee on Natural Resources.

Under Chairman UDALL's leadership, Congress adopted very detailed "Congressional

Grazing Guidelines" that apply wherever wilderness designations and existing livestock grazing overlap. Those guidelines bring clarity to the situation, protecting both the legitimate practical needs of the ranchers to carry out their permitted grazing use, with the access and facilities that are necessary, and the public interest in preserving wilderness values. Among other things, those guidelines spell out that livestock numbers cannot be reduced solely due to wilderness designation. In the case of this proposed legislation, I appreciate the fact that local conservation groups have taken the initiative to work with cooperative ranchers holding grazing permits within the proposed area to craft a mutually supportable plan consistent with the congressional guidelines.

The other major concern in shaping this legislation is the international border. These new wilderness areas lie adjacent to the border, so it has been my concern to be sure that the agencies charged with border and customs enforcement have the operational flexibility they need to do their jobs. In carrying out this vital work, let us not accept the false choice between protecting our natural heritage or our national security—we can do both. After all, these will not be the first wilderness areas Congress has designated on or very near the Mexican border, only the most recent.

This is a complex matter, which my staff and I have pursued in detail with both the U.S. Forest Service, which administers these lands, and the Department of Homeland Security and its specialized border and customs agencies. This legislation references the highly detailed 2006 Memorandum of Understanding adopted by Homeland Security, the Forest Service, and other land management agencies regarding operations within wilderness areas and other public lands.

WHY WE PRESERVE WILDERNESS

Finally, Madam Speaker, I would like to comment on one of the more philosophical reasons that preserving areas like those proposed in the Tumacacori Highlands Wilderness Act is so important. Yes, we protect wilderness for our fellow Americans, who today treasure it for the opportunities it provides to hike, ride horseback, hunt, photograph or paint, go birding or enjoy the wild scenery. If we have the foresight to protect wilderness, it will be treasured and enjoyed for years to come by our children, grandchildren and future generations.

But we also preserve wilderness because we recognize the role it has played in shaping our Nation and our national character. The wilderness areas we preserve are patches of the original American landscape, protected to the best of our ability so that future generations of Americans will have the chance to know what wild America was and is still. So that future generations will have the opportunity to explore wilderness, to enjoy wilderness, to test themselves and grow in wilderness as did their ancestors. Wilderness is their rightful inheritance from us and we must be certain that they receive it. The public lands that will be given wilderness protection by the Tumacacori Highlands Wilderness Act represent important additions to southern Arizona's protected landscapes and I am pleased to introduce this legislation to preserve it now and for the future.

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SOUTHERN CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

SPEECH OF

HON. STEVE COHEN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 30, 2007

Mr. COHEN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

The Southern Christian Leadership Conference, SCLC, originated through the Montgomery Bus Boycott when a courageous young woman by the name of Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat and move to the back of the bus on December 5, 1955. The Montgomery Bus Boycott brought two dynamic ministers together: Martin Luther King, Jr., and Ralph Abernathy. Through the guidance of Dr. King, Dr. Abernathy and Dr. Joseph Lowery, this boycott led to a new phase of a long struggle to be known as the modern day "Civil Rights Movement."

The Southern Christian Leadership Conference, SCLC, is best known for its commitment to nonviolent civil disobedience as a means for securing equal rights for African Americans and other oppressed people worldwide. The Southern Christian Leadership Conference, SCLC, adopted the motto: "Not one hair of one head should be harmed." This motto not only proved effective for the civil rights movement but should be applied in today's challenges in the world.

After the success of the Montgomery Bus Boycott, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference founded the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee and cooperated with SNCC and other civil rights organizations seeking social justice for over 45 years.

I myself have witnessed the power and effectiveness of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference in the city of Memphis, when Dr. King and the Memphis Chapter of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, SCLC, and the labor movement organized 1,300 city sanitation workers to go on strike for fair and honest wages and benefits.

I rise today and urge everyone to remember and respect 50 years of good works by the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, SCLC. It has been living, fulfilling and perpetuating the dream of Dr. King. Its legacy, vision, and commitment to nonviolent action is highly regarded by this younger generation. The Southern Christian Leadership Conference has not just served the purpose of assuring rights for African Americans but all Americans.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. GINNY BROWN-WAITE

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, August 1, 2007

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Madam Speaker, on Tuesday, July 31, 2007, I was unable to make a series of votes. If I had been present I would have voted: "Aye," on rollcall vote No. 763, S. 1, the Honest Leadership and Open Government Act; "Aye," on rollcall vote No. 764, H.R. 180, the Darfur