

This measure authorizes the transfer of the 6.08 acres constituting the cemetery and a small additional tract, which would otherwise be landlocked by this transfer, to the church. The total amount of land to be conveyed to the church will not exceed 8 acres. Conveyance of the property will be contingent on the completion of a survey acceptable to the Forest Service at the church's expense.

I appreciate the efforts of Chairman PETERSON and his staff as well as my colleague from Virginia, Mr. GOODLATTE, in working with me on this legislation, and I thank Mr. GOODLATTE, who also represents a portion of Alleghany County, for cosponsoring the bill with me. H.R. 3454 enjoys bipartisan support in the House and its passage would benefit both the Forest Service and the members of the Central Advent Christian Church.

I urge approval of the measure.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I wish to express strong support for H.R. 3454, which I've cosponsored with my colleague Mr. BUCHER. H.R. 3454 would authorize the U.S. Forest Service to convey roughly 8 acres of the George Washington National Forest in Alleghany County, Virginia, to the Central Advent Christian Church.

These 8 acres contain a 6 acre cemetery and 2 acres between the cemetery and the adjoining interstate. The cemetery has been managed by the Church since 1941, under a special use permit, with no fees.

It's frustrating to me that limited federal dollars are being spent to manage this property that is clearly not in line with the mission of the Forest Service. That's why I've cosponsored this legislation. This bill will help relinquish the Forest Service of this responsibility so they can focus on the lands that our forefathers intended them to manage.

Several times, the Forest Service has attempted to sell this property but to no avail. The local community church lacks the resources to purchase the property. While I would of course prefer that we sell the land, I believe it is in the federal government's interest to convey the land to the Church rather than spending additional resources on it.

I urge adoption of this important legislation.

Ms. FOXX. I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. PETERSON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3454.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on the bill just considered.

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

There was no objection.

CONVEYANCES UNDER FLORIDA NATIONAL FOREST LAND MANAGEMENT ACT OF 2003

Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1374) to amend the Florida National Forest Land Management Act of 2003 to authorize the conveyance of an additional tract of National Forest System land under that Act, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1374

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. CONVEYANCES UNDER FLORIDA NATIONAL FOREST LAND MANAGEMENT ACT OF 2003.

(a) ADDITIONAL CONVEYANCE AUTHORIZED.—Subsection (b) of section 3 of the Florida National Forest Land Management Act of 2003 (Public Law 108-152; 117 Stat. 1919) is amended—

(1) by striking “and” at the end of paragraph (17);

(2) by redesignating paragraph (18) as paragraph (19);

(3) by inserting after paragraph (17) the following new paragraph:

“(18) tract W-1979, located in Leon County consisting of approximately 114 acres, within T. 1 S., R. 1 W., sec. 25; and”;

(4) in paragraph (19), as so redesignated, by striking “(17)” and inserting “(18)”.

(b) ADDITIONAL USE OF PROCEEDS.—Paragraph (2) of subsection (i) of such section (117 Stat. 1921) is amended—

(1) by striking “and” at the end of subparagraph (A);

(2) by striking the period at the end of subparagraph (B) and inserting “; and”;

(3) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(C) acquisition, construction, or maintenance of administrative improvements for units of the National Forest System in the State.”.

(c) LIMITATIONS ON USE OF PROCEEDS.—Subsection (i) of such section is further amended by adding at the end the following new paragraphs:

“(3) GEOGRAPHICAL AND USE RESTRICTION FOR CERTAIN CONVEYANCE.—Notwithstanding paragraph (2), proceeds from the sale or exchange of the tract described in subsection (b)(18) shall be used exclusively for the purchase of inholdings in the Apalachicola National Forest.

“(4) RESTRICTION ON USE OF PROCEEDS FOR ADMINISTRATIVE IMPROVEMENTS.—Proceeds from any sale or exchange of land under this Act may be used for administrative improvements, as authorized by paragraph (2)(C), only if the land generating the proceeds was improved with infrastructure.”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. PETERSON) and the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Minnesota.

Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1374. H.R. 1374, introduced by Representatives ALLEN BOYD of Florida

and Ander Crenshaw of Florida, would amend the Florida National Forest Land Management Act of 2003 and permit a land conveyance in Leon County. This bill would allow the United States Forest Service to sell a 114-acre parcel in the Apalachicola National Forest known as the “Flea Market Tract.” The parcel is surrounded by commercial development, including a major highway to the north, a power line easement to the south, and private land primarily developed to the east and west.

The configuration and development makes adequate land management difficult and the tract unsuitable as managed forest land. H.R. 1374 specifies that the proceeds of the sale of the tract be used for the purpose of acquiring private lands within the Apalachicola National Forest.

H.R. 1374 is supported by the United States Forest Service, the City of Tallahassee, and Leon County, as well as by local businesses, church and civic groups. It is a project that is worthy of congressional support.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I would like to echo the sentiments of my colleague and express support for H.R. 1374, which authorizes the sale of 114 acres in the Apalachicola National Forest in Florida, the proceeds of which can be used only to purchase private inholdings from willing sellers. H.R. 1374 passed the Agriculture Committee last week by a voice vote.

The land proposed for sale is a small tract that is extremely difficult for the U.S. Forest Service to manage, given its proximity to the City of Tallahassee and the surrounding development. Properties such as this, which contribute little to meeting the Forest Service mission, unfortunately diverts scarce resources from other lands that need management.

In addition to relieving the Forest Service of the management problems this tract creates, the bill will also help the agency reduce the number of private inholdings within the forest if the private owners are interested in selling. Inholdings are a common problem throughout many national forests in the East and create significant access and management issues for the landowners and the agency.

I urge adoption of this bipartisan legislation, and reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I now would yield such time as he may consume to the author of the bill, Mr. BOYD from Florida.

(Mr. BOYD of Florida asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BOYD of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my friend, the distinguished chairman of the House Agriculture Committee, Mr. PETERSON, for granting me time to speak on behalf of this legislation and also thank him and the ranking member, Mr. GOODLATTE,

and his representative for supporting this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, the Apalachicola National Forest is the largest of Florida's three national forests. It contains 564,000 acres, and its rivers and streams provide a steady freshwater flow to some of the most productive coastal bays and estuaries known for shellfish and other commercial seafood. Portions of the forest are in wet lowlands and they abound with cypress, oak and magnolias. Watching wildlife, hunting and fishing are popular recreation activities in this beautiful national forest. Visitors to the forest also enjoy swimming, picnicking, boating, and camping.

The Apalachicola National Forest is truly a national treasure, and I am very proud that this legislation will help strengthen and sustain one of our Nation's most valuable natural assets.

As the chairman and the ranking member have said, this enables the national forest to sell a piece of property that really lies right on the south side of Tallahassee, Florida, in Leon County. It actually comes up to the beltway, or what we call the Capital Circle and is surrounded on three sides by commercial development. It is detached from the rest of the national forest, and so it is really, as you have heard earlier, an unmanageable piece of land. And with those proceeds, we are going to use the proceeds to go and purchase some privately held holdings within the confines of the 564,000 acres, what we commonly know as "inholdings," and that is the only purpose that those funds can be used for. There are about 2,000 acres of inholdings, privately held lands within the Apalachicola National Forest, and that is what those funds, Mr. Speaker, would be used for.

I want to thank Mr. Joe Baca, the Forestry Subcommittee chairman, and his staff director, Lisa Shelton, for helping guide this legislation through the subcommittee process. And also I want to thank my friend, the majority leader, Mr. HOYER, for scheduling. I encourage our colleagues to pass this legislation.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. PETERSON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1374.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on the bill just considered.

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

There was no objection.

□ 1230

EXPRESSING HEARTFELT SYMPATHY FOR THE VICTIMS AND FAMILIES OF THE SHOOTINGS IN OMAHA, NEBRASKA, ON WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2007

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 856) expressing heartfelt sympathy for the victims and families of the shootings in Omaha, Nebraska, on Wednesday, December 5, 2007.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 856

Whereas the community of Omaha, Nebraska has suffered through a tragic event at the Westroads Mall that resulted in the loss of 9 lives and the wounding of several others;

Whereas on December 5, 2007, a troubled young man entered a department store in the Westroads Mall in Omaha, Nebraska carrying a rifle;

Whereas the young man began to randomly fire his rifle at shoppers and store clerks within the Von Maur department store and other locations within Westroads Mall;

Whereas the result of this shooting spree resulted in the deaths of Gary Scharf, John McDonald, Angie Schuster, Maggie Webb, Janet Jorgensen, Diane Trent, Gary Joy, and Beverly Flynn;

Whereas Fred Wilson, Michelle Oldham, Jeff Schaffert, and Brad Stafford were wounded as a result of the shootings;

Whereas the first responders, officers of the Omaha Police Department, Douglas and Sarpy County Sheriff's Department, and Omaha Fire Department, arrived at the Westroads Mall within minutes and secured all entrances and exits to the mall and discovered a number of deceased persons, including the shooter;

Whereas on December 6, 2007 Nebraska Governor Dave Heineman ordered that all United States and State flags in Nebraska be flown at half-staff through Sunday, Dec. 9; and

Whereas the grieving and celebration of the lives of those lost in this senseless tragedy will be with the greater Omaha community for months and years to come: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the United States House of Representatives—

(1) expresses its heartfelt sympathy for the victims and families of the shootings in Omaha, Nebraska on Wednesday, December 5, 2007; and

(2) conveys its gratitude to the city and county officials, and all the police, fire, sheriff, and emergency medical teams who responded swiftly to the scene and secured the mall and surrounding area.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) and the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia?

There was no objection.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, as a member of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, I join my colleagues in consideration of H. Res. 856, which expresses heartfelt sympathy for the victims and families of the shootings in Omaha, Nebraska, on Wednesday, December 5, 2007. H. Res. 856, which was introduced by Representative LEE TERRY on December 12, 2007, has the support of 72 Members of Congress.

The community of Omaha, Nebraska, experienced a shooting spree at the hands of a troubled teenager carrying a rifle on December 5. Sadly, nine people died, and four others were wounded in the Westroads Mall. Thankfully, first responders, the Omaha Police Department, Douglas and Sarpy County Sheriff's Department, and Omaha Fire Department all arrived within minutes of the attacks to secure all entrances.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to express great sympathy for the community's tragedy and all of the lives lost. I commend my colleague for sponsoring this measure, and I urge the swift passage of the resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, as we on a bipartisan basis support this resolution, I would yield to the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. TERRY) such time as he may consume.

Mr. TERRY. I thank my friend, the gentleman from California, as well as the Government Reform Committee, for making sure that this got to the floor in such a timely manner.

December 5, 2007: that will be a day forever etched in Omaha's memory as the day a lone gunman took the lives of eight innocent people at the Westroads Mall, the Von Maur store, during the holiday shopping season. But it will also be remembered as a day that revealed the true character of Omaha.

Tragedy, no doubt, reveals the true meaning of unity in any community. Although I will never understand the senseless events that took place in my hometown on December 5, I stand here as a proud citizen, Congressman of that district, because it's in times like these it doesn't matter what party you belong to, what your political beliefs are, your race, creed, or color. People come together and they ask what can we do to help the city and the eight innocent people. I think this is not only the spirit of Omaha, or what defines the Omaha area, but also I think it is what exemplifies the spirit of America, and it is that spirit that we remember in each of the victims and the first responders.

Let me introduce the eight innocent lives that were lost on that day. There was 53-year-old Dianne Clavin Trent,