components enjoyed in the last Congress.

This bill will accomplish two things that have already become a key characteristic of all of our efforts here in the 111th Congress: It will create jobs and it will save energy. The Water Quality Investment Act will support quality paying jobs by ensuring that workers receive no less than local prevailing wages. By authorizing funding for cleanup of the Great Lakes, the bill will improve opportunities in the fishing, swimming, boating, agriculture, and shipping industries, which support approximately 40 million people in the Great Lakes Basin whose livelihoods are directly dependent upon clean water resources.

This bill has a thoughtful eye on the future by taking into account energy efficiency and water conservation. As a westerner, I understand the vast challenges we face with regard to our water supply. Establishing our water infrastructure that encourages and promotes conservation is of incredible importance for regions that will only see their water sources become fewer and farther between. In Colorado, we rely on clean water not only for municipal and agricultural use, but entire communities are supported by visiting kayakers, fly fishermen, and outdoorsmen from across the country who flock to our pristine rivers and streams. Our environment, communities, industries, and businesses all stand to gain under the provisions of this law. Without the infrastructure investments in this bill, the EPA has projected that our water quality could be set back decades to pre-Clean Water Act levels.

I urge my colleagues to vote ''yes'' on the rule and to vote ''yes'' on the underlying bill.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The previous question was ordered.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

## PERMISSION TO REDUCE TIME FOR ELECTRONIC VOTING DURING PROCEEDINGS TODAY

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that during proceedings today in the House and in the Committee of the Whole, the Chair be authorized to reduce to 2 minutes the minimum time for electronic voting on any questions that otherwise could be subjected to 5-minute voting under clause 8 or 9 of rule XX or under clause 6 of rule XVIII.

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

There was no objection.

## GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 1262 and include extraneous materials in the RECORD.

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

There was no objection.

## WATER QUALITY INVESTMENT ACT OF 2009

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. SUTTON). Pursuant to House Resolution H. Res. 235 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 1262.

□ 1058

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 1262), with Mr. PASTOR of Arizona in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered read the first time.

The gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBERSTAR) and the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Minnesota.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

The bill pending before us has been so well described in the discussion of the rule that it seems superfluous to repeat the major items of the pending legislation.

At the Rules Committee yesterday, I said, and our floor manager for the Rules Committee restated, that we bring to the House bills that passed the House in the 110th Congress individually. The gentleman from Colorado read off the votes, which were overwhelming, well over 300-plus votes in favor of each of those bills; just bipartisanship, nonpartisanship, overwhelming support for these measures.

Unfortunately, they went to the other body, never to be heard of again. So we thought it would be a better approach this year to combine those all into one bill, and maybe the other body can do one bill instead of five, we are hoping.

The commitment to clean water, though, cannot be taken so slightly, cannot be just subject to ''hotline holds'' by the other body, cannot be subject to undisclosed holds, cannot be subject to indifference to action. The agenda for clean water is ours. It's for the next generation. It's to hand on to the next generation water in better condition than we received it from the previous generation.

I have been on the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure from the time it was the Committee on Public Works. I started my career in this House in January of 1963 as Clerk of the Subcommittee on Rivers and Harbors, the oldest committee of the House, the first committee of the House.

Our work has evolved over many years to encompass a wide range of issues related to investment in the Nation's well-being, but none more fundamental, more important, than water. All the water we ever had on this Earth, or ever will have, is with us today. We aren't going to create new water from any technological source. No comet is likely to come into our orbit and deposit new ice to form water. Our responsibility is to care for the water we have.

Every day, 42 trillion gallons of moisture passes over the continental United States. Ten percent of that falls as moisture, 4.2 trillion gallons. Of that, some .4 trillion gallons is absorbed by the soil or evaporates. The rest, some 680 billion gallons, goes into surface waters of the United States. That is all we have every day, 680-some billion gallons.

We have to manage it well, make sure that we use it properly, that we return to the streams and lakes and estuaries of the Nation water in clean condition. This legislation will move us in that direction.

The centerpiece of this $18.7 billion package of bills is restoration of and reauthorization of the State Revolving Fund from which funds are borrowed by municipalities to build wastewater treatment facilities, sewer lines, interceptor sewers, separate storm and combine storm and sanitary sewers. But for a dozen years, until the 110th Congress, that legislation had expired and had not been reauthorized. The funding was continued, but at lower levels of appropriation, for each of those 12 years until the 110th Congress.

That leveled off, because the authorization legislation could never make its way to the House floor, even though our committee was prepared to do that. We had bipartisan support within the committee, but could never get it to the House floor.

Well, we brought it to the floor in the 110th and passed it overwhelmingly, as I said earlier. It went to the Senate, and that has not moved.

The stimulus legislation provides funding of $4.6 billion, half in loans and half in grant funds to the State Revolving Funds to create jobs and to deal with the backlog of need in State wastewater treatment programs and sewer upgrades. Hardly a week goes by that I don't read of a matter main break or a sewer line break somewhere in this country.

It is commentary on the aging wastewater structure of this country and the need to rebuild it, need to upgrade our sewage treatment plant facilities built in the 1970s and some in the 1980s that are beyond their capacities or that are in need of new technology upgrades. This legislation will move us in the direction of dealing with those needs.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
*Washington, DC, March 9, 2009.*

Hon. JAMES L. OBERSTAR,
*Chairman, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Washington, DC.*

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: I write to you regarding H.R. 1262, ''the Water Quality Investment Act of 2009.''

Section 1501 of H.R. 1262, as ordered reported, increases vessel tonnage duties. This provision falls within the jurisdiction of the Committee on Ways and Means. In addition, H.R. 1262 violates clause 5(a) of Rule XXI, which restricts bills and amendments from carrying taxes and tariffs not reported by the Ways and Means Committee.

I recognize and appreciate your desire to bring this legislation before the House in an expeditious manner and, accordingly, I will not seek a sequential referral of the bill and will not oppose H.R. 1262 being given a waiver of Rule XXI. However, I agree to waive consideration of this bill with the understanding that this does not in any way prejudice the Committee on Ways and Means or its jurisdictional prerogatives on H.R. 1262 or similar legislation.

Further, the Ways and Means Committee reserves the right to seek the appointment of conferees during any House-Senate conference convened on this legislation on provisions of the bill that are within the Committee's jurisdiction. I ask for your commitment to support any request by the Committee on Ways and Means for the appointment of conferees on H.R. 1262 or similar legislation. I also ask that a copy of this letter and your response be placed in the Committee report on H.R. 1262 and in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD during consideration of this bill by the House.

I look forward to working with you as we prepare to pass this important legislation.

Sincerely,

CHARLES B. RANGEL,
*Chairman.*

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE,
*Washington, DC, March 9, 2009.*

Hon. CHARLES B. RANGEL,
*Chairman, Committee on Ways and Means, Washington, DC.*

DEAR CHAIRMAN RANGEL: Thank you for your recent letter regarding H.R. 1262, the ''Water Quality Investment Act of 2009''. Your support for this legislation and your assistance in ensuring its timely consideration are greatly appreciated.

I agree that section 1501 of H.R. 1262, as ordered reported, is of jurisdictional interest to the Committee on Ways and Means. I acknowledge that, by foregoing a sequential referral, your Committee is not relinquishing its jurisdiction and I will fully support your request to be represented in a House-Senate conference on those provisions over which the Committee on Ways and Means has jurisdiction in H.R. 1262.

This exchange of letters will be placed in the Committee Report on H.R. 1262 and inserted in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD as part of the consideration of this legislation in the House. Thank you for the cooperative spirit in which you have worked regarding this matter and others between our respective committees.

I look forward to working with you as we move ahead with this important legislation.

Sincerely,

JAMES L. OBERSTAR,
*Chairman.*

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY,
*Washington, DC, March 6, 2009.*

Hon. JAMES L. OBERSTAR,
*Chairman, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Washington, DC.*

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN, I am writing to you concerning the jurisdictional interest of the Committee on Science and Technology in H.R. 1262, the Water Quality Investment Act of 2009. The bill contains certain provisions which are within the Committee on Science and Technology's jurisdiction.

The Committee on Science and Technology acknowledges the importance of H.R. 1262 and the need for the legislation to move expeditiously. Therefore, while we have a valid claim to jurisdiction over the bill, I agree not to request a sequential referral. This, of course, is conditional on our mutual understanding that nothing in this legislation or my decision to forgo a sequential referral waives, reduces or otherwise affects the jurisdiction of the Committee on Science and Technology and that a copy of this letter and of your response will be included in the legislative report on H.R. 1262 and the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD when the bill is considered on the House Floor.

The Committee on Science and Technology also asks that you support our request to be conferees on any provisions over which we have jurisdiction during any House-Senate conference on this legislation.

Thank you for, your attention to this matter, and I look forward to working with you to pass this important legislation.

Sincerely,

BART GORDON,
*Chairman.*

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE,
*Washington, DC, March 6, 2009.*

Hon. BART GORDON,
*Chairman, Committee on Science and Technology, Washington, DC.*

DEAR CHAIRMAN GORDON: Thank you for your letter regarding H.R. 1262, the ''Water Quality Investment Act of 2009''.

I appreciate your willingness to waive rights to further consideration of H.R. 1262, notwithstanding the jurisdictional interest of the Committee on Science and Technology. Of course, this waiver does not prejudice any further jurisdictional claims by your Committee over this or similar legislation. Further, I will support your request to be represented in a House-Senate conference on those provisions over which the Committee on Science and Technology has jurisdiction in H.R. 1262.

This exchange of letters will be placed in the Committee Report on H.R. 1262 and inserted in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD as part of the consideration of this legislation in the House. Thank you for the cooperative spirit in which you have worked regarding this matter and others between our respective committees.

I look forward to working with you as we prepare to pass this important legislation.

Sincerely,

JAMES L. OBERSTAR,
*Chairman.*

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. Chairman, anyone who drives on our bridges and roads, ships freight through our rivers and locks, or who has the responsibility to maintain our water quality knows that our country's infrastructure system needs attention. We as a Nation have allowed important components of our economic security to fall into disrepair.

Maintaining municipal water infrastructure has long been a local responsibility. It's a difficult task. Around the country, many communities have gotten behind.

To address this problem, we need a collective effort that focuses both on reducing cost and on increasing investment in water infrastructure at all levels, including Federal, State and local governments, local ratepayers and the private sector. No one element will be able to carry this responsibility alone.

The Congress believes in helping those communities that need help to get back into control of their wastewater management program and developing good management practices to ensure that the Federal Government does not become the financing mechanism of choice for these systems.

Our Nation's quality of life and economic well-being rely on clean water. However, that challenge to continue providing clean water is substantial, as our existing national wastewater structure is aging, deteriorating and in need of repair, replacement and upgrading.

As a Nation, we are not investing enough in our wastewater infrastructure to ensure that we will continue to keep our waters clean. Unless we act, we could lose the significant gains in water quality that have been achieved over the last 30 years.

In addition to reauthorizing the Clean Water State Revolving Fund, the bill also extends the pilot program under the Clean Water Act for alternative water source projects. Many communities are finding that their water needs cannot be met by existing water supplies. As a result, they are looking at alternative ways to alleviate their water shortages and enhance water supplies to meet their future water needs.

Some of these approaches they are looking at involve reclaiming, reusing or conserving water that has already been used. This bill helps them do that.

H.R. 1262 provides an authority to help communities meet some of their critical water supply needs through water reclamation, reuse, conservation and management. The bill authorizes $250 million over 5 years for the EPA to make grants to water resource development agencies for these sorts of alternative water source projects.

Another provision of H.R. 1262 reauthorizes grants to help communities address the widespread problem in our country of sewer overflows. As a result of inadequate or outdated wastewater infrastructure, raw sewage can flow into rivers or back up into people's basements. To provide communities some assistance to meet these needs, the bill authorizes additional resources for EPA to make sewer overflow control grants totaling $1.8 billion to States and local communities.

The Water Quality Investment Act also contains a provision to improve the public's confidence in the quality

of our Nation's waters and protect public health and safety. This provision requires that communities monitor for potential overflows in their sewer systems and notify the public whenever a release would threaten public health and safety. The public has a right to know when their lives are threatened by sewer releases.

Also included in this reauthorization is a reauthorization of the Great Lakes Legacy Act, authored by VERN EHLERS and enacted in 2002. The Great Lakes Legacy Act authorized the Environmental Protection Agency to carry out qualified sediment remediation projects and conduct research and development of innovative approaches, technologies and techniques for the remediation of contaminated sediment in the Great Lakes.

While I agree very much with the clean water goals of H.R. 1262, I am disappointed that the majority included language that requires Davis-Bacon wage rates to be used for all projects receiving any money from the Clean Water State Revolving Fund. Even projects paid for with State contributed funds will be subject to the higher wage rates.

I am not a supporter of Davis-Bacon, because it will make clean water projects cost more. It will especially hurt small disadvantaged communities who are trying to clean up their local waters, and it will force States that do not have their own prevailing wage rate law to adopt the expensive Federal Davis-Bacon requirement. The result will be fewer projects, fewer jobs and less clean water.

Despite my concerns with Davis-Bacon, I believe this to be a very, very good bill, a very, very good underlying bill, and I very much support it.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Chairman, I yield 5 minutes to the distinguished Chair of the Water Resources Subcommittee, Ms. JOHNSON of Texas, and yield myself 5 seconds to compliment her on the splendid work she has done in chairing this subcommittee in the 110th and in this Congress, and the groundwork she has laid to bring this legislation to the floor.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Thank you to the Chair of the full committee and to the subcommittee members, as well as the full committee.

I rise in strong support of the Water Quality Investment Act of 2009. This legislation authorizes almost $19 billion to protect and restore the integrity of U.S. waters, which are one of this country's most valuable natural resources. Over the past several decades, we have made significant progress in improving the quality of our water. Unfortunately, much of this progress is now at risk.

Today, approximately 40 percent of the rivers, lakes and coastal waters do not meet State water quality standards, and the problem is getting worse. Based on EPA estimates, without significant additional investment in our Nation's system of wastewater infrastructure, discharges into the U.S. waters could reach levels not seen since 1968, 4 years before the enactment of the 1972 Clean Water Act.

Moreover, much of the United States' water structure is approaching or has exceeded its projected useful life and is now in need of repair or replacement. Without significant investment now, this could have dire consequences for human health, aquatic ecosystems and our overall quality of life.

The Environmental Protection Agency and others estimate that we will need to invest between $300 billion to $400 billion over the next 20 years to address these water infrastructure needs. Current estimates show an annual funding gap of between $3 billion to $11 billion over our existing expenditures, from Federal, State and local sources.

This legislation will help jump-start the investment in these needs so that we will continue to have access to clean, safe water and so future generations can continue to enjoy the economic and recreational benefits of our water resources.

The Water Quality Investment Act of 2009 contains five titles which, together, will make great progress to this end. Each of these titles contain legislative proposals that passed through the House in the 110th Congress. Unfortunately, these important bills never became law.

The first title reauthorizes the Clean Water State Revolving Fund legislation. It is intended to address the Nation's infrastructure needs and to reaffirm the Federal commitment toward meeting the goals of the Clean Water Act. This title reauthorizes the Federal grant program for capitalizing State Revolving Funds at $13.8 billion over next 5 years.

Further, the reauthorization provides increased flexibility in the types of projects that the State Revolving Fund can finance. In addition, it seeks to improve the efficiency of our wastewater infrastructure by promoting, to the maximum extent practicable, the use of more energy and water-efficient practices.

□ 1115

This creates incentives for alternative energy approaches that will lower energy costs and reduce our greenhouse gas emissions. It also encourages the development of ''green infrastructure'' that decreases the amount of storm water that enters our waterways, relieving some of the strain on our aging wastewater treatment systems.

It also provides the States with increased flexibility in financing packages so they can offer the cities and local communities principal forgiveness and negative interest loans. This is intended to assist communities in meeting their water quality infrastructure goals, which is critical in this time of economic stress.

Title II of the Water Quality Investment Act of 2009 provides funding for the pilot program for alternative water source projects, and this program provides $250 million in grant funding for a variety of projects, such as water reuse and recycling.

Title III of the legislation reauthorizes the Sewer Overflow Grant Program. This section provides $1.8 billion over the next 5 years in grant funding for States to control combined sewer overflows. These overflows discharge annually an estimated 850 billion gallons of untreated or partially treated sewage directly into local waters.

In addition, combined sewer overflows are often the direct cause of beach closures, contamination of drinking water supplies, and other environmental and public health problems. This program will help address the critical needs of the approximately 700 communities in the United States that still depend on combined sewer systems.

The CHAIR. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. OBERSTAR. I yield 1 additional minute.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Title IV of the Water Quality Investment Act of 2009 creates a new Sewer Overflow Right-To-Know program. The legislation amends the Clean Water Act to require owners and operators of publicly owned treatment works to notify Federal and State agencies, public health officials, and the public of sewer overflows. This is an important step to increase transparency of this public health-related information and to protect the well-being of the public.

Finally, Title V of the legislation completes some unfinished business in last year's Great Lakes Legacy Act. This provides funding for the cleanup of contaminated sediment around the Great Lakes.

My colleagues, it has been over 20 years since Congress last authorized appropriations for the Clean Water State Revolving Fund. These programs cannot wait any longer while the quality of our water deteriorates. It is time that Congress completes the task of sending these important provisions to the President for signing.

I encourage my colleagues to join me in voting for this act.

Mr. BOOZMAN. I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. OBERSTAR. I yield 2 minutes to a hardworking member of the committee, the gentleman from New York (Mr. BISHOP).

Mr. BISHOP of New York. On behalf of the residents of eastern Long Island, I would like to commend Chairman OBERSTAR and Chairwoman JOHNSON for their leadership and unwavering dedication to clean water issues. I would also like to thank Ranking Member BOOZMAN and the committee staff for their hard work and commitment to advancing this legislation.

The Water Quality Investment Act will renew our commitment to clean

water in America and provide funding to chip away at the tremendous backlog of water infrastructure needs across the Nation. This legislation will increase investment, reduce costs, and promote efficiency in our water infrastructure.

I am particularly proud of Title IV of the bill that provides monitoring, reporting, and public notification of sewer overflows. My good friend, Mr. LOBIONDO of New Jersey, and I have worked to advance this issue for several years through independent legislation, the Sewage Overflow Community Right-To-Know Act, that is a part of this legislation.

Sewer overflows discharge roughly 850 billion gallons of sewage annually into local waters. These discharges end up in local rivers, lakes, streams, and the ocean.

The best way to avoid health and environmental concerns from sewer overflows is to ensure that they never occur in the first place, a primary goal of this legislation. However, even with significant increases in investment, sewer overflows will continue to occur. Therefore, it is imperative that we provide the public with comprehensive and timely notification of sewer overflows, which is also accomplished in this bill.

Mr. Chairman, the Water Quality Investment Act makes investments today to protect our families tomorrow. I encourage my colleagues to vote in favor of this commonsense legislation to ensure we maintain our commitment to clean water.

Mr. BOOZMAN. I will continue to reserve.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Michigan, defender of the Great Lakes water, Mr. STUPAK.

Mr. STUPAK. I thank the gentleman for yielding, as I rise in support of H.R. 1262, the Water Quality Investment Act of 2009. I wish to personally thank Chairman OBERSTAR for his work and for including a provision I requested, which will improve water quality in the Great Lakes.

Water pollution in the Great Lakes comes from both Canadian and U.S. sources. In my district, residents of Sugar Island, located within the St. Mary's River Area of Concern, have to deal with water contaminated with E. coli, coliform, and other bacteria along their shoreline.

The problem is neither they, nor Federal or State regulators, have a clear understanding of how much the pollution is American in origin, how much is Canadian, resulting in a great deal of finger-pointing over responsibility for cleanup.

My provision within the manager's amendment would require the EPA to conduct a study, in consultation with the Department of State and the Canadian government, on all pollution discharges from wastewater treatment facilities into the Great Lakes. When the study is complete, the EPA is to provide recommendations on how to improve information-sharing and coordination between the two countries to protect the water quality of the Great Lakes. It is my hope that, with the conclusion of the study, our two countries can coordinate to meet our mutual goal of protecting Great Lakes water quality.

Again, thank you, Mr. Chairman, for addressing our concerns. This legislation will play an important role in helping communities upgrade and repair their aging water infrastructure, which will ensure the health of the Great Lakes, a source of drinking water for 45 million people.

I urge my colleagues to support this vital legislation.

Mr. OBERSTAR. How much time remains on both sides?

The CHAIR. The gentleman from Arkansas has 24½ minutes. The gentleman from Minnesota has 14½ minutes.

Mr. OBERSTAR. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BOOZMAN. I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. EHLERS).

Mr. EHLERS. I thank the gentleman for yielding. I rise in strong support of H.R. 1262, the Water Quality Investment Act of 2009. As previously stated, this legislation is an accumulation of five bills that individually overwhelmingly passed the House of Representatives in the 110th Congress but which were held up or significantly altered in the Senate.

I echo the comments made by Chairman OBERSTAR at the Transportation and Infrastructure markup, that, by bundling these bills together, we can make it even easier for the Senate to act quickly. The provisions in this bill will go far toward helping restore and protect the Great Lakes, the largest fresh water source on the planet.

I have spent a considerable amount of time on this issue over the years. I want to deeply thank Chairman OBERSTAR for his dedication to this and his willingness to combine these bills in a very meaningful fashion. I also thank Mr. BOOZMAN for his good work on it, and Ranking Member MICA for his help as well.

Of particular interest to me is the reauthorization of the Great Lakes Legacy Act. The Great Lakes are plagued by toxic contaminants from years of industrial pollution that have settled in the sediment of tributaries to the lakes. These legacy pollutants degrade the health of both humans and wildlife and, if they are not cleaned up, they will remain toxic for generations to come.

We have known about these toxic materials for years. We lived in the vain hope that they might just stay in the sediments at the river bottom and not move into the lakes. But we now know that they are moving into the lakes. And that is the reason I authored the Legacy Act several years ago.

I have to say that the highest compliment I have received on that bill, and I have received it numerous times, is that this is the most effective, best Federal cleanup bill that was ever passed. Maybe we can now use this as a successful model to go back and clean up all the rest of the toxic dumps using the same approach we used here.

That is why I introduced the Great Lakes Legacy Act in the 107th Congress. With bipartisan support, Congress passed, and the President signed, the Legacy Act in 2002. Since then, the Legacy Act has been heralded, as I said, as the best and most effective Federal environmental cleanup program.

The interesting aspect of it, which was gratifying in some ways but disappointing in others, is that while the President of the United States every year requested the full authorization in his budget request, the Congress did not appropriate the money that the President had suggested. And I hope, Mr. Chairman and Mr. Ranking Member, that we can both work on this and make sure the appropriators are willing to appropriate the full ammount that the President requests. We would be far ahead in cleaning up the toxic sediments.

Last year, Chairman OBERSTAR and I introduced the Great Lakes Legacy Reauthorization Act, which increased the authorization from $50 million per year to $150 million per year for 5 years. According to the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration Strategy, if fully appropriated, this amount can potentially clean up all of the toxic sediments in the Great Lakes watershed in 10 years. That would be a major accomplishment at relatively low cost, and will stop the problem for all time.

Although the House last year passed this bill by a resounding 371–20 vote, the Senate was unable to overcome the objection of a single Senator who did not want to increase this authorization. A compromise was reached to reauthorize the program at its prior funding level, but to only reauthorize the program for 2 years.

During floor debate last year, Chairman OBERSTAR vowed to address this issue in the 111th Congress, and I am grateful that he has honored that promise in one of the first committee water bills to be taken up by the House in this Congress.

I also thank Chairman OBERSTAR and Ranking Member MICA for their support, as well as Ranking Member BOOZMAN. Their dedication to the Great Lakes issues have been most appreciated throughout the entire Midwest. The Great Lakes are the greatest treasure of pure water in the United States, and I am convinced that in the future water is going to be worth more than oil to the industrial machinery of our Nation. I believe you will see a resurgence of manufacturing and population around the Great Lakes, simply because of the availability of abundant clean water.

I am hopeful the Senate will be able to pass this bill soon so that we can

speed our efforts to clean up and protect the Great Lakes. I urge all Members to support this important legislation. Once again, I thank all those who worked so hard on these bills so that they could reach this state. We hope to see them signed into law very soon.

Thank you, again, for the time.

Mr. OBERSTAR. I yield myself 1 minute to express my great appreciation to Mr. MICA for the splendid cooperation we have had and the bipartisan spirit in which we approached combining these bills into one package, one piece of legislation for the House floor; Ms. JOHNSON, for her splendid leadership as chair of the subcommittee; Mr. BOOZMAN as the ranking member, who has done splendid service to the Nation in his championship of water; and Mr. EHLERS. If it were up to me, I would rename this the Vern Ehlers Great Lakes Legacy Act. At some point in time, I think we will come to do that.

We do have a President from the Great Lakes region who has increased funding for the Great Lakes in the budget, but the details are yet to come. The overall dollar amount is increased, I'd say, Mr. Chairman. And I hope to work closely with the gentleman from Michigan as the details of the budget come out to designate the appropriate amount of funding for the Great Lakes Legacy Act.

I yield 2 minutes to a refugee from the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, but still an advocate for our programs, particularly for clean water, the distinguished gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PASCRELL).

Mr. PASCRELL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I rise in support of H.R. 1262, the Water Quality Investment Act. I want to commend Chairman OBERSTAR and Subcommittee Chairwoman JOHNSON for bringing this critical legislation to the floor, and it has had bipartisan support for quite a few years. We didn't give up on it, did we?

H.R. 1262 makes many crucial investments in our country's water infrastructure system. Section 3 of the bill contains language we originally introduced a few years ago in our Water Quality Investment Act. The language authorizes $1.8 billion in appropriations for grants to municipalities and States to control combined sewer overflows and sanitary sewer overflows. The municipalities just don't have the money to do this, yet we mandate them to do it. Figure that out.

□ 1130

Funding for infrastructure projects will help create jobs and spur the economy. For every $1 billion, we create 40,000 jobs.

My provision is very important, especially for my colleagues in the Northeast and the Great Lakes area. Many of our older cities have combined sewer systems and suffer from overflows that send sewage and untreated waste flowing into streets, basements, rivers, and lakes. All in all, a total of 772 municipalities have combined sewer systems, serving approximately 40 million people. Problems that arise during wet weather events can be devastating and are one of the most pressing issues facing urban America. Our communities must be given access to the Federal resources necessary to upgrade their systems and to upgrade the Clean Water Act.

In its 2004 Clean Water Needs survey, the EPA estimated the cost to communities of addressing these particular problems at almost $55 billion and the cost of the SSO problems to be $88.5 billion; and here we are, $1.8 billion.

The CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. OBERSTAR. I yield the gentleman an additional 1 minute.

Mr. PASCRELL. The vast majority of these costs will be borne by local communities, many with fewer than 10,000 people. As a former mayor, I know how difficult it is to keep a town going in tough economic times. These communities are struggling financially. Many are laying off critical personnel, like police officers and firefighters and teachers, because they struggle to provide even the most essential services. During our current economic crisis, upgrading these infrastructures is completely out of reach to most of these towns.

H.R. 1262 serves many purposes financially and healthwise. I commend people on both sides of the aisle for making sure this gets done today, and we hope the folks on the other side of the building understand what this is all about. I pray for that.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. Chairman, I yield such time as he would like to our distinguished ranking member, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MICA).

Mr. MICA. I thank the gentleman from Arkansas for yielding, and appreciate his leadership.

As our ranking Republican leader on the Water Resources Subcommittee, I also want to thank Mr. OBERSTAR, my chairman of the full committee, who I am pleased to work with on our side of the aisle in what has been I think an example for the Congress, a bipartisan relationship, during the last 2 years. I want to compliment him on the water resources bill that we did together, when we sat down and we said we had not reauthorized water resources legislation for some 7 years, and we made a commitment together that we thought was in the best interest of the Nation.

Previously, the authorization levels were $4 billion or $5 billion. The bill that we offered, and there had been a backlog of projects and need for investment in our water resources infrastructure, was a $24 billion measure which, unfortunately, got vetoed by the former President. But I helped in leading the 107th veto override in the history of the Congress, because both Mr. OBERSTAR and I, Democrats and Republicans, agreed. There were some disagreements with the administration, but we agreed that we had to invest in this Nation's infrastructure; that our sewer systems, our water systems, the basic infrastructure of this country needed that investment. We can't have in the United States Third-World water and sewer systems or storm drainage systems or antiquated municipal systems that serve our people, and essential public services that are outdated, aging, crumbling. So we made that commitment together.

Now, I was noticing that this legislation here, we passed five bills last time. Four of the bills, and I have the votes here, were all over 360 votes, a very small number of people in opposition to four of the votes. I think I supported all four of the measures. We did combine, however, in here an important bill that the chairman led, the provisions of House Resolution 720, that reauthorized State resolving funds and provides $13 billion over 5 years in Federal assistance to further capitalize the funds for these projects, and this is a very important fund.

Now, let me just say that while I am supportive of the overall legislation, even the level of funding that we put in here, I do have one reservation about the extension of the requirement for prevailing wage. And this is not a union-set wage; that is not the issue; it is a prevailing wage, and the way it is assessed in some of our areas. We have 18 States that will be penalized by having their funds that previously weren't subject to this, and they are State funds, and funds that come back into their fund are now also made subject to this prevailing Federal wage provision. And that is the one objection I do have to this legislation. Another gentleman from Florida (Mr. MACK) will offer an amendment, which we all agreed should be fully debated and heard. But that is my issue.

Now, if that provision comes out of the bill, I would support the entire measure. I am sorry that this small point that I disagree on would cause me not to support this bill on final passage if it is included. But this is basically a good piece of legislation. It does have a question about extension of some of these things, these prevailing wage issues and, again, the way they assess this prevailing wage; and maybe we should go back and change this.

First of all, I have no problem with prevailing wage, and we should have it in our large urban areas. We should also give States discretion to set levels of wage even beyond the Federal requirement, and some of those jurisdictions do. We do have a Federal minimum wage, so no one is trying to make people work for less than the Federal minimum. But sometimes the area in which we assess that prevailing wage does expand into some of the smaller communities. So they are going to be paying more and getting less, or marginal projects will get left behind because they don't have the resources that they can expend. And it does, again, diminish the amount of money that they can have available by

this new requirement. So that is the one area of disagreement we have.

I compliment the staff, the ranking member's, Ms. JOHNSON—I don't see her here today—Mr. OBERSTAR, and the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) for their leadership on this issue, and I hope we can proceed. And I hope that even if this does pass today with that provision, that we can work with the other body and make the basic provisions of this legislation the law of the land and improve our infrastructure.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER), a former member of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, an adjunct member of the committee.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. I prefer, Mr. Chairman, to think of myself as an associate member of the committee. It is a source of great pride and interest for me to have served under your leadership for 12 years on that committee and with EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON on this subcommittee.

I rise in support of this bill today. I take modest exception to my good friend from Florida talking about the problems of prevailing wage. We have only to look at Louisiana and New Orleans, and the post-Katrina debacle where we suspended Davis-Bacon, What happened? The work was done for people literally who were working in many cases for barely minimum wage, there was all sorts of money involved went to subcontracts and we had a lot of shoddy workmanship.

In my State, the voters took this on directly, voting 60/40 to have a State prevailing wage. This protects working men and women and helps provide better quality of workmanship on these critical projects. We need the best workmanship, and we need this bill.

Our Nation's water infrastructure has grown while funding has declined. The American Society of Civil Engineers came out with their 5-year report card, and guess what—water infrastructure: D-minus. And some would say they were grading on a curve.

We have massive needs in the foreseeable future, and the Water Quality Investment Act is an important step towards meeting those needs. It recognizes the challenges we face and will provide communities with new tools to cope with them.

I particularly appreciate the support for green infrastructure and the general movement towards a more sustainable system, both fiscally and environmentally. Green infrastructure often involves nonstructural approaches that can have added environmental and quality-of-life benefits that save communities money.

I worked for 10 years in Portland as Commissioner of Public Works on cleaning up the Willamette River that flows through the heart of our city. We had to spend $1 billion on a big pipe, because it rains all the time in Portland, and any time it rained more than two-tenths of an inch in 2 hours, we were having overflow into that river. But we also worked on nonstructural approaches. We found that green infrastructure reduced peak flows by 80 to 85 percent. We disconnected almost 50,000 downspouts at $53 per downspout. It cost less than $3 million but reduced over 1.2 billion gallons of runoff. If we had tried to do that only with big pipes, it would have cost far, far more, literally hundreds of millions of dollars.

The CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has again expired.

Mr. OBERSTAR. I yield the gentleman another 1 minute.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. I appreciate the gentleman's courtesy, because there is one area that I hope to work on with him and the committee, and that is how we make sure we are focusing on clean water infrastructure that makes repairs and enhancement as a priority. In some places we have to go to new construction, but most of the threats to our communities, from Detroit to Cincinnati to Portland, is the existing infrastructure that is in sad need of repair. I hope, as this works its way through the legislative process, that we might be able to fine-tune that a little bit to give priority to fixing it first where there is the greatest impact and the greatest hope.

I deeply appreciate the leadership of the committee once again, and look forward to working with people on both sides of the aisle to get this important legislation passed and to realize these benefits in a way to make all our communities more livable and our families safer, healthier, and more economically secure.

The CHAIR. The Committee will rise informally.

The Speaker pro tempore (Mr. DRIEHAUS) assumed the chair.

## MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed without amendment a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 1127. An act to extend certain immigration programs.

The message also announced that pursuant to the provisions of S. Res. 105 (adopted April 13, 1989), as amended by S. Res. 149 (adopted October 5, 1993), as amended by Public Law 105–275 (adopted October 21, 1998), further amended by S. Res. 75 (adopted March 25, 1999), amended by S. Res. 383 (adopted October 27, 2000), and amended by S. Res. 355 (adopted November 13, 2002), and further amended by S. Res. 480 (adopted November 21, 2004), the Chair, on behalf of the Republican leader, announces the appointment of the following Senator as member of the Senate National Security Working Group for the One Hundred Eleventh Congress:

The Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM).

The message also announced that pursuant to Public Law 101–509, the Chair, on behalf of the Republican Leader, announces the appointment of Terry Birdwhistell, of Kentucky, to the Advisory Committee on the Records of Congress.

The message also announced that pursuant to Public Law 100–696, the Chair, on behalf of the President pro tempore, appoints the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) as a member of the United States Preservation Commission.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Committee will resume its sitting.

## WATER QUALITY INVESTMENT ACT OF 2009

The Committee resumed its sitting.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. BILBRAY).

Mr. BILBRAY. Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the bill here today, and I would just like to highlight the issue that, as we commit taxpayers' funds to addressing the environmental issues that face this country, that we recognize that outcome is what really matters when we talk about spending money to clean up the environment.

Chairman OBERSTAR has worked with me for years on a problem that we have got to address, and I am not saying we as my district, I am saying nationally; that we have sent funds all over the country and looked at process, rather than how a city or a community may impact the environment.

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A good example is the fact that you may have a city of Chicago that was outrageous in saying they were worried about polluting Lake Michigan, because they were polluting their own water. But they built a canal so they can dump the water into the Illinois River and pollute all the waters of the Mississippi.

I think one of the things that we have got to recognize is being smart with our money and addressing the fact that these funds should go to where is the best environmental benefit. And a good example would be the fact that there are certain areas where the treatment of the sewage at its existing level has no net negative impact, but there are other areas which have highly sensitive environments that are being polluted, even though the Federal law technically is being protected, things like the secondary mandate, where we should be putting our resources into tertiary and reclamation, where you end up having areas like deep-water discharge places, where right now scientists will tell you there is no net degradation.

So I would just ask the majority to take a look at when we focus these funds, that we focus it where the most benefit to the environment can be given, much like we have done in California. We have gone beyond the process issue and gone to the outcome-