

**EAST BENCH IRRIGATION DISTRICT WATER CONTRACT EXTENSION ACT**

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 997) to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to extend a water contract between the United States and the East Bench Irrigation District.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 997

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

**SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

This Act may be cited as the “East Bench Irrigation District Water Contract Extension Act”.

**SEC. 2. AUTHORITY TO EXTEND WATER CONTRACT.**

The Secretary of the Interior may extend the contract for water services between the United States and the East Bench Irrigation District, numbered 14-06-600-3593, until the earlier of—

(1) the date that is 4 years after the date on which the contract would have expired if this Act had not been enacted; or

(2) the date on which a new long-term contract is executed by the parties to the contract.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) and the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. LUJÁN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Washington.

□ 1620

**GENERAL LEAVE**

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, S. 997, the East Bench Irrigation District Water Contract Extension Act, extends the water contract between the United States and the East Bench Irrigation District in southwestern Montana until December 31, 2013, or until a new contract can be executed.

This bill allows for the continued irrigation of 28,000 acres of land which is important to that area's economy. It also preserves the district's renewal rights while a local matter is adjudicated at the State level. The bill will not influence the outcome of State actions.

S. 997 is supported by our colleague from Montana, Congressman DENNIS REHBERG, and by the administration. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, S. 997 was introduced by Senator JON TESTER in May of last year and passed the Senate in November 2011.

As my colleague mentioned, S. 997 would extend the East Bench Irrigation District's water contract for 4 years pending a judicial ruling. The administration has testified in support of S. 997 because it would allow for water service to the district to continue and allows for contract renewal while the court confirmation process is given time to be completed.

We thank Senator JON TESTER for his leadership, and we have no objections to this legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I urge adoption of the legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. REHBERG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of S. 997, the East Bench Irrigation District Water Contract Extension.

Water and energy are pretty important to Montana, and as you may know, I've spent a lot of time working with the House Water and Power Subcommittee over the years on these issues. This time, though, there's something a little different. There's just something cool about working on a bill that starts with “S” instead of “H.R.”—I think I could get used to this!

I'm sure it's not lost on you that this legislation is sponsored by Senator JON TESTER, the Junior Senator from Montana. We're both Montanans and while there are certainly things we disagree about—President Obama's health reform and stimulus, protecting gun rights and government bailouts—even with all those differences, there are ways to find common ground.

An example of common ground is this legislation. S. 997 is a good idea, and it's one I hope my colleagues will vote in favor of.

The bill simply authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to extend a water contract between the United States and the East Bench Irrigation District in Beaverhead and Madison Counties in southwestern Montana. It has no impact on the federal budget.

The Clark Canyon Dam and Reservoir—owned and operated by the Bureau of Recreation—supplies irrigation water for 28,000 acres within the East Bench Irrigation District.

The operation is bound by a contract between the federal government and the District—a contract that expired on December 31, 2005. Since then, federal appropriations acts have extended the original contract for two year durations. S. 997 extends it again through the end of 2013.

I realize this sort of congressional contract extension isn't common, but in cases where specific variables delay contract renewals, it's appropriate and necessary. In this case, the law requires Montana's 5th District Court to issue a decree before any new contract can be signed.

That decree has been delayed, so S. 997 provides the regional farmers and ranchers with necessary water certainty until at least 2014. Hopefully, by then, all parties will be ready to agree to a new long-term contract.

For dry land farmers and ranchers, water is our most precious resource. We have a lot of land—plenty of dirt between light bulbs—and

our productivity is only constrained by our access to water. In Montana where we rely on water for drinking, irrigation, and energy.

It's vitally important we pass this bill to try to avoid needless disruptions in service. There is no conflict or objection to this “house-keeping” matter, and its importance to the many impacted farmers and ranchers cannot be over-emphasized. I have worked hard to extend the contract in the past and look forward to passing this critical legislation today. As I said, it's a good idea.

I'm here to do what's best for Montana, and a good idea is a good idea regardless of who gets credit. That's why I'm up here today.

This is a good bill, and I hope my colleagues will join me in voting in favor of its passage.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 997.

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.

□ 1630

**EXPRESSING REGRET FOR PASSAGE OF LAWS ADVERSELY AFFECTING THE CHINESE IN THE UNITED STATES**

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 683) expressing the regret of the House of Representatives for the passage of laws that adversely affected the Chinese in the United States, including the Chinese Exclusion Act.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 683

Whereas many Chinese came to the United States in the 19th and 20th centuries, as did people from other countries, in search of the opportunity to create a better life;

Whereas the United States ratified the Burlingame Treaty on October 19, 1868, which permitted the free movement of the Chinese people to, from, and within the United States and made China a “most favored nation”;

Whereas in 1878, the House of Representatives passed a resolution requesting that President Rutherford B. Hayes renegotiate the Burlingame Treaty so Congress could limit Chinese immigration to the United States;

Whereas, on February 22, 1879, the House of Representatives passed the Fifteen Passenger Bill, which only permitted 15 Chinese passengers on any ship coming to the United States;

Whereas, on March 1, 1879, President Hayes vetoed the Fifteen Passenger Bill as being incompatible with the Burlingame Treaty;

Whereas, on May 9, 1881, the United States ratified the Angell Treaty, which allowed the United States to suspend, but not prohibit, immigration of Chinese laborers, declared that “Chinese laborers who are now in the United States shall be allowed to go and come of their own free will,” and reaffirmed