

Jacobs (CA) McKinley  
 Jacobs (NY) McNerney  
 Jeffries Meeks  
 Johnson (GA) Meijer  
 Johnson (LA) Meng  
 Johnson (OH) Meuser  
 Johnson (SD) Mfume  
 Johnson (TX) Miller (WV)  
 Jones Miller-Meeks  
 Jordan Moolenaar  
 Joyce (OH) Mooney  
 Joyce (PA) Moore (AL)  
 Kahele Moore (UT)  
 Kaptur Moore (WI)  
 Katko Morelle  
 Keating Moulton  
 Keller Mrvan  
 Kelly (IL) Mullin  
 Kelly (MS) Murphy (FL)  
 Kelly (PA) Murphy (NC)  
 Khanna Nadler  
 Kildee Napolitano  
 Kilmer Neal  
 Kim (CA) Neguse  
 Kim (NJ) Nehls  
 Kind Newhouse  
 Kinzinger Norcross  
 Kirkpatrick Norman  
 Krishnamoorthi O'Halleran  
 Kuster Obernolte  
 Kostoff Omar  
 LaHood Owens  
 LaMalfa Palazzo  
 Lamb Pallone  
 Lamborn Palmer  
 Langevin Panetta  
 Larsen (WA) Pappas  
 Larson (CT) Pence  
 Latta Perry  
 LaTurner Peters  
 Lawson (FL) Pfluger  
 Lee (NV) Phillips  
 Leger Fernandez Pingree  
 Lesko Pocan  
 Letlow Porter  
 Levin (CA) Posey  
 Levin (MI) Price (NC)  
 Lieu Quigley  
 Lofgren Raskin  
 Long Reschenthaler  
 Loudermilk Rice (NY)  
 Lowenthal Rice (SC)  
 Lucas Rodgers (WA)  
 Luetkemeyer Rogers (AL)  
 Luria Rogers (KY)  
 Lynch Rose  
 Mace Rosendale  
 Malliotakis Ross  
 Maloney, Carolyn B. Rouzer  
 Maloney, Sean Roy  
 Mann Roybal-Allard  
 Manning Ruiz  
 Massie Ruppertsberger  
 Mast Rush  
 Matsui Rutherford  
 McBath Ryan  
 McCarthy Salazar  
 McCaul Sánchez  
 McClain Sarbanes  
 McClintock Scalise  
 McCollum Scanlon  
 McEachin Schakowsky  
 McGovern Schiff  
 McHenry Schneider  
 Schrader

**NAYS—27**

Beatty Perlmutter  
 Bowman Jayapal  
 Bush Lawrence  
 Escobar Lee (CA)  
 Espallat Malinowski  
 Garcia (IL) Newman  
 Garcia (TX) Ocasio-Cortez  
 Gotthelmer Pascrell  
 Grijalva Payne

**NOT VOTING—4**

Casten Herrell  
 Guest Miller (IL)

□ 1449

Mses. LEE of California and NEWMAN changed their vote from “yea” to “nay.”

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

**PERSONAL EXPLANATION**

Mrs. MILLER of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, had I been present, I would have voted “nay” on rollcall No. 259, “nay” on rollcall No. 260, and “yea” on rollcall No. 261.

**MEMBERS RECORDED PURSUANT TO HOUSE RESOLUTION 8, 117TH CONGRESS**

|                  |                   |                  |
|------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| Amodei           | Lamb (Blunt)      | Price (NC)       |
| (Balderson)      | Rochester)        | (Manning)        |
| Bustos (Mrvan)   | Lawrence          | Rice (SC)        |
| Carter (TX)      | (Stevens)         | (Meijer)         |
| (Weber (TX))     | Lawson (FL)       | Schneider        |
| Correa (Huffman) | (Wasserman        | (Stevens)        |
| Crist            | Schultz)          | Speier (Huffman) |
| (Wasserman       | Lynch             | Stansbury        |
| Schultz)         | (Langevin)        | (Garcia (IL))    |
| Dauids (KS)      | Mace (Carter      | Stanton          |
| (Neguse)         | (GA)              | (Huffman)        |
| Deutch (Rice     | McEachin          | Suozi (Beyer)    |
| (NY))            | (Beyer)           | Taylor (Van      |
| Evans (Beyer)    | Moore (WI)        | Duynne)          |
| Gonzalez (OH)    | (Beyer)           | Tenney           |
| (Meijer)         | Nadler (Pallone)  | (Jackson)        |
| Johnson (GA)     | Newman (Beyer)    | Titus (Pallone)  |
| (Manning)        | O'Halleran        | Walorski         |
| Johnson (TX)     | (Schrader)        | (Bucshon)        |
| (Jeffries)       | Palazzo           | Waters (Takano)  |
| Kahele (Mrvan)   | (Fleischmann)     | Welch (Pallone)  |
| Kelly (IL)       | Payne (Pallone)   | Wilson (FL)      |
| (Neguse)         | Peters (Jeffries) | Wilson (FL)      |
| Khanna (Watson   | Pingree           | (Neguse)         |
| Coleman)         | (Wasserman        | Wilson (SC)      |
|                  | Schultz)          | (Timmons)        |

**RECOVERING AMERICA'S WILDLIFE ACT OF 2021**

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 1170, I call up the bill (H.R. 2773) to amend the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act to make supplemental funds available for management of fish and wildlife species of greatest conservation need as determined by State fish and wildlife agencies, and for other purposes, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 1170, in lieu of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Natural Resources, printed in the bill, an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 117-47, modified by the amendment printed in part C of House Report 117-366, is adopted and the bill, as amended, is considered read.

The text of the bill, as amended, is as follows:

**H.R. 2773**

*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 “Recovering America’s Wildlife Act of 2022”.*

**SEC. 2. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE.**

*The purpose of this Act is to extend financial and technical assistance to States, territories, the District of Columbia, and Indian Tribes, including under the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act (16 U.S.C. 669 et seq.), for the purpose of avoiding the need to list species, or recovering species currently listed as a threatened species or an endangered species, under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.) or under State law.*

**TITLE I—WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AND RESTORATION**

**SEC. 101. WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AND RESTORATION SUBACCOUNT.**

(a) *IN GENERAL.*—Section 3 of the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act (16 U.S.C. 669b) is amended in subsection (c)—

(1) *by redesignating paragraphs (2) and (3) as paragraphs (9) and (10); and*

(2) *by striking paragraph (1) and inserting the following:*

“(1) *ESTABLISHMENT OF SUBACCOUNT.*—

“(A) *IN GENERAL.*—There is established in the fund a subaccount to be known as the ‘Wildlife Conservation and Restoration Subaccount’ (referred to in this section as the ‘Subaccount’).

“(B) *AVAILABILITY.*—Amounts in the Subaccount shall be available without further appropriation, for each fiscal year, for apportionment in accordance with this Act.

“(C) *DEPOSITS INTO SUBACCOUNT.*—The Secretary of the Treasury shall transfer from the general fund of the Treasury to the Subaccount—

“(i) for fiscal year 2023, \$850,000,000;

“(ii) for fiscal year 2024, \$1,100,000,000;

“(iii) for fiscal year 2025, \$1,200,000,000; and

“(iv) for fiscal year 2026 and each fiscal year thereafter, \$1,300,000,000.

“(2) *SUPPLEMENT NOT SUPPLANT.*—Amounts transferred to the Subaccount shall supplement, but not replace, existing funds available to the States from—

“(A) the funds distributed pursuant to the Dingell-Johnson Sport Fish Restoration Act (16 U.S.C. 777 et seq.); and

“(B) the fund.

“(3) *INNOVATION GRANTS.*—

“(A) *IN GENERAL.*—The Secretary shall distribute 10 percent of funds apportioned from the Subaccount through a competitive grant program to State fish and wildlife departments, the District of Columbia fish and wildlife department, fish and wildlife departments of territories, or to regional associations of fish and wildlife departments (or any group composed of more than 1 such entity).

“(B) *PURPOSE.*—Such grants shall be provided for the purpose of catalyzing innovation of techniques, tools, strategies, or collaborative partnerships that accelerate, expand, or replicate effective and measurable recovery efforts for species of greatest conservation need and species listed under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.) and the habitats of such species.

“(C) *REVIEW COMMITTEE.*—The Secretary shall appoint a review committee comprised of—

“(i) a State Director from each regional association of State fish and wildlife departments;

“(ii) the head of a department responsible for fish and wildlife management in a territory;

“(iii) one delegate from the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, for the purpose of providing technical assistance; and

“(iv) beginning in fiscal year 2023, four individuals representing four different nonprofit organizations each of which is actively participating in carrying out wildlife conservation restoration activities using funds apportioned from the Subaccount.

“(D) *SUPPORT FROM UNITED STATES FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE.*—Using not more than 3 percent of the amounts apportioned under subparagraph (A) to carry out a competitive grant program, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service shall provide any personnel or administrative support services necessary for such committee to carry out its responsibilities under this Act.

“(E) *EVALUATION.*—Such committee shall evaluate each proposal submitted under this paragraph and recommend projects for funding, giving preference to solutions that accelerate the recovery of species identified as priorities through regional scientific assessments of species of greatest conservation need.

“(4) USE OF FUNDS.—Funds apportioned from the Subaccount shall be used for purposes consistent with section 2 of the Recovering America’s Wildlife Act of 2022 and—

“(A) shall be used to implement the Wildlife Conservation Strategy of a State, territory, or the District of Columbia, as required under section 4(e), by carrying out, revising, or enhancing existing wildlife and habitat conservation and restoration programs and developing and implementing new wildlife conservation and restoration programs to recover and manage species of greatest conservation need and the key habitats and plant community types essential to the conservation of those species, as determined by the appropriate State fish and wildlife department;

“(B) shall be used to develop, revise, and enhance the Wildlife Conservation Strategy of a State, territory, or the District of Columbia, as may be required by this Act;

“(C) shall be used to assist in the recovery of species found in the State, territory, or the District of Columbia that are listed as endangered species, threatened species, candidate species or species proposed for listing, or species petitioned for listing under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.) or under State law;

“(D) may be used for wildlife conservation education and wildlife-associated recreation projects, especially in historically underserved communities;

“(E) may be used to manage a species of greatest conservation need whose range is shared with another State, territory, Indian Tribe, or foreign government and for the conservation of the habitat of such species;

“(F) may be used to manage, control, and prevent invasive species, disease, and other risks to species of greatest conservation need; and

“(G) may be used for law enforcement activities that are directly related to the protection and conservation of a species of greatest conservation need and the habitat of such species.

“(5) MINIMUM REQUIRED SPENDING FOR ENDANGERED SPECIES RECOVERY.—Not less than an average of 15 percent over a 5-year period of amounts apportioned to a State, territory, or the District of Columbia from the Subaccount shall be used for purposes described in paragraph (4)(C). The Secretary may reduce the minimum requirement of a State, territory, or the District of Columbia on an annual basis if the Secretary determines that the State, territory, or the District of Columbia is meeting the conservation and recovery needs of all species described in paragraph (4)(C).

“(6) PUBLIC ACCESS TO PRIVATE LANDS NOT REQUIRED.—Funds apportioned from the Subaccount shall not be conditioned upon the provision of public access to private lands, waters, or holdings.

“(7) REQUIREMENTS FOR MATCHING FUNDS.—

“(A) For the purposes of the non-Federal fund matching requirement for a wildlife conservation or restoration program or project funded by the Subaccount, a State, territory, or the District of Columbia may use as matching non-Federal funds—

“(i) funds from Federal agencies other than the Department of the Interior and the Department of Agriculture;

“(ii) donated private lands and waters, including privately owned easements;

“(iii) in circumstances described in subparagraph (B), revenue generated through the sale of State hunting and fishing licenses; and

“(iv) other sources consistent with part 80 of title 50, Code of Federal Regulations, in effect on the date of enactment of the Recovering America’s Wildlife Act of 2022.

“(B) Revenue described in subparagraph (A)(iii) may only be used to fulfill the requirements of such non-Federal fund matching requirement if—

“(i) no Federal funds apportioned to the State fish and wildlife department of such State from the Wildlife Restoration Program or the Sport

Fish Restoration Program have been reverted because of a failure to fulfill such non-Federal fund matching requirement by such State during the previous 2 years; and

“(ii) the project or program being funded benefits the habitat of a hunted or fished species and a species of greatest conservation need.

“(8) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection, the following definitions apply:

“(A) PARTNERSHIPS.—The term ‘partnerships’ may include collaborative efforts with Federal agencies, State agencies, local agencies, Indian Tribes, nonprofit organizations, academic institutions, industry groups, and private individuals to implement a State’s Wildlife Conservation Strategy.

“(B) SPECIES OF GREATEST CONSERVATION NEED.—The term ‘species of greatest conservation need’ may be fauna or flora, and may include terrestrial, aquatic, marine, and invertebrate species that are of low population, declining, rare, or facing threats and in need of conservation attention, as determined by each State fish and wildlife department, with respect to funds apportioned to such State.

“(C) TERRITORY AND TERRITORIES.—The terms ‘territory’ and ‘territories’ mean the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and the United States Virgin Islands.

“(D) WILDLIFE.—The term ‘wildlife’ means any species of wild, freeranging fauna, including fish, and also fauna in captive breeding programs the object of which is to reintroduce individuals of a depleted indigenous species into previously occupied range.”.

(b) Section 3 of the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act (16 U.S.C. 669b) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS TO INSPECTOR GENERAL.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Office of the Inspector General of the Department of the Interior ½ of 1 percent of the amounts made available under subsection (c) for the purposes of providing oversight and accountability with respect to expenditure of funds authorized under such subsection, to remain available until September 30, 2029.”.

(c) ALLOCATION AND APPORTIONMENT OF AVAILABLE AMOUNTS.—Section 4 of the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act (16 U.S.C. 669c) is amended—

(1) in subsection (d)—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) in subparagraph (A), by striking “to the District of Columbia and to the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, each” and inserting “To the District of Columbia”;

(ii) in subparagraph (B)—

(I) by striking “to Guam” and inserting “To Guam”; and

(II) by striking “not more than one-fourth of one percent” and inserting “not less than one-third of one percent”; and

(iii) by adding at the end the following:

“(C) To the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, a sum equal to not less than 1 percent thereof.”;

(B) in paragraph (2)(A)—

(i) by amending clause (i) to read as follows:

“(i) one-half of which is based on the ratio to which the land and water area of such State bears to the total land and water area of all such States;”;

(ii) in clause (ii)—

(I) by striking “two-thirds” and inserting “one-quarter”; and

(II) by striking the period and inserting “; and”; and

(iii) by adding at the end the following:

“(iii) one-quarter of which is based upon the ratio to which the number of species listed as endangered or threatened under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.) in such State bears to the total number of such species listed in all such States.”;

(C) by amending paragraph (2)(B) to read as follows:

“(B) The amounts apportioned under this paragraph shall be adjusted equitably so that no such State, unless otherwise designated, shall be apportioned a sum which is less than 1 percent or more than 5 percent of the amount available for apportionment under—

“(i) subparagraph (A)(i);

“(ii) subparagraph (A)(ii); and

“(iii) the overall amount available for subparagraph (A).”; and

(D) in paragraph (3), by striking “3 percent” and inserting “1.85 percent”;

(2) in subsection (e)(4)—

(A) by amending subparagraph (B) to read as follows:

“(B) Not more than an average of 15 percent over a 5-year period of amounts apportioned to each State, territory, or the District of Columbia under this section for a wildlife conservation and restoration program may be used for wildlife conservation education and wildlife-associated recreation.”; and

(B) by inserting after subparagraph (B), as so amended, the following:

“(C) 5 percent of amounts apportioned to each State, each territory, or the District of Columbia under this section for a wildlife conservation and restoration program shall be reserved for States and territories that include plants among their species of greatest conservation need and in the conservation planning and habitat prioritization efforts of their Wildlife Conservation Strategy. Each eligible State, territory, or the District of Columbia shall receive an additional 5 percent of their apportioned amount. Any unallocated resources shall be allocated proportionally among all States and territories under the formulas of this section.”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(f) MINIMIZATION OF PLANNING AND REPORTING.—Nothing in this Act shall be interpreted to require a State to create a comprehensive strategy related to conservation education or outdoor recreation.

“(g) ACCOUNTABILITY.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Not more than one year after the date of enactment of the Recovering America’s Wildlife Act of 2022 and every 3 years thereafter, each State fish and wildlife department shall submit a 3-year work plan and budget for implementing its Wildlife Conservation Strategy and a report describing the results derived from activities accomplished under subsection (e) during the previous 3 years to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service for review, which shall summarize such findings and submit a report to—

“(A) the Committee on Environment and Public Works of the Senate; and

“(B) the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives.

“(2) REQUIREMENTS.—The format of the 3-year work plans, budgets, and reports required under paragraph (1) shall be established by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, in consultation with the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies.

“(3) GAO STUDY.—Not later than 7 years after the date of enactment of the Recovering America’s Wildlife Act of 2022, the Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study to examine the progress of States, territories, the District of Columbia, and Indian Tribes towards achieving the purpose described in section 2 of that Act.”.

#### SEC. 102. TECHNICAL AMENDMENTS.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—Section 2 of the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act (16 U.S.C. 669a) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (7), by striking “including fish,”; and

(2) in paragraph (9), by inserting “Indian Tribes, academic institutions,” before “wildlife conservation organizations”.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—The Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act (16 U.S.C. 669 et seq.) is amended—

(1) in section 3—  
 (A) in subsection (a)—  
 (i) by striking “(1) An amount equal to” and inserting “An amount equal to”; and  
 (ii) by striking paragraph (2);  
 (B) in subsection (c)—  
 (i) in paragraph (9), as redesignated by section 101(a)(1), by striking “or an Indian tribe”; and  
 (ii) in paragraph (10), as redesignated by section 101(a)(1), by striking “Wildlife Conservation and Restoration Account” and inserting “Subaccount”; and  
 (C) in subsection (d), by striking “Wildlife Conservation and Restoration Account” and inserting “Subaccount”;  
 (2) in section 4 (16 U.S.C. 669c)—  
 (A) in subsection (d)—  
 (i) in the heading, by striking “ACCOUNT” and inserting “SUBACCOUNT”; and  
 (ii) by striking “Account” each place it appears and inserting “Subaccount”; and  
 (B) in subsection (e)(1), by striking “Account” and inserting “Subaccount”; and  
 (3) in section 8 (16 U.S.C. 669g), in subsection (a), by striking “Account” and inserting “Subaccount”.

#### SEC. 103. SAVINGS CLAUSE.

The Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act (16 U.S.C. 669 et seq.) is amended—

(1) by redesignating section 14 as section 16; and

(2) by inserting after section 13 the following:

#### “SEC. 14. SAVINGS CLAUSE.

“Nothing in this Act shall be construed to enlarge or diminish the authority, jurisdiction, or responsibility of a State to manage, control, or regulate fish and wildlife under the law and regulations of the State on lands and waters within the State, including on Federal lands and waters.

#### “SEC. 15. STATUTORY CONSTRUCTION WITH RESPECT TO ALASKA.

“If any conflict arises between any provision of this Act and any provision of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (16 U.S.C. 3101 et seq.) or the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (43 U.S.C. 1601 et seq.), then the provision in the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act or the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act shall prevail.”

### TITLE II—TRIBAL WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AND RESTORATION

#### SEC. 201. INDIAN TRIBES.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) ACCOUNT.—The term “Account” means the Tribal Wildlife Conservation and Restoration Account established by subsection (b)(1).

(2) INDIAN TRIBE.—The term “Indian Tribe” has the meaning given such term in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5304).

(3) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of the Interior.

(4) TRIBAL SPECIES OF GREATEST CONSERVATION NEED.—The term “Tribal species of greatest conservation need” means any species identified by an Indian Tribe as requiring conservation management because of declining population, habitat loss, or other threats, or because of their biological or cultural importance to such Tribe.

(5) WILDLIFE.—The term “wildlife” means—  
 (A) any species of wild flora or fauna including fish and marine mammals;

(B) flora or fauna in a captive breeding, rehabilitation, and holding or quarantine program, the object of which is to reintroduce individuals of a depleted indigenous species into previously occupied range or to maintain a species for conservation purposes; and  
 (C) does not include game farm animals.

(b) TRIBAL WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AND RESTORATION ACCOUNT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—There is established in the Treasury an account to be known as the “Tribal Wildlife Conservation and Restoration Account”.

(2) AVAILABILITY.—Amounts in the Account shall be available for each fiscal year without further appropriation for apportionment in accordance with this title.

(3) DEPOSITS INTO ACCOUNT.—

Beginning in fiscal year 2023, and for each fiscal year thereafter, the Secretary of the Treasury shall transfer \$97,500,000 from the general fund of the Treasury to the Account.

(c) DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS TO INDIAN TRIBES.—Each fiscal year, the Secretary of the Treasury shall deposit funds into the Account and distribute such funds through a non-competitive application process according to guidelines and criteria, and reporting requirements determined by the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Director of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, in consultation with Indian Tribes. Such funds shall remain available until expended.

(d) WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES.—The distribution guidelines and criteria described in subsection (c) shall be based, in part, upon an Indian Tribe’s wildlife management responsibilities. Any funding allocated to an Indian Tribe in Alaska may only be used in a manner consistent with the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (43 U.S.C. 1601 et seq.), the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (16 U.S.C. 3101 et seq.), and Public Law 85–508 (commonly known as the “Alaska Statehood Act”) (48 U.S.C. note prec. 21). Alaska Native Corporations or Tribes may enter into cooperative agreements with the State of Alaska on conservation projects of mutual concern.

(e) USE OF FUNDS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), the Secretary may distribute funds from the Account to an Indian Tribe for any of the following purposes:

(A) To develop, carry out, revise, or enhance wildlife conservation and restoration programs to manage Tribal species of greatest conservation need and the habitats of such species, as determined by the Indian Tribe.

(B) To assist in the recovery of species listed as an endangered or threatened species under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.).

(C) For wildlife conservation education and wildlife-associated recreation projects.

(D) To manage a Tribal species of greatest conservation need and the habitat of such species, the range of which may be shared with a foreign country, State, or other Indian Tribe.

(E) To manage, control, and prevent invasive species as well as diseases and other risks to wildlife.

(F) For law enforcement activities that are directly related to the protection and conservation of wildlife.

(G) To develop, revise, and implement comprehensive wildlife conservation strategies and plans for such Tribe.

(H) For the hiring and training of wildlife conservation and restoration program staff.

(2) CONDITIONS ON THE USE OF FUNDS.—

(A) REQUIRED USE OF FUNDS.—In order to be eligible to receive funds under subsection (c), a Tribe’s application must include a proposal to use funds for at least one of the purposes described in subparagraphs (A) and (B) of paragraph (1).

(B) IMPERILED SPECIES RECOVERY.—In distributing funds under this section, the Secretary shall distribute not less than 15 percent of the total funds distributed to proposals to fund the recovery of a species, subspecies, or distinct population segment listed as a threatened species, endangered species, or candidate species under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.) or Tribal law.

(C) LIMITATION.—In distributing funds under this section, the Secretary shall distribute not more than 15 percent of all funds distributed under this section for the purpose described in paragraph (1)(C).

(f) NO MATCHING FUNDS REQUIRED.—No Indian Tribe shall be required to provide matching

funds to be eligible to receive funds under this Act.

(g) PUBLIC ACCESS NOT REQUIRED.—Funds apportioned from the Tribal Wildlife Conservation and Restoration Account shall not be conditioned upon the provision of public or non-Tribal access to Tribal or private lands, waters, or holdings.

(h) ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS.—Of the funds deposited under subsection (b)(3) for each fiscal year, not more than 3 percent shall be used by the Secretary for administrative costs.

(i) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS TO INSPECTOR GENERAL.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Office of the Inspector General of the Department of the Interior ½ of 1 percent of the amounts made available this section for the purposes of providing oversight and accountability with respect to expenditure of funds authorized under this section, to remain available until September 30, 2029.

(j) SAVINGS CLAUSE.—Nothing in this Act shall be construed as modifying or abrogating a treaty with any Indian Tribe, or as enlarging or diminishing the authority, jurisdiction, or responsibility of an Indian Tribe to manage, control, or regulate wildlife.

(k) STATUTORY CONSTRUCTION WITH RESPECT TO ALASKA.—If any conflict arises between any provision of this Act and any provision of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (16 U.S.C. 3101 et seq.) or the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (43 U.S.C. 1601 et seq.), then the provision in the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act or the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act shall prevail.

### TITLE III—ENDANGERED SPECIES RECOVERY AND HABITAT CONSERVATION LEGACY FUND

#### SEC. 301. ENDANGERED SPECIES RECOVERY AND HABITAT CONSERVATION LEGACY FUND.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established in the Treasury of the United States a fund, to be known as the “Endangered Species Recovery and Habitat Conservation Legacy Fund” (referred to in this section as the “Fund”).

(b) FUNDING.—For each of fiscal years 2023 through 2026, the Secretary of the Treasury shall transfer from the general fund of the Treasury to the Fund \$187,500,000.

(c) AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS.—Amounts in the Fund shall be available to the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Director of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (referred to in this section as the “Secretary”), as provided in subsection (e), without further appropriation or fiscal year limitation.

(d) INVESTMENT OF AMOUNTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may request the Secretary of the Treasury to invest any portion of the Fund that is not, as determined by the Secretary, required to meet the current needs of the Fund.

(2) REQUIREMENT.—An investment requested under paragraph (1) shall be made by the Secretary of the Treasury in a public debt security—

(A) with a maturity suitable to the needs of the Fund, as determined by the Secretary; and

(B) bearing interest at a rate determined by the Secretary of the Treasury, taking into consideration current market yields on outstanding marketable obligations of the United States of comparable maturity.

(3) CREDITS TO FUND.—The income on investments of the Fund under this subsection shall be credited to, and form a part of, the Fund.

(e) USE OF FUNDS.—Amounts in the Fund shall be used for recovering the species managed under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.), in addition to amounts otherwise available for such purposes, as follows:

(1) ENDANGERED SPECIES RECOVERY GRANT PROGRAM.—\$75,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2023 through 2026, to remain available until expended, shall be used to establish and implement

a grant and technical assistance program, to be known as the "Endangered Species Recovery Grant Program", to provide competitive matching grants for the purpose of recovering species listed as a threatened species or an endangered species under section 4 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1533) by addressing the backlog in the development of recovery plans, and implementing the backlog of activities identified in existing recovery plans, under subsection (f) of that section (16 U.S.C. 1533(f)). The Secretary shall enter into an agreement with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to establish and cooperatively manage the Endangered Species Recovery Grant Program in accordance with the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.) and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Establishment Act (16 U.S.C. 3701 et seq.).

(2) INTERAGENCY CONSULTATION RESPONSIBILITIES.—\$75,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2023 through 2026, to remain available until expended, shall be used for the United States Fish and Wildlife Service to address interagency consultation responsibilities under section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1536).

(3) CONSERVATION ACTIVITIES.—\$28,125,000 for each of fiscal years 2023 through 2026, to remain available until expended, shall be used for the United States Fish and Wildlife Service to work with non-Federal entities, including through, but not limited to, the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program, the Coastal Program, and the North American Wetlands Conservation Act (16 U.S.C. 4401 et seq.).—

(A) to conserve at risk species, species that are candidates or proposed for listing, and species that are listed as threatened or endangered species under section 4 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1533), including through rescue and rehabilitation efforts; and

(B) to conserve wildlife habitat.

(4) VOLUNTARY CONSERVATION AGREEMENTS.—\$9,375,000 for each of fiscal years 2023 through 2026, to remain available until expended, shall be used for the United States Fish and Wildlife Service to address the development and permitting of voluntary conservation agreements under section 10 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1539).

(f) SUPPLEMENT, NOT SUPPLANT.—Amounts made available under this section shall supplement and not supplant any other Federal amounts made available to carry out activities described in this section in an annual appropriations Act of Congress.

(g) SUBMISSION OF SPECIES LISTS TO CONGRESS.—

(1) PRIORITY LIST OF SPECIES.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary, shall submit to the Committees on Environment and Public Works and Appropriations of the Senate and the Committees on Natural Resources and Appropriations of the House of Representatives a list of threatened species and endangered species for which recovery plans described in subsection (e)(1) will be developed or implemented for fiscal year 2023.

(2) ANNUAL LIST OF SPECIES.—Until the date on which all of the amounts in the Fund are expended, the President shall annually submit to Congress, together with the annual budget of the United States, a list of threatened species and endangered species for which recovery plans described in subsection (e)(1) will be developed or implemented with amounts from the Fund.

(h) PUBLIC DONATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may accept public cash donations that advance efforts—

(A) to address the backlog in the development and implementation of recovery plans; and

(B) to encourage relevant public-private partnerships.

(2) CREDITS TO FUND.—Any cash donations accepted under paragraph (1) shall be credited to, and form a part of, the Fund.

(3) REJECTION OF DONATIONS.—The Secretary may reject a donation under this section when

the rejection is in the interest of the Federal Government, as determined by the Secretary.

(i) ALLOCATION AUTHORITY.—

(1) SUBMISSION OF COST ESTIMATES.—The President shall submit to Congress detailed allocations by program element of the amount recommended for allocation in a fiscal year from amounts made available under subsection (c), consistent with the use of funds under subsection (e), as follows:

(A) For fiscal year 2023, not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

(B) For each fiscal year thereafter, until the date on which all of the amounts in the Fund are allocated, as part of the annual budget submission of the President under section 1105(a) of title 31, United States Code.

(2) ALTERNATE ALLOCATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Committees on Appropriations of the Senate and House of Representatives may provide for alternate allocation of amounts recommended for allocation in a given fiscal year from amounts made available under subsection (c), consistent with the use of funds under subsection (e), including allocations by program element.

(B) ALLOCATION BY PRESIDENT.—

(i) NO ALTERNATE ALLOCATIONS.—If Congress has not enacted legislation establishing alternate allocations, including by program, by the date on which the Act making full-year appropriations for the Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies for the applicable fiscal year is enacted into law, only then shall amounts recommended for allocation for that fiscal year from amounts made available under subsection (c), consistent with the use of funds under subsection (e), be allocated by the President or apportioned or allotted by program pursuant to title 31, United States Code.

(ii) INSUFFICIENT ALTERNATE ALLOCATION.—If Congress enacts legislation establishing alternate allocations, including by program, for amounts recommended for allocation in a given fiscal year from amounts made available under subsection (c), consistent with the use of funds under subsection (e), that are less than the full amount recommended for allocation for that fiscal year, the difference between the amount recommended for allocation and the alternate allocation shall be allocated by the President and apportioned and allotted by program pursuant to title 31, United States Code.

(j) PROHIBITIONS.—No amounts from the Fund shall be used—

(1) to make any listing determination relating to the endangered or threatened status of any species pursuant to section 4(a) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1533(a));

(2) on any experimental population (as defined in paragraph (1) of section 10(j) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1539(j))) of a threatened or endangered species that is determined to be nonessential under that section;

(3) outside of the United States (as defined in section 3 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1532)); and

(4) to acquire any Federal land.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The bill, as amended, is debatable for 1 hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Natural Resources or their respective designees.

The gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. DINGELL) and the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN), each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. DINGELL).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 2773.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 2773, the Recovering America's Wildlife Act. This legislation has been years in the making, and this moment is the culmination of the collected works of a bipartisan group of Members, a strong, diverse coalition of advocates, and grassroots support from across the country.

This work began in 2015 when the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies—which represents State fish and wildlife agencies across the country—established a blue ribbon panel on sustaining America's diverse fish and wildlife resources.

After working closely with hunting and fishing organizations, as well as partners in the sportsmen's community, businesses, and other advocates, it was decided that we needed a 21st century model of funding conservation to address the current shortfalls in wildlife conservation.

Right now, the United States is facing an unprecedented biodiversity crisis. One-third of all bird species are in need of urgent conservation action. In fact, the number of birds in the United States and Canada have fallen by 29 percent since 1970; a decline of almost 3 billion fewer birds.

We have seen similar declines across the board. For example, 40 percent of freshwater fish species are also at risk. One-third of all U.S. wildlife species are currently imperiled or vulnerable.

These developments threaten our common environmental heritage, reduce opportunities for outdoor recreation, and will require costly and aggressive interventions if not addressed soon.

This legislation is particularly critical for the sportsmen's community. As one of the co-chairs of the Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus, I have always said that sportsmen and women are some of our best conservation advocates, as they understand the on-the-ground reality of the decline in wildlife and the importance of cost-effective conservation.

Their input has been critical to the historic and innovative legislation before us today. Without a change in the way we finance fish and wildlife conservation, the list of Federally threatened and endangered species will balloon from nearly 1,600 species today to thousands more in the future.

□ 1500

The cost of inaction is immense. The longer we wait to address this issue, the more resources we will ultimately need to safeguard our Nation's wildlife and environment. And we cannot keep waiting. We must take the bold, urgent action that addresses the scale of the threat. We need strong, proactive conservation measures to address these

unmet needs, and that is why the Recovering America's Wildlife Act is necessary.

The legislation provides approximately \$1.4 billion in dedicated, annual funding to the States, territories, and Native American Tribes for proactive conservation efforts for the approximately 12,000 species of wildlife and plants identified under State wildlife action plans.

This bold investment in our Nation's wildlife will pay significant dividends. It will allow States to take proactive action that will prevent at-risk species from becoming endangered. This is critical not only to preserving our common environmental heritage, but for supporting hunters, anglers, and the almost \$900 billion outdoor recreation economy.

As I have said previously, as one of the co-chairs of the Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus, I understand the importance of these measures to support fishermen and hunters across the country.

I thank my three fellow co-chairs of the Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus who have sponsored the Recovering America's Wildlife Act as well. It shows the strong, bipartisan support for this bill.

The broad group of stakeholders supporting the Recovering America's Wildlife Act underscores the need for action and the support for this approach. Hundreds of leading sportsmen's groups, hunting and fishing advocates across the country, conservation organizations, environmental organizations, and businesses, all support the legislation for good reason: it utilizes proven funding mechanisms, boldly addresses pressing conservation needs, and prevents the need for more costly interventions in the future.

The Recovering America's Wildlife Act is the product of years and years of work and consultation with these stakeholders and has broad bipartisan support. This legislation has received bipartisan support in both the House and Senate, and the thoughtful input of my colleagues has resulted in strong consensus legislation that will benefit every single congressional district in the country.

We have a conservation, economic, and moral rationale to act in order to protect and recover America's wildlife for future generations. This is an opportunity to take historic action to address a pressing conservation need, and I ask my colleagues that they support the Recovering America's Wildlife Act.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in reluctant opposition to H.R. 2773, as drafted. The goal of this bill is commendable. Republicans and Democrats alike want to see America's wildlife thrive. Unfortunately, the legislation as written contains partisan provisions that I simply cannot support.

State and Tribal fish and wildlife agencies have long been recognized as the primary and most well-equipped managers of local species and habitat in the United States. After all, those on the ground are more attuned to what is happening in their backyards than the Federal Government. That is why State and Tribal wildlife agencies, as well as prominent sportsmen's groups support this bill.

While the bill would provide financial resources to States and Tribes to help meet wildlife recovery goals, the spending is mandatory and lacks any offset. This spending is not pocket change. The Congressional Budget Office estimated the Rules Committee Print would lead to more than \$12 billion—that is \$12 billion—in direct spending in the first decade of the program alone. And I say the first decade, because that is only what is in the so-called scoring window. In reality, this program and its mandatory spending would last forever since there is no sunset in titles I and II of the bill.

Mr. Speaker, this is not the modern-day funding models suggested by the blue ribbon commission. This is an important issue, and we should make the responsible, tough decisions on how to fund it.

This funding model has no offset ever, and it has an average expenditure of \$1.4 billion per year. It is the most irresponsible, lazy way to fund the program, especially with the record government spending that is contributing to record inflation. At a time of rampant inflation, it would be wildly irresponsible to drive inflation even higher and saddle future generations with the consequences. The debt created by this bill will only add to our Nation's current \$30 trillion debt.

This bill also lacks a sunset provision. Without a sunset, there is no mechanism to ensure oversight or proper review of the program to fix flaws that may arise. Mandating a permanent new program is poor governance, and it ignores precedent. Congress routinely passes legislation like the Farm Bill or the Water Resources Development Act which have proper sunsets. Those sunsets require us to come back and do our jobs by assessing what is working, what is not working, and making tweaks and changes to the law.

The bill does not allow Congress the opportunity to perform the needed oversight. Instead, it requires spending \$1.4 billion per year in perpetuity. I, and my fellow Republican committee members, tried to resolve these fiscal issues with amendments at the committee markup. We were told by the Democrat majority that, although they opposed these amendments at the time, they would work with us on finding a funding offset before this bill would be considered on the floor.

We stayed at the negotiating table, as did the bill's sponsor, Mrs. DINGELL, whom I have a lot of respect for and commend her for her efforts on this

bill. But larger forces decided to ram this bill forward without fixing anything. In fact, the majority made the bill worse than it was when it left our committee.

They decided to airdrop provisions into a new title III that would siphon money away from States and Tribes and give it to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. That is in direct contrast to the spirit of this bill to give money to the State and Tribal agencies so that they could do the management.

We never even had the chance to debate this terrible title in the committee. The whole point of this bill was to empower States and Tribes who are the ones, again, who are closest to our lands and waters, not to increase the Washington, D.C., Federal bureaucracy, which is now what this bill will do.

A number of Republican amendments proposed to the Rules Committee tried to fix these problems and several other issues but they were similarly ignored, depriving us of ways to improve the bill and debate these issues today. As a result of all of this, we have a regrettably flawed bill. The situation we are now in was avoidable. The bill before us represents a lost opportunity to forge significant bipartisan compromise. It didn't have to be this way, and I hope that this is not a partisan sign of the future of conservation.

I will remain at the table and hope that my Democratic colleagues come back and work together with us on a lasting solution. Until then, I am opposed to H.R. 2773, and I reluctantly encourage my colleagues to vote "no" on the resolution.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my colleague's perspective on permanent funding, and I have a great deal of respect for him. We have and will always continue to work together on conservation issues. But the fact is we know that stable and predictable funding is critical to effective conservation efforts, and that is what the blue ribbon panel on sustaining America's diverse fish and wildlife resources—which included 26 members from the hunting and fishing business and outdoor recreation communities—found in their 2016 report whose recommendations formed the basis of this legislation. We have seen that this funding structure has been fundamental to the success of Pittman-Robertson and Dingell-Johnson conservation programs upon which this is built.

I appreciate my colleague's views on oversight. This legislation contains robust guardrails to ensure that there is appropriate use of public funds, including reporting requirements and other oversight provisions.

So the Recovering America's Wildlife Act does meet the moment because of its funding structure and because of the strong oversight language which is

supported by the coalitions of hundreds of organizations.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. HUFFMAN).

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative DINGELL for the time and for her great work on this landmark bipartisan legislation, the Recovering America's Wildlife Act, or RAWA, as we call it.

This is a bright spot amidst so many problems facing our Nation. As our constituents are well aware, the climate crisis and other human impacts have dramatically harmed our Nation's wildlife, and, in fact, State agencies have identified 12,000 wildlife species that are in need of conservation assistance. In the United States alone, there are currently 1,300 species that are either threatened or endangered. If we fail to act, these profound and irreversible losses will continue to have devastating ecosystem impacts.

States, territories, and Tribes are doing great work to address threats to wildlife, but their conservation efforts have been chronically underfunded for decades. This stream of dedicated funding from RAWA is a lifeline for local wildlife agencies.

This bill also provides local governments the resources to address key elements impacting biodiversity loss such as wildfire and drought which are worsening as the climate crisis accelerates. RAWA lays the groundwork for wildfire threat mitigation on a number of fronts, including managing vegetation and creating wildlife-friendly fire management plans on the front end, performing emergency rescues during the fires, and restoring critical habitat after fires.

RAWA funding will also allow local communities to restore habitats that have been harmed by drought and protect vulnerable ecosystems from further damage because we know these drought conditions are going to continue.

We cannot lose sight of the cultural implications of this legislation. The funding in this bill for Tribal nations to recover fish and wildlife is critical to protecting the species that have been integral to their cultures since time immemorial. Biodiversity is declining at a rate not seen since the last mass extinction. Tackling this crisis simply cannot wait.

As chairman of the Water, Oceans, and Wildlife Subcommittee of the House Natural Resources Committee, I am incredibly glad to see this bill on the floor today with strong bipartisan support—42 Republican cosponsors, and 152 Democrats.

Madam Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to vote "yes."

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I will point out that even though there is a reporting requirement in the legislation, once you approve mandatory, permanent spending, then Congress loses our leverage. Creating a permanent program doesn't bode well for

oversight from Congress. Programs that were mentioned like Pittman-Robinson, think about the land and water conservation fund, all of those had dedicated funding streams. This funding is coming straight out of the Treasury. It is coming out of our kids' and our grandkids' piggy banks.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BENTZ).

Mr. BENTZ. Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD an article from Claremont Review of Books, spring, 2022, titled "In the Red," by Jeffrey H. Anderson.

#### IN THE RED

Our glidepath to insolvency.

When Ross Perot won an impressive 19 percent of the popular vote as an independent candidate for president in 1992, his main issue was the national debt. In one of his unusual, half-hour-long campaign ads, Perot declared, "Just this year, we ran up \$341 billion in new debt . . . That's our legislators and our president trying to buy our vote, this year, with what used to be our money."

Three decades later, our national debt—which reached \$4 trillion the year that Perot ran—has hit \$30 trillion. If our debt were to keep rising at that rate over the next 60 years, it would increase more than 50-fold and surpass \$1.5 quadrillion (a quadrillion, which sounds like a made-up number, is a thousand trillions).

The portion of the national debt that really matters is the almost 80 percent that's held by entities—whether foreign or state-side—other than the federal government. Such "debt held by the public," which is fueled by deficit spending, has to be paid back to outside entities, whereas debt *not* held by the public merely involves intragovernmental transfers. Foreign holdings compose about a third of all debt held by the public. Japan and China hold by far the most (over \$1 trillion each), some of which belongs to private investors and some to government entities. Put another way, China—an increasingly hostile world superpower—has more than \$1 trillion of leverage over us.

It's getting worse, fast. Our recent deficit spending has been truly historic. In 2020, based on official federal tallies (the basis for all figures in this essay), the federal government brought in \$3.4 trillion in tax revenues and dished our \$6.6 trillion in spending—so, for every \$10 that came in, \$19 went out. This lavish expenditure smashed the deficit record like New York's Bob Beamon smashed the long-jump record in the 1968 Olympics. Beamon soared past the previous record—27 feet, 4¾ inches—to make an astounding 29-foot, 2½-inch jump. In similar fashion, with the deficit record sitting at \$1.4 trillion, the federal government in 2020 spent a spectacular \$3.1 trillion that it didn't have. In 2020 alone, the government racked up more deficit spending than it had during the first 36 fiscal years of the postwar era (1947 through 1982), and that's after adjusting for inflation.

Even before our blowout spending during COVID, our deficits had already reached breathtaking levels. In constant 2012 dollars (to adjust for inflation), the average annual deficit during the four years from 2016 through 2019—a stretch of relative peace and prosperity—was \$700 billion. In comparison, during the four years from 1942 through 1945—during which we funded and fought a two-front war against Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan—the average annual deficit was \$505 billion in constant 2012 dollars. After the war (using the Office of Management and Budget's composite deflator), we owed \$3 trillion of debt held by the public in constant

2012 dollars (four times what we owed when the war began). Subsequent statesmen succeeded in cutting that tally in half by 1974 (to \$1.5 trillion), but it rose back to end-of-World-War-II levels by 1986 (to \$3 trillion), doubled end-of-World-War-II levels by 2008 (\$6 trillion), tripled them by 2010 (\$9 trillion), quadrupled them by 2014 (\$12 trillion), quintupled them by 2019 (\$15 trillion), and sextupled them by 2020 (\$18 trillion).

In other words, we added as much debt held by the public in 2020 alone as we did from the end of World War II to the end of 2008, and we racked up more debt in the 12 months of 2020 than we did during the four years of the Second World War. That's after adjusting for inflation.

#### NO BIG DEAL

And yet, incredibly, many politicians and commentators claim that our staggering indebtedness is nothing much to worry about. Unwilling to face the challenge of reining in the budget, we seem to have thrown up our hands in recent years and chosen to treat our ballooning deficits as funny money.

Debt apologists like to measure taxes, spending, and debt in relation to the gross domestic product (GDP), rather than in relation to inflation or population growth. That way, if Americans' tax bills double, but the economy doubles in size over that same span, it can be said that Americans aren't paying any more in taxes (as a percentage of GDP). The same thing is true with the debt, which only rises by this measure if it increases faster than economic output.

This way of talking partially masks the magnitude of our debt problem by assuming that our government should grow every bit as fast as our economy. Even so, by the percent-of-GDP measure, debt held by the public is now at approximately end-of-World War II levels. But whereas it fell dramatically after World War II, there is no reason to think it will do so now. It more than tripled from 2001 (32 percent of GDP) to 2020 (100 percent of GDP), putting us on course to surpass 300 percent of GDP if it grows at the same rate from 2020 to 2039.

For all of the myriad cultural, technological, and moral problems we face, few things would guarantee the undoing of the founders' experiment in self-government more surely than continuing to pile on the burden, to ourselves and our posterity, of runaway debt. Thomas Jefferson described fiscal profligacy as a precursor to inevitable misery and suffering, the first in a stampede of apocalyptic horsemen. "[T]he fore horse of this frightful team is public debt," he wrote. "Taxation follows that, and in its train wretchedness and oppression." This wretchedness will only be more keenly felt as interest rates rise. Too much debt puts power in the hands of our enemies and renders the average American poorer every year.

#### MANDATORY BANKRUPTCY

The first step in avoiding a truly calamitous, debt-ridden future is to understand how we got ourselves into this predicament to begin with. It is not national defense or even the New Deal but rather the Great Society that is bankrupting us.

A fundamental preliminary question is whether our government taxes too little or spends too much. The answer is easy to determine. In 2021, the federal government collected more than three-and-a-half times as much money, in real dollars per capita—that is, above and beyond inflation and population growth—as it did at the start of the postwar period. But it spent nearly seven times as much. From 1947 (the first postwar fiscal year, as FY 1946 began in July of 1945) through 2021, the population of the United States rose 2.3-fold, while prices rose nearly 13-fold. Combining these two factors, the federal government could have collected and

spent 29 times as much in nominal dollars in 2021 as it did in 1947 without collecting or spending any more in real (inflation-adjusted) dollars per capita. Instead, the federal government taxed more than 100 times as much in 2021 as in 1947 and spent almost 200 times as much. By any reasonable standard, our government isn't afflicted by a shortage of tax revenues but by an almost endless appetite for spending.

What are we spending all of that money on? *Contra* the Left's repeated claims, it isn't defense—and our debt problem wasn't created by Ronald Reagan. We actually spend less per capita on defense now, after adjusting for inflation, than we did during the Kennedy Administration. Real per-capita defense spending fell from \$2,283 in 1962 to \$1,953 in 2020, a drop of 14 percent. Even at the height of the Reagan defense buildup, we exceeded the 1962 level by only 2 percent. Meanwhile, real per-capita spending on everything but defense increased more than eight-fold (from \$1,930 in 1962 to \$15,646 in 2020). If overall federal spending had followed the same trajectory as defense spending, we would have had a surplus in 2020 of \$2.1 trillion instead of a deficit of \$3.1 trillion.

The problem isn't defense: it's health care. More specifically, it was Lyndon Johnson and his (mostly) Democratic congressional allies who put us on a glidepath toward insolvency with the passage of their Great Society programs. The New Deal put strain on the federal budget, to be sure, but not enough to break it. By 1964, over three decades after Franklin Roosevelt had taken office, federal debt held by the public had fallen more than 40 percent from the end of World War II, in real (inflation-adjusted) dollars. The real deficit was 1/68th as large as it would be in 2020. As the first Ford Mustangs rolled off the assembly line, the country's debt was manageable and dropping, its deficits were minimal, and seven of the postwar years had actually produced surpluses. The next year, Johnson signed legislation creating Medicare and Medicaid.

Broadly speaking, there are two ways to fund federal programs. Congress either decides how much funding a program will get ("discretionary" spending), or just puts a program on autopilot and finds out later how much it turned out to cost ("mandatory" spending). With discretionary spending, Congress decides each year how much money to appropriate (for something like national defense), taking into account such quaint notions as what we need and what we can afford. With "mandatory" spending, Congress creates a program and pledges to fund it at the same time, even though no one knows what its price tag will be.

Within "mandatory" spending, there are programs that have a dedicated and generally sufficient revenue stream (such as Social Security), and there are those that do *not* have a dedicated revenue stream that comes anywhere near covering their costs—such as Medicare and Medicaid (and Obamacare, part of which expanded Medicaid). Payroll taxes cover only about a third of Medicare's costs and none of Medicaid's. In other words, no one who launched these programs had any idea how to pay for them.

This has had extraordinary consequences. The first year that Medicare spending visibly hit the books was 1967. From that point through 2020, Medicare and Medicaid cost a combined \$17.8 trillion, while our combined federal deficits over that same span were \$17.9 trillion. In essence, our deficit problem is a Medicare and Medicaid problem.

#### THE FATHER OF OUR DEBT

By 1975, a decade after they were created, Medicare and Medicaid were entrenched. From that point through 2019—the most re-

cent "normal" (pre-COVID) spending year—real per-capita Medicare and Medicaid spending rose nine-fold (more than triple the rise in Social Security costs over that period). In 1975, we spent more than five times as much on defense as on Medicare and Medicaid combined. By 2019, we spent 56 percent more on Medicare and Medicaid than on defense.

In 2019, the federal government collected about \$10,500 in revenues per capita and spent about \$13,500. Here's how Americans' contributions to the federal treasury were allocated. The first \$1,000 essentially just went into the trash—it was used to pay interest on the debt, not to buy anything. About \$2,000 was spent on defense and another \$2,000 on non-defense discretionary spending. Roughly \$3,000 was spent on Social Security, \$3,000 on Medicare and Medicaid (with about a 60 percent-40 percent split between them), and \$2,500 on other "mandatory" spending, to include much of Obamacare, unemployment, welfare, etc. So, in all, about \$4,000 (or roughly 30 percent) was discretionary spending, actually voted upon by Congress, and about \$9,500 (roughly 70 percent) was either "mandatory" spending or payments on the national debt.

If we had a Mount Rushmore of deficit spending, then, Lyndon Johnson would merit George Washington's place of honor as the father of our debt. Beside him would be the three most recent presidents. For we have run up more debt under Barack Obama, Donald Trump, and Joe Biden—even after adjusting for inflation—than we did under the previous 42 presidents combined. After a brief period of fiscal responsibility under Bill Clinton, the average annual deficit soared to \$455 billion under George W. Bush (\$41 billion more than under his father), \$857 billion under Obama, and \$1.462 trillion under Trump (who was averaging \$805 billion even before COVID hit).

Again—amazingly—these figures are adjusted for inflation. They are based on each president's having been responsible for the deficit the year after he took office—for example, Obama, who took office when fiscal year 2009 was already underway, was responsible for fiscal years 2010 through 2017. But note the following exceptions: the \$179 billion in Obama-signed "stimulus" funds spent in 2009, and the \$1.115 trillion in Biden-signed COVID "stimulus" funds spent in 2021 are treated as part of Obama's and Biden's deficit tallies, respectively; and the \$147 billion in TARP loans repaid in 2010 (\$110 billion) and 2011 (\$37 billion) are counted as reductions in George W. Bush's deficit tallies, as they paid back money that was counted as deficit spending when it was loaned out on Bush's watch.

Clinton is the obvious outlier, having managed an average annual surplus of \$3 billion during his eight years in office, six of them with a Republican Congress. After Perot sounded the alarm and Republicans won the House for the first time in four decades, Speaker Newt Gingrich and his Republican colleagues—working with Clinton—made good on the Contract with America's pledge to balance the budget. They cut defense spending, passed welfare reform, benefitted from a strong economy that increased revenues, and were able to lower federal interest payments as the debt fell. Most surprisingly, however, they managed to cut Medicare spending, via reforms passed through the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 (BBA). After Medicare's costs had quadrupled from 1982 to 1997, they actually dropped from 1998 to 1999—not just in comparison to inflation, but in terms of the actual number of dollars that went out the door.

It was around this time that the "experts" decided the work was done and the free-spending days could return once again. In

2002, after the George W. Bush tax cuts had been enacted, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) projected that the federal government would run a surplus in nine out of the ten years from 2003 through 2012 and a decade-long surplus of \$2.3 trillion. It turned out that the federal government ran a deficit in all ten of those years and a decade-long deficit of \$7.1 trillion. The CBO also projected that debt held by the public at the end of 2012 would be \$1.3 trillion. It turned out to be \$11.3 trillion, so the CBO was off by \$10 trillion and a factor of nearly nine.

Despite this subsequent debt explosion, the Clinton-Gingrich era was a successful one in terms of fiscal responsibility. Indeed, over the past 40 years, deficits have been lowest when a Democrat has been in the White House and Republicans have controlled both houses of Congress. The second-best scenario has been a Republican president with either party controlling both houses of Congress. Next-best has been a Democratic president paired with a mixed Congress (with each party controlling one house), followed by a Republican president paired with a mixed Congress. The worst scenario has been Democratic control of the whole government. Over the past four decades, Democratic control (average deficit of \$1.1 trillion in constant 2012 dollars) has been more than twice as costly as Republican control (\$490 billion).

No matter who is in power, however, about 70 percent of our spending—consuming about 90 percent of our tax revenues—is on autopilot. To balance the budget by focusing solely on cutting those portions of the budget that Congress actively controls through the appropriations process, we would have to cut discretionary spending—which includes defense—by about 75 percent. Any realistic effort to balance the budget, therefore, must focus on "mandatory" spending.

#### FIXING OUR MESS

Medicare absolutely must be reformed. Its autopilot has malfunctioned and is flying not only the plane but also the country into the ground. We came tantalizingly close to fixing things back in 1999, when the National Bipartisan Commission on the Future of Medicare grew out of the BBA and drafted an appealing blueprint for reform. The Commission, chaired by Democratic Senator John Breaux and Republican Congressman Bill Thomas, floated a variety of proposals, most notably "premium support," which would utilize private competition to keep public costs down. But events intervened: Politico healthcare editor Adriel Bettelheim writes that "with the Monica Lewinsky scandal festering and the threat . . . of impeachment growing, [Clinton] took a very public turn to appease his left flank" and turned against the commission just as it was wrapping up its 11 months of work.

Nevertheless, the commission was a serious effort at exploring promising ideas, many of which Congressman Paul Ryan picked up during his Obamacare-fighting era. Ryan's advocacy of premium support did not keep him from being tapped as Mitt Romney's 2012 running mate, nor did it hurt the Romney-Ryan ticket (Romney did that all on his own). This suggests that Medicare reform can be politically viable when advanced with determination and skill.

Medicaid also cannot go on in its present form. Its funding system, whereby every \$1 of state funding is matched by between \$1 and \$9 of federal funding, invites waste and inefficiency. The more a state spends on Medicaid, the more federal money it gets. If it manages to reform its Medicaid program, it gets at most half of the savings—usually far less. Also, states often hire consultants who concoct elaborate shell games to exaggerate states' Medicaid funding, thereby

bringing in even more federal money, much of which funds non-Medicaid ventures. If Medicaid were reformed so that each state simply received a given amount of federal funding, independent of the state's level of funding, that would presumably remove most of these perverse incentives and reduce Medicaid's costs.

Social Security has always been self-funded, but it too is projected to dip into the red about a dozen years from now. It poses nowhere near the threat to our fiscal solvency that Medicare and Medicaid do, but its costs have still risen faster than overall federal spending, and it does need to be sensibly revised. The percentage of the U.S. population that is over age 75 is roughly the same as the percentage that was over age 65 when Social Security was created, yet the eligibility age for receiving full retirement benefits has been raised just two years (from 65 to 67) over the past eight decades. Gradually (but not too gradually) raising that age to reflect current biological and fiscal realities is an obvious and necessary fix.

In addition to changing individual programs, there are measures we can take to promote fiscal responsibility more generally. Simply demanding a balanced budget, either as a matter of policy or through a constitutional amendment, will not do: the state could still spend as much as it accrued, which might encourage ever-greater levels of taxation to fund an ever-larger government, as in many European countries. Instead, we ought to focus on measures that can keep spending itself low.

For instance, the American citizenry would be more apt to view the debt as a shared concern if nearly everyone paid at least some income tax, as Florida Senator Rick Scott has proposed. At the least, no one's income tax bill should go negative, as it does when tax credits are made "refundable"—available not as a tax cut but as a payment to those who don't pay income tax. A few years ago, I released "The Main Street Tax Plan" (Hudson Institute, 2016), which the Tax Foundation said would reduce deficits. It declared, "Nearly everyone should be paying something in income tax, however small, and Americans shouldn't regard April 15 as a payday."

Some, such as Senator Mitch McConnell, oppose Scott's proposal because—in McConnell's words—it "raises taxes" (for people who don't pay income taxes). Those who share this concern should consider pairing refund reform with an end to the Medicare payroll tax. Unlike the Social Security payroll tax, which is viral and funds Social Security as a (more or less) pay-in-for-yourself program, the Medicare payroll tax funds only about a third of Medicare and helps perpetuate the false notion that Medicare too is mostly pay-in-for-yourself. Eliminating the Medicare payroll tax would soften the perception of Medicare as an entitlement, simplify the tax code, and ease the tax burden of the working poor. Combining this with Scott's plan would encourage more people to care about the size and scope of the federal government.

In 2010, back when the Tea Party was ascendant and the national debt was \$13 trillion rather than \$30 trillion, I proposed (in National Affairs) a Limited Government Amendment to the Constitution. Such an amendment would limit annual increases in federal spending to inflation plus two percentage points, except during a formally declared war, or if two-thirds of Congress and three-quarters of state legislatures authorized additional spending for other reasons. An amendment in this spirit could greatly facilitate fiscal restraint.

It has become fashionable to think of constitutional amendments as relics from the

past. But then, so are fiscal responsibility and—increasingly—representative government. The founders made the Constitution amendable for a reason, and we should take our cues from them. In the late 1990s, we showed—briefly—that it's possible to take action to reverse our course and help save our country from the tragic fate that Jefferson described. But the first step is to recognize that the \$30 trillion elephant in the room isn't going away. It's just growing bigger.

Mr. BENTZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition, sadly, to H.R. 2773. Although protecting our endangered species is truly a worthy cause, our country is not fiscally sound, and to commit \$1.4 billion a year in perpetuity is exactly the kind of spending that has landed us in the mess we are now in.

Let me be clear: we do not have the money. In the 30 years since 1992, the national debt has increased from \$4 trillion to \$30 trillion. Mr. Anderson notes in his article that:

At that rate over the next 60 years, our debt would increase by more than 50-fold to surpass \$1.5 quadrillion. In case one is wondering, a quadrillion is 1,000 trillions.

Mr. Speaker, some might say: Just raise taxes. But, Mr. Speaker, the author of the article points out that, in fact, the Federal Government last year taxed over 100 times what it did in the first postwar year and spent nearly 200 times as much. So taxes are not the problem. Spending is the problem.

The \$1.4 billion per year is perpetual. Now, under anyone's measure, perpetuity is a long time. Since this money will never be paid back, some might say like those deep in credit card debt: We will just pay the interest.

The interest on \$1.5 billion for 30 years at current rates of 3.4 percent is \$51 million a year. But, Mr. Speaker, we have to look at the current total interest bill. It is estimated to be almost \$400 billion a year or about 8.7 percent of everything we spend.

Why would we add to this enormous obligation?

There is a quote by Ernest Hemingway: How did you go bankrupt?

The answer is: Gradually, then suddenly.

Mr. Speaker, this is exactly how bankruptcy works. You can keep spending recklessly and rack up debts for a while—even a long while—but at some point, it comes to an end abruptly. We have ignored our Nation's spending problems for far too long. We have been going bankrupt gradually, and I fear the day will come when we will go bankrupt immediately.

We must correct this course. For this reason, I cannot support, sadly, this bill.

□ 1515

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I would like to note that hunting and angling collectively support over \$200 billion in economic activity annually, including over 1.5 million jobs as well as almost \$15 billion in Federal tax revenue.

My home State of Michigan, the Great Lakes State, is home to almost

650,000 licensed hunters and over 1.1 million licensed fishermen and -women as of last year. However, with over 40 percent of freshwater fish at risk, and significant declines in game and nongame species that support local ecosystems, we need RAWA's investments in on-the-ground conservation to support hunting and fishing for future generations, which is why the major sportsmen's groups, like the Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation and Ducks Unlimited, have endorsed this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. PANETTA).

Mr. PANETTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of Recovering America's Wildlife Act.

This is a proactive piece of bipartisan legislation that would help our State and Tribal fish and wildlife agencies with the recovery and conservation of close to 12,000 species of fish, wildlife, and plants.

Now, I support this bill not only as the United States Representative for the central coast of California, a district that values and cherishes our wildlife, but also as the vice chair of the Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus.

As some of the most passionate wildlife conservationists across our country, many sportsmen and -women, including those in the Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation, no matter what their political persuasion, support this critical piece of legislation.

In addition to enhancing the Pittman-Robertson and Dingell-Johnson Acts, sportsmen and -women want to ensure that our species are protected and perpetuated. From bighorn sheep to the Sierra Nevada red fox, from the California condors to the coho salmon, and from moose to monarch butterflies, the intent of this legislation is to protect those and thousands of other iconic animals well before they need to be listed as endangered or threatened.

This way, rather than impose burdensome and costly regulations on fish and wildlife managers, sportsmen and -women, and private businesses, those species can be recovered and renewed well before any measures are mandated.

Look, it is estimated that it costs the Federal Government more than \$19 million, on average, to recover a single species once it is listed, including \$1 million to just list the species and \$18 million for the science and habitat work. Let's simply take 2,000 of the 12,000 species this bill would help conserve, and it would cost the Federal Government at least \$38 billion. This bill is a preventative measure to ensure that does not happen.

Through this legislation, we would not only save billions of dollars by not having to list species, but we would save thousands of plants and animals by ensuring that they are protected.

By providing millions of dollars in funding for the on-the-ground efforts,

we could recover, reintroduce, and restore wildlife, fish, flora, and fauna throughout our Nation.

As many species face the growing threat of becoming extinct at accelerated rates, due to changing global weather events and our climate crisis, this legislation and its proposed funding would protect those species well before they become endangered.

That is why sportsmen, community members, and my country members support this bill, and that is why I urge my colleagues to do the same by voting for and passing the Recovering America's Wildlife Act.

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

I know that we all like the idea of dynamic scoring, and I spend a lot of money on hunting and fishing myself, as do a lot of other Members of Congress. But CBO, unfortunately, does not take that into account.

I know we all think that this bill could help not have listings of endangered species. But case studies clearly show that Federal money alone will not keep species off the endangered species list.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the record the CBO score from the Senate version of the language that is in this bill.

U.S. CONGRESS,  
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,  
Washington, DC, May 26, 2022.

Hon. THOMAS CARPER,  
Chairman, Committee on Environment and Public Works, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: The Congressional Budget Office has prepared the enclosed cost

estimate for S. 2372, the Recovering America's Wildlife Act of 2022.

If you wish further details on this estimate, we will be pleased to provide them. The CBO staff contact is Madeleine Fox.

Sincerely,

PHILLIP L. SWAGEL,  
Director.

Enclosure.

S. 2372, RECOVERING AMERICA'S WILDLIFE ACT OF 2022—AS REPORTED BY THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS ON APRIL 27, 2022

|   | By fiscal year, millions of dollars— |           |               |
|---|--------------------------------------|-----------|---------------|
|   | 2022                                 | 2022–2027 | 2022–2032     |
| Direct Spending (Outlays) ..                      | 0                                    | 7,049     | 14,082        |
| Revenues .....                                    | 0                                    | 0         | 0             |
| Increase or Decrease (–)<br>in the Deficit .....  | 0                                    | 7,049     | 14,082        |
| Spending Subject to Appropriation (Outlays) ..... | 0                                    | 1         | not estimated |

Statutory pay-as-you-go procedures apply? Yes.

Increases on-budget deficits in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2033? \$5 billion.

Mandate Effects:  
Contains intergovernmental mandate? No.  
Contains private-sector mandate? No.

The bill would:  
Make funds available to the Department of the Interior for grants and other support for wildlife conservation by states, territories, and Indian tribes.

Allow the department to spend interest accrued on certain unspent balances for wildlife conservation.

Estimated budgetary effects would mainly stem from:

Spending without further appropriation on authorized activities.

Spending of interest credited from amounts invested in Treasury securities.

Bill summary: S. 2372 would amend the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act and appropriate funds for the Department of the Interior to support efforts by state, local, and tribal governments to conserve endangered and threatened species. The bill also would allow interest accrued on unspent balances in one account to be available without further appropriation for those activities.

The bill would require the President to provide the Congress each year with a list of threatened or endangered species and to estimate the amount of funding allocated for their conservation. S. 2372 also would direct the Government Accountability Office to study the progress of states, territories, the District of Columbia, and Indian tribes in protecting endangered and threatened species and to report its findings seven years after enactment.

Estimated Federal cost: The estimated budgetary effect of S. 2372 is shown in Table 1. The costs of the legislation fall within budget function 300 (natural resources and environment).

Basis of estimate: For this estimate, CBO assumes that S. 2372 will be enacted near the end of fiscal year 2022. On that basis, CBO expects that outlays from funds provided in 2022 would occur in 2023. Using information from the affected agencies and historical spending patterns for similar activities, CBO estimates that enacting S. 2372 would increase direct spending by \$14.1 billion over the 2022–2032 period.

TABLE 1.—ESTIMATED BUDGETARY EFFECTS OF S. 2372

|  | By fiscal year, millions of dollars— |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |           |           |
|--|--------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----------|-----------|
|  | 2022                                 | 2023  | 2024  | 2025  | 2026  | 2027  | 2028  | 2029  | 2030  | 2031  | 2032  | 2022–2027 | 2022–2032 |
| Increases in Direct Spending               |                                      |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |           |           |
| Title I, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service:   |                                      |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |           |           |
| Budget Authority .....                     | 850                                  | 1,100 | 1,200 | 1,300 | 1,300 | 1,300 | 1,300 | 1,300 | 1,300 | 1,300 | 1,300 | 7,050     | 13,550    |
| Estimated Outlays .....                    | 0                                    | 645   | 1,218 | 1,336 | 1,359 | 1,293 | 1,300 | 1,300 | 1,300 | 1,300 | 1,300 | 5,851     | 12,351    |
| Title II, Bureau of Indian Affairs:        |                                      |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |           |           |
| Budget Authority .....                     | 98                                   | 98    | 98    | 98    | 98    | 98    | 98    | 98    | 98    | 98    | 98    | 585       | 1,073     |
| Estimated Outlays .....                    | 0                                    | 98    | 78    | 94    | 107   | 99    | 98    | 98    | 98    | 98    | 98    | 476       | 963       |
| Title III, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service: |                                      |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |           |           |
| Estimated Budget Authority .....           | 188                                  | 191   | 192   | 193   | 3     | 1     | *     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 767       | 768       |
| Estimated Outlays .....                    | 0                                    | 191   | 154   | 185   | 120   | 73    | 38    | 8     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 722       | 768       |
| Total Changes in Direct Spending:          |                                      |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |           |           |
| Estimated Budget Authority .....           | 1,135                                | 1,388 | 1,489 | 1,590 | 1,401 | 1,399 | 1,398 | 1,398 | 1,398 | 1,398 | 1,398 | 8,402     | 15,390    |
| Estimated Outlays .....                    | 0                                    | 933   | 1,450 | 1,615 | 1,586 | 1,465 | 1,435 | 1,405 | 1,398 | 1,398 | 1,398 | 7,049     | 14,082    |

Components may not sum to totals because of rounding; \* = between zero and \$500,000.  
S. 2372 would require annual reports whose cost would total \$1 million over the 2022–2027 period, subject to the availability of appropriated funds.

Direct spending: S. 2372 would establish new accounts in the Treasury, specify the amounts to be deposited into those accounts each year, and make the funds in those accounts available to the Secretary of the Interior to spend without further appropriation. In 2021, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) spent \$713 million for similar activities.

Title I would make \$850 million available in 2022 for USFWS to make grants to state, local, and tribal governments for wildlife conservation. The amounts made available would increase in 2023 and 2024. In 2025 and every year thereafter, title I would make \$1.3 billion available for those purposes. CBO estimates that enacting this title would increase direct spending by \$12.4 billion over the 2022–2032 period.

Title II would make \$97.5 million available in 2022 and every year thereafter for the Bureau of Indian Affairs to help Indian tribes conserve species on tribal land that have the greatest need for conservation. CBO estimates that enacting this title would increase direct spending by \$963 million over the 2022–2032 period.

Title III would make \$187.5 million available each year from 2022 through 2025 for USFWS to make grants to states and Indian tribes for the conservation of endangered and threatened species and to carry out other authorities under the Endangered Species Act. A portion of those amounts—\$75 million each year—would be made available to the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to recover threatened or endangered species. CBO estimates that enacting this provision in

title III would increase direct spending by \$750 million over the 2022–2032 period.

In addition, title III would direct the Department of the Treasury to credit interest on unspent balances made available under that title to USFWS. That interest would be available to spend without further appropriation for recovery efforts under the Endangered Species Act. (Crediting interest to an account in the Treasury is an intragovernmental transfer and thus would have no budgetary effect but allowing the agency to spend the accrued amounts would increase direct spending.) Using the interest rates underlying the May 2022 baseline projections, CBO estimates that under this provision, \$18 million would be accrued and spent over the 2022–2032 period.

The bill would permit USFWS to accept and spend donations. CBO estimates that the effect on net direct spending from donations would be negligible over the 2022–2032 period. The bill would authorize the transfer of some penalties collected under current law to the accounts established under title I and title II, but S. 2372 would not authorize any new penalty collections.

Spending subject to appropriation: S. 2372 would require the President to submit to the Congress lists of threatened or endangered

species for which recovery efforts would be funded under the bill and to report annually on the amounts allocated for endangered species recovery, interagency consultation, and conservation activities. Using information about similar activities, CBO estimates that producing the annual reports would cost \$1 million over the 2022–2027 period; any spending would be subject to the availability of appropriated funds.

Under the bill, the Government Accountability Office would report in 2029 or 2030 on

conservation efforts authorized in the bill. Based on the cost of similar reports, CBO estimates that the cost of that report would be insignificant.

Pay-As-You-Go considerations: The Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010 establishes budget-reporting and enforcement procedures for legislation affecting direct spending or revenues. The net changes in outlays that are subject to those pay-as-you-go procedures are shown in Table 2.

TABLE 2.—CBO'S ESTIMATE OF THE STATUTORY PAY-AS-YOU-GO EFFECTS OF S. 2372, THE RECOVERING AMERICA'S WILDLIFE ACT, AS REPORTED BY THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON THE ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS ON APRIL 27, 2022

|                            | By fiscal year, millions of dollars— |      |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |           |           |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------------|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----------|-----------|
|                            | 2022                                 | 2023 | 2024  | 2025  | 2026  | 2027  | 2028  | 2029  | 2030  | 2031  | 2032  | 2022–2027 | 2022–2032 |
|                            | Net Increase in the Deficit          |      |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |           |           |
| Pay-As-You-Go Effect ..... | 0                                    | 933  | 1,450 | 1,615 | 1,586 | 1,465 | 1,435 | 1,405 | 1,398 | 1,398 | 1,398 | 7,049     | 14,082    |

Increase in long-term deficits: CBO estimates that enacting S. 2372 would increase on-budget deficits by more than \$5 billion in all of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2033.

Mandates: None.  
 Estimate prepared by: Federal Costs: Madeline Fox, Mandates: Lilia Ledezma.  
 Estimate reviewed by: Susan Willie, Chief, Natural and Physical Resources Cost Estimates Unit; H. Samuel Papenfuss, Deputy Director of Budget Analysis; Theresa Gullo, Director of Budget Analysis.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, this report does show that it will cost over \$12 billion in the first 10 years and \$1.4 billion thereafter.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. STAUBER).

Mr. STAUBER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today opposed to the underlying bill.

Americans are living in paralyzing fear, watching all of their household income get eaten up by the price of gas and household needs and watching their retirement security disappear in our new bear market.

The Biden and House Democrat approach has been to spend their way out of every problem, and look where it has gotten us.

The Recovering America's Wildlife Act is well intended. Of course, we conservationists support investments in our species. But there is still no pay-for. This is \$1.4 billion in perpetuity, with no pay-for or offset.

During committee markup, Republicans on the Natural Resources Committee simply asked to offset the spending that continues to punish Americans. But Democrats declined to negotiate in good faith and are choosing to aggravate inflation instead.

However, I offer legislation that will actually help fix the problem. The Endangered Species Act Flexibility Act will give the Interior Secretary options to help endangered species without crippling our economy.

Too often, the ESA is abused. Science is ignored, and the law is used as a weapon to stop much-needed development. Take, for example, the northern long-eared bat. The bat's massive range runs from Maine to Texas to Montana, with everything in between. You can see it on the map right here.

Northern long-eared bats are, sadly, afflicted with white-nose syndrome, a disease caused by a fungus that interrupts hibernation, leading to their death. The science is clear: This disease has nothing to do with human activity.

But because of declining population, the Fish and Wildlife Service is deciding whether to uplist the species, which would severely restrict logging, mining, and infrastructure building, like roads, bridges, ports, and more.

Would you like to spend that infrastructure money on upgrading projects anywhere on this map? Good luck if the northern long-eared bat is listed as endangered.

My ESA Flexibility Act will give the Interior Department the latitude to make species-specific habitat plans for endangered species, so we don't punish Americans who need a transmission line to get reliable power or need a bridge upgrade to drive to work.

I don't think a single Member of Congress here, across both aisles, would disagree that the Endangered Species Act is an imperfect law in desperate need of tweaks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 30 seconds to the gentleman.

Mr. STAUBER. Therefore, I regret that my ESA Flexibility Act was not accepted as an amendment, but I look forward to the eventual passage of the ESA Flexibility Act into law.

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

Before recognizing my colleague, I would like to talk about these costs and address the fact that dollars invested properly do save dollars.

I note that the droughts in the American West cost \$8.6 billion just last year, according to NOAA, and that the impact of wildfire cost over \$10 billion last year alone.

Restoration efforts, which this bill would help do, that make habitats and communities more resilient to climate change have an exceptionally high return on investment, such as reducing drought and wildfire risks, increasing

job opportunities, and growing local economies.

Conservation and restoration of key habitats help reduce the threats of wildfires and help States conserve water and improve water quality, making their water systems more resilient to the drought.

Finally, full implementation of State and Tribal wildlife plans will help species recover and be removed and even stay off the endangered species list, which is what we want, saving the U.S. taxpayers millions of dollars each year.

The large economic and social benefits of this legislation would boost our economy and help us deliver on our climate commitments for years to come as well.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to my distinguished colleague from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER).

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentlewoman's courtesy, and I appreciate her leadership on this. And she is right.

Looking at these issues in a comprehensive fashion, we see opportunities to not just save species, but to save money, and to deal with serious consequences that we are seeing.

I am from the Pacific Northwest. We are in the middle of a climate crisis. Last year, we had all-time records 3 days in a row for temperatures. And that same week, in British Columbia, they set an all-time record for Canada. And in the city that they set it, it burned down the next day.

Climate change, loss of habitat, severe weather, including wildfires, and the spread of invasive species, are taking their toll on animals, from fish and amphibians to birds and mammals.

As co-chair of the Animal Protection Caucus, I am particularly aware of the importance of saving our at-risk wildlife species.

More than 1,600 are already listed as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act because of our failure to act.

Oregon alone is home to more than 50 of these threatened and endangered species.

In States like Oregon, in partnership with Tribes, we have identified thousands more species that are at-risk and need conservation assistance.

With States and conservation partners working diligently to pass and develop conservation plans, we can make a significant difference. But we lack dedicated annual comprehensive funding to implement the plans which would be cost-effective.

With this bill, the Federal Government is stepping up in full partnership with the Tribes, with the conservation communities, and wildlife advocates.

The Recovering America's Wildlife Act will provide more than a billion dollars in dedicated annual funding for proactive, cost-effective model efforts, collaborative efforts by the States and Tribes to recover and protect at-risk species.

I fear it is a false economy to sometimes engage in shortchanging these efforts. The long-term cost to the environment, to our communities, is immense. And I am pleased to support this legislation because I think we can change this dynamic. I strongly urge people to support its passage.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I encourage the majority to put their estimates to the test. Let's make this a bill with a 7-year sunset like the amendment that I proposed. Let's come back, look at it, and see if it really did save money. If it really did save species, maybe we should fund it at more than \$1.4 billion a year. Maybe we can find that funding with an offset.

But the simple truth is it is all speculation right now, and we are getting ready to put a permanent mandatory spending program in place with no way to come back and have checks and balances on it without repealing the law. And how many times does that happen when Congress passes a law?

Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. TIFFANY).

□ 1530

Mr. TIFFANY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Regrettably, I will not be able to support this bill either. It is another \$1.4 billion of mandatory spending—no offsets, no sunset. This is another case of the runaway Biden inflation train gaining speed. The only question at this point to the American people is how spectacular the crack-up is going to be, and the American people know that.

When I go out and talk to them, I hear about two things: energy prices and inflation.

Well, here we have got another \$1.4 billion that are going to be poured into the tinderbox of the train to send it careening down the rails even faster. The only question is how spectacular the crack-up is going to be. Unfortunately, the American people are going to suffer the consequences.

The author of this bill just said that she would like to take some species off the endangered species list. There is

one that can come off right now—right now—that has recovered.

Representative BOEBERT and I proposed an amendment to de-list the gray wolf. It has recovered. The gray wolf is in the ESA "Hotel California." They can enter, but they never leave.

Twenty-five wildlife scientists from the upper Midwest a decade ago said, you need to de-list the wolf. We put together an amendment for this bill, and it was not considered.

Terribly unfortunate, because it is time for the Endangered Species Act to either be used properly and de-list a species like the gray wolf that is fully recovered, according to wildlife scientists, or else the ESA itself has to be reformed.

Those scientists, when you read their document that they wrote, specifically said, the Endangered Species Act is endangered because it is not being used properly.

Also, there is no language in this bill that prohibits funds from going to acquiring new Federal lands. Think about it this way: If you have a neighbor that doesn't repair their roof, it is leaking into their house, and they say we are going to go buy that lot next door. That, in effect, is what this bill will allow the Federal Government to do.

We are seeing across America, including in my district, that the Federal Government is not taking care of their lands appropriately. The Federal Government is becoming America's slumlord.

This bill has grant programs that even the most extreme environmental groups can apply for. Every time some taxpayer-funded, so-called corporate green group runs an ad, and you are going to see a lot of them here in 2022, claiming the sky is falling, just remember: You may have paid for it, and you may pay twice because you will get hit with inflation as a result of spending that the American people cannot afford.

I thank the gentleman for the opportunity to be able to testify on this bill. Unfortunately, I will not be able to support it, and I hope in the future that we can do better.

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. KILMER).

Mr. KILMER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding and for her leadership on this issue.

I rise in support of the Recovering America's Wildlife Act, bipartisan legislation I am proud to cosponsor, that aims to make the most significant investment in wildlife and habitat conservation in a generation.

Across Washington State, across our whole country, we are facing widespread species decline that doesn't just threaten the health of our ecosystems. It threatens the recreation and tourism and fishing industries that our communities rely on.

That is why Democrats and Republicans support taking bold action to implement conservation efforts to con-

serve and restore habitat, to reintroduce native species, and to mitigate wildlife risk.

This bill is critical to helping our State and our Tribal wildlife managers put conservation measures in place to protect species before they become threatened or endangered.

On top of that, this bill will help us combat threats to ecosystems, including the European green crab, an invasive species that is destroying essential marine habitat for Dungeness crab and Pacific salmon and threatening our shellfish industry that so many of the families that I represent depend on.

Get this: Last year, more than 102,000 European green crabs were caught in Puget Sound and along Washington's coast. That was an astronomical 5,500 percent increase from 2019.

In response to that explosion in the green crab population, a series of disaster declarations were made by the Lummi Nation and the Makah Tribe concerning the green crabs' impact on Tribal culture and on their economies, and another a disaster was declared by the State of Washington to mobilize more resources.

While our Tribes and States and local partners and small businesses are working diligently to protect our region against the explosion of these invasive species, they need more resources to improve detection, increase control efforts, and pursue eradication of this invasive species.

This burden shouldn't fall entirely on the backs of our Tribes or on local taxpayers' backs. The Federal Government can and should step up and be a better partner in this effort, and this bill will do that. That is why I encourage my colleagues to support this bipartisan legislation.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Idaho (Mr. FULCHER).

Mr. FULCHER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for yielding the time.

As I speak, the West is literally burning. Major infernos are devastating States like California, Arizona, and Alaska.

In New Mexico, the Hermit's Peak fire became the largest in State history nearly 1 month ago and is still not fully contained. This catastrophic fire has burned over 320,000 acres and cost taxpayers a whopping \$224 million in fire suppression costs.

In total, over 2.6 million acres have burned this year already, putting us on a pace to surpass every wildfire season in the past decade.

Homes have burned to the ground. Thousands of brave wildland firefighters have put their lives on the line. Hundreds of millions of dollars have been spent trying to tame fires so intense, they create their own weather systems known as firenadoes. Why?

The answer is simple. The lack of active forest management and decades of fire suppression and mismanagement have left our Nation's forests as dry as

powder kegs and ready to ignite from a single spark.

In the last decade, mismanagement caused over 70 million acres to burn, and we have no signs of it slowing down. According to the U.S. Forest Service, over one billion—that is billion with a b—acres across the country are at risk of experiencing severe wildfires.

That is why I am offering this amendment. My amendment seeks to add forest management activities such as mechanical thinning and prescribed burning that enhance or create wildlife habitat—that is, enhance or create wildlife habitat—or reduce the risk of destruction to wildlife habitat due to wildfires as acceptable projects under the Recovering America's Wildlife Act.

Catastrophic fires remain one of the single greatest threats to wildlife in Western States, such as my home State of Idaho.

In California, the Los Angeles Times reported in 2020 that the Bobcat fire turned one of the most abundant wildlife habitats with lush canyons and a mixture of rare and endangered species into an "apocalypse" that looked like ground zero after a nuclear explosion. Experts believe this fire would reverse decades of conservation efforts.

In Oregon, the 2020 wildfires have burned over 360,000 acres of critical spotted owl habitat, pushing the species into what researchers call an extinction vortex.

Catastrophic wildfires recently forced the State of Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife to recommend moving the greater sage-grouse from threatened to endangered status in their State. This is the very action that RAWA seeks to prevent.

These wildfires also killed nearly half of the State's endangered pigmy rabbit population. A Seattle Times report stated that rabbits had asphyxiated as the fire, in its fury, devoured oxygen from the atmosphere. There was nothing but ash and dust. No movement. No footprints. There was no chance anything survived.

Is this what recovering America's wildlife looks like, choking animals in suffocating smoke, burning them alive?

These catastrophic wildland fires are polluting our air, degrading our water, releasing massive amounts of carbon into the atmosphere, and turning rich and diverse wildlife habitat into barren moonscapes.

Incentivizing better, more active forest management through my amendment will create healthier ecosystems and abundant habitat for diverse wildlife. That is exactly what this bill is intended to do. If we truly care about recovering America's wildlife, then you will support my amendment.

If we adopt this, we will instruct the Committee on Natural Resources to add my amendment to include the forest management activities that modify, improve, enhance, or create wildlife habitat or protect wildlife habitat from wildfires as acceptable uses of funding under this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to include the text of my amendment in the RECORD immediately prior to the vote on the motion to recommit.

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

There was no objection.

Mrs. DINGELL. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Idaho for making a point that it is really the underlying reason that we should be—or the underlying question we should be talking about is, Why do we need to recover America's wildlife?

It is because we have messed up badly. We have mismanaged our Federal lands. Catastrophic wildfires run rampant. That does nothing to help wildlife habitat, and it is sad that we are actually here looking for funding and ways to fix something that we should have already fixed, something that we shouldn't have broken in the first place.

I think there is a way to recover wildlife, if we would just simply manage the habitat that the wildlife lives in. That is the purpose of this bill, but it is going to take some worldview changes, and the so-called environmental groups that are pushing to stop the management activity are going to have to allow this activity to take place.

It doesn't matter how much funding we put out from the Federal Government; we are going to continue to see wildlife habitat destroyed, and we are going to continue to see the loss of wildlife.

So it is not a problem that simply throwing money at will fix, and it is, again, a problem where we should put a program in place, come back and evaluate it, and decide whether we want to continue the program based on the merits of the successes of it.

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

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

I say to my colleague, I deeply agree that these fires are horrific in what they are doing to our natural resources and our habitat, but that is why this bill is so important.

It is not Washington telling the States or the Native lands or territories in the Native lands what to do. It is the State wildlife plans that are being drafted at the local level where they know what needs to be done that we will be funding and trying to prevent fires like that.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the very distinguished gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GRIJALVA), the chairman of the Committee on Natural Resources, who leads all of us on so many of these issues.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2773, Recovering America's Wildlife Act. I thank Representative DINGELL and her colleagues that have worked diligently on this

legislation for a considerable amount of time.

In the midst of the species extinction crisis that we have, accelerated climate change, the loss of biodiversity, droughts, the wildfires that we just heard about, it is important to note that this legislation was built from the ground up; 1,800 organizations, as diverse as Duke Energy on one side of the political spectrum and the Environmental Defense Fund on the other side, both agreeing that the approach of this legislation is the right approach; 180-plus cosponsors represented in a bipartisan fashion.

This bill before us today will transform the state of wildlife conservation in our country.

As we know, America's wildlife faces numerous threats, including habitat loss, pollution, climate change, wildfire, drought, invasive species, and emerging diseases.

It provides a historic \$1.3 billion of dedicated funding for States and territories and \$97 million for Tribes to assist in their efforts to conserve, restore, and protect wildlife and habitat each year.

With that protection comes the resiliency for habitat and the overall resiliency for communities and our environment.

In the long run, this investment will save taxpayers money. It creates jobs, promotes tourism, and provides safety and resilience to those communities across our country.

Through habitat conservation and restoration, this bill makes habitats and communities much more resilient to the ongoing and accelerated issue of climate change. This is an important piece of legislation for each and every State, territory, and Tribe in our country, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

□ 1545

My friends on the other side of the aisle, my Republican colleagues are fiscal conservatives when they are not in the majority. When they are in the majority, that is not the pattern of behavior.

At the present time, nothing should be done is what is being preached:

Nothing should be done about the climate crisis.

Nothing should be done about wildlife extinction.

Nothing should be done about January 6 and our democracy. That was merely a mirage, a walk in the park that we should all forget.

Nothing should be done about our children and the danger that they are exposed to in our very schools.

Nothing should be done about the rising healthcare costs and prescription drug costs.

We can't do anything because of inflation and the rising gas prices, so the best thing to do is to do nothing.

Well, my colleagues, I support H.R. 2773 because it does something. It does something in a bipartisan, comprehensive way. If my colleagues want to talk

about climate change, if they want to talk about droughts, if they want to talk about wildfire, if they want to talk about fiscally prudent things to do, let's talk about this bill today. Support it with dedicated funding. Make the investment that will guarantee the dividends for ourselves and future generations.

I applaud Representative DINGELL and all the work of her colleagues and this piece of legislation, and I urge its support and urge a "yes" vote.

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

Mr. Speaker, there has been a lot of talk about this bill being bipartisan. The original House version of the text did have 42 Republican cosponsors on it, which is a sizable number. That is a bipartisan bill.

There will still be Republicans who vote for this version, but as long as we are in the business of estimating today, I am going to estimate that it won't be the 42 cosponsors of the original text, which, again, was supplanted by the Senate version that didn't send all the money to the State and Tribal governments. It sent the money to U.S. Fish and Wildlife, part of the funding to U.S. Fish and Wildlife.

I have talked to some of the Republican Members who have cosponsored the bill, and their understanding was that the pay-for was going to be worked out. If we would just sponsor the bill, we would get the pay-fors worked out. We were told the bill will go to the floor, and we will work out the pay-fors. Well, here is the bill on the floor and there is still no pay-fors. It is still permanent mandatory spending, \$1.4 billion a year.

If this bill passes out of the House, and if for some reason it doesn't make it through the Senate and become law, then I hope to come back and work on a bill that has the same objectives but is fiscally responsible, a bill that has pay-fors, a bill that is not borrowing from our children, and a bill that is not permanent, one that actually gives Congress the authority to have oversight and to come back and analyze the language, to analyze the success of it, and make changes as needed as we go on.

We do this with the farm bill, we do it with other bills. I am not sure why we can't do it with Recovering America's Wildlife Act because it is a very important subject.

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

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

I say to my colleague, we have worked in good faith. We will continue to work in good faith.

The Senate, which doesn't work together as closely at times the way we do, has negotiated a legacy fund that is a bipartisan negotiated provision by the chairman and the ranking member of the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works. Actually,

more Republicans voted for that than Democrats did.

This bill has been supported by a broad cross-section of Senate Republicans and Senate Democrats. Quite frankly, there are some of your Senate Republican colleagues who will only support it the way it is now. I have talked to many Republicans who want to see this bill go through. I don't know how the final vote will be today. I know people want to support it.

By the way, it addresses a shared goal, what the Senate did, that third provision helping to move species off of the ESA listings more quickly. It contains guardrails on the use of funds that I know were important to my Republican colleagues. These include prohibitions on the use of funds to make any listing or critical habitat determination relating to the endangered or threatened status of any species or to acquire any Federal land, which I know is really important on your side.

The broad coalition supporting the bill, including the State wildlife agencies and sportsmen's groups, have also backed all these provisions. We are not done. If the bill passes the House, we will go to conference with the Senate. We will all be at that table. But the time is now. We need to get this done. We have lost almost 3 billion birds since 1970. We are losing 40 percent of our fish. You and I both fish. I am not as great a hunter as you guys are, but I was married to one. But they know what is happening. The time for action is now.

Mr. Speaker, we are prepared to close, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume. In closing, I just want to go back through the facts as we know them.

We know that we need to do better habitat management, whether it is forest, rangelands, oceans, rivers, or lakes. We know there are areas where we need to manage better. The intent of this bill is to let those management activities be done by the people who do it best, State and Tribal agencies.

I think there is a huge agreement in the House, both Republicans and Democrats alike, but that is a good thing. The problem we have with the bill, though, is the way that we are going to implement it in the financial times that we are in now, and looking back at history and seeing how we got in the condition that we are in. The spending problem in this country is not discretionary spending. It is not the appropriation bills that we should be debating and approving every year.

It is the mandatory spending. It is the cruise control programs that previous Congresses have put in place that are driving the deficit. Over 70 percent of our debt is due to mandatory spending. And here we are with record debt, record inflation, and we are talking about putting more on the mandatory side of the equation.

There is a path where we could get huge support. We could probably do

this, maybe even do it on a unanimous consent bill, and that would be if the majority would accept the amendment that I offered in the Rules Committee.

As the ranking member on the committee, I offered an amendment that would bring a lot of our Members on board, and it simply put a 7-year sunset in, make it an authorization and let the Appropriations Committee do their work.

We are not even going to vote on that. We are not even going to put it on the floor to see where the Members of the body are at. The Rules Committee took that off of the table. So we have no choice. No choice but to recommend that we vote "no" on this bill, that we come back to the table, that we look at something that everybody can agree on. Not just on the authorization, but on how we fund the bill. I think we can get there.

I hate to take it out of the House's hands and put it into the Senate's hands when we didn't give it a full effort on how to not only craft the legislation on what needs to be done on the ground, but how to pay for it, how to be fiscally responsible going forward.

So, again, I support the idea. I don't support the way we are paying for it. I have to recommend a "no" vote. I encourage my colleagues to vote "no," and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume to close.

I thank my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for the constructive debate and input that we have had to date on Recovering America's Wildlife Act. This legislation is historic, and our shared efforts today will help move us one step closer to a bold solution to the biodiversity crisis and will establish conservation measures that will endure for generations, which I know we both care about.

The Recovering America's Wildlife Act has strong bipartisan support, the backing of hundreds of meetings of sportsmen's groups, hunting and fishing advocates, conservation organizations, environmental advocates, businesses, and countless others.

It will fund proactive conservation measures that will benefit every State and territory and contains a strong Tribal title to support Tribal organizations' efforts to protect wildlife on tens of millions of acres of land.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the Recovering America's Wildlife Act. It will make a difference in every congressional district in this country.

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

Mr. CASE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 2773, the Recovering America's Wildlife Act. I thank the gentlewoman from Michigan, Congresswoman DINGELL, and Chairman GRIJALVA for their leadership in moving this critical legislation through our Natural Resources Committee and to the Floor.

The world is in the middle of an extinction crisis and, unfortunately, my state is at its center. As a result of climate change, invasive species and other environmental stressors, our islands have earned the unfortunate distinction of becoming the endangered species capitol of the world. Of the 1,225 endangered species listed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, nearly 500 are found in Hawaii. Just last year, nine more of Hawaii's endemic species were officially reclassified as extinct.

The Recovering America's Wildlife Act will provide \$1.3 billion in support to states, territories and tribes to address wildlife conservation. The estimated \$60 million in annual funding to Hawaii will be essential to my state's ability to save our imperiled biodiversity and will increase the chance that species like the 'i'iwi (a Hawaiian Honeycreeper), 'Ōpe'ape'a (the Hawaiian Hoary Bat) and Kāhuli (Hawaiian tree snail) survive.

I urge my colleagues to vote yes on this legislation. Mahalo.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired.

Each further amendment printed in part D of House Report 117-366 not earlier considered as part of the amendments en bloc pursuant to section 7 of House Resolution 1170 shall be considered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and opponent, may be withdrawn by the proponent at any time before the question is put thereon, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question.

It shall be in order at any time for the chair of the Committee on Natural Resources or his designee to offer amendments en bloc consisting of further amendments in part D of House Report 117-366 not earlier disposed of. Amendments en bloc shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for 20 minutes equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Natural Resources or their respective designees, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question.

AMENDMENTS EN BLOC NO. 1 OFFERED BY MRS. DINGELL OF MICHIGAN

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 1170, I offer amendments en bloc.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will designate the amendments en bloc.

Amendments en bloc No. 1 consisting of amendment Nos. 1, 3, 6, and 7, printed in part D of House Report 117-366, offered by Mrs. DINGELL of Michigan:

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MRS. CHERFILUS-MCCORMICK OF FLORIDA

Page 7, line 15, strike "and".

Page 7, line 20, strike the period and insert "; and".

Page 7, after line 20, insert the following:

(H) may be used to expand the use of innovative technologies, tools, strategies, or collaborative partnerships that accelerate, ex-

pand, or replicate effective and measurable recovery efforts for species of greatest conservation need and species listed as threatened or endangered under section 4 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 and the habitats of such species.

AMENDMENT NO. 3 OFFERED BY MS. JACKSON LEE OF TEXAS

**TITLE IV—REPORT**

**SEC. 401. REPORT.**

The Secretary of the Interior shall, not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this section, and annually thereafter, submit a report to the Committee on Environment and Public Works of the Senate and the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives providing detailed information on the dollar amount of grants and contracts (including subcontracts), and the percentage of total awards and grants, that were awarded or allocated under this Act to Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic-serving educational institutions, Tribally-controlled colleges and universities, minority-serving educational institutions, minority-owned business enterprises, women-owned business enterprises, and community-based organizations that are principally administered by, operated by, or serving minority communities.

AMENDMENT NO. 6 OFFERED BY MS. SCHRIER OF WASHINGTON

Page 7, line 15, strike "and".

Page 7, line 20, strike the period at the end and insert "; and".

Page 7, after line 20, insert the following new subparagraph:

“(H) may be used for conservation infrastructure projects related to the protection and conservation of a species of greatest conservation need and the habitat of such species.”.

AMENDMENT NO. 7 OFFERED BY MR. DAVID SCOTT OF GEORGIA

Page 7, line 15, strike "and".

Page 7, line 20, strike the period and insert "; and".

Page 7, after line 20, insert the following new subparagraph:

“(H) may be used to conserve and restore a native pollinator species which is a species of greatest conservation need.”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 1170, the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. DINGELL) and the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) each will control 10 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Michigan.

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, this en bloc consists of four amendments: Amendment No. 3, offered by the gentlewoman from Texas; amendment No. 7, offered by the gentleman from Georgia; amendment No. 6, offered by the gentlewoman from Washington; and amendment No. 1, offered by the gentlewoman from Florida.

Amendment No. 3, offered by the gentlewoman from Texas, requires the Secretary of the Interior to submit a report to the House Committee on Natural Resources and the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works outlining the dollar amount of grants, contracts, and subcontracts, and the percent of total awards and grants that were awarded or allocated under RAWA to HBCUs and minority-serving institutions, minority- and women-owned businesses, and commu-

nity-based organizations serving minority communities.

Current conservation and restoration practices underutilize the breadth of traditional, indigenous, and local knowledge found in our communities. To be successful in our restoration and conservation goals, we must use all of the tools at our disposal.

Amendment No. 7, offered by the gentleman from Georgia, adds activities that support native pollinator conservation and restoration to the list of appropriate uses of funds from the Wildlife Conservation and Restoration Subaccount.

While many State wildlife action plans already include projects that will conserve and restore native pollinator species and habitat, we recognize the important role that pollinators play in ecosystem functionality.

Twenty-seven States included monarch butterflies in their State wildlife action plans, and thousands of other pollinators are identified as species of greatest conservation need.

Our pollinators are at risk, and it is important that we not forget the important impact they have on our landscape.

Amendment No. 6, offered by the gentlewoman from Washington, clarifies that the Wildlife Conservation and Restoration Subaccount funds may include conservation infrastructure projects related to the protection and conservation of a species of greatest conservation need and the habitat of those species.

Conservation infrastructure projects are cost-effective methods to enhance conservation and build climate resiliency. They can protect against excessive heat and coastal storms while improving wildlife habitat and carbon sequestration.

Conservation infrastructure projects improve the health and management of ecosystems so that they provide important benefits and services. Examples include managing stormwater runoff, improving water quality for wildlife, restoring wildlife habitat in the built environment, and attracting beneficial species.

□ 1600

Finally, amendment No. 1, offered by the gentlewoman from Florida, broadens the appropriate uses of Wildlife Conservation and Restoration Subaccount funds to include using innovative technologies, tools, strategies, or collaborative partnerships that accelerate, expand, or replicate effective and measurable recovery efforts for species of the greatest conservation need and endangered species.

Supporting the implementation and expansion of new, creative conservation methods is of the utmost importance if we wish to interrupt the ongoing mass extinction event. In this time of need, our species and ecosystems need all the help we can provide. Funding innovative ideas will fill the gaps left by traditional conservation methods while spurring research and creating jobs.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote “yes,” and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume. I also rise in support of this amendment en bloc.

None of the amendments included in this amendment en bloc would add more spending to this bill. Three of the amendments in this en bloc amend title I by adding more flexibility for State fish and wildlife agencies when they make conservation investments funded under this bill.

These amendments do not impose new mandates, but rather, provide States more tools to manage wildlife as they see fit.

Mr. SCOTT's amendment on helping pollinators and their habitats will enhance ongoing efforts aimed at helping the monarch butterfly. Pollinators are critical to ecosystem conservation around the world. That is why my Republican colleagues and I have continuously supported the Candidate Conservation Agreement with Assurances for the monarch butterfly, which allows private companies and landowners to contribute to proactive conservation.

The amendment from Congresswoman CHERFILUS-MCCORMICK recommends that States prioritize funding toward innovative strategies and partnerships to recover species. I believe that innovation is critical for ensuring widespread species recovery. The current species recovery framework under the Endangered Species Act is not only outdated, but it is broken and needs innovation.

Republicans have offered numerous ideas to use innovation to spur species recovery. One idea from Representative HERRELL of New Mexico would help incentivize proactive Candidate Conservation Agreements that allow private companies and landowners to contribute toward at-risk species conservation through their own dollars and efforts. Sounds like a good, commonsense idea.

The outdated Endangered Species Act has become a top-down government approach that rarely works to help species or people. Innovative approaches like Ms. HERRELL's are much needed.

I was disappointed to see that the majority discarded amendments like Ms. HERRELL's without even giving us the chance to debate its merits on the House floor.

Representative STAUBER also had an innovative idea to update the Endangered Species Act that he offered as an amendment. His amendment would have provided the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service with the flexibility to utilize so-called 4(d) rules for endangered species. Under a 4(d) rule, the Secretary of the Interior can issue a rule for individual species that tailors protections to that species' conservation and recovery. Unfortunately, again, the majority also ignored that amendment.

The amendment by Congresswoman SCHRIER is also included in this en bloc

by encouraging States to invest in “conservation infrastructure projects.” While States already have flexibility to decide how to spend the funding provided in title I of the bill, this amendment would give them the option to invest in natural solutions, such as buffer strips, wetlands—one of my favorite things—planting trees, and other natural solutions to environmental challenges.

Lastly, Congresswoman JACKSON LEE's amendment would require the Secretary of the Interior to issue a report within 1 year of this bill's enactment, detailing the percentage of total awards and grants that were awarded or allocated to institutions serving minority communities.

While I support this amendment and its reporting requirement, I have bad news for the sponsor. Because the bill lacks a sunset provision, there is little incentive and recourse for Congress to fix any problems. In other words, if the reports required by this amendment highlight a glaring flaw with the programs being carried out under this bill, there will be no guarantee that Congress will fix the problem. The same is true for the State reports required under the bill.

For that reason, I offered a commonsense amendment that would have included a 7-year sunset to ensure that Congress would have to fix any flaws associated with this new program. Unfortunately, as I stated earlier, my amendment was also blocked by the majority.

This bill and the process to rush this bill to the floor today are unfortunate. It could have been avoided, but at least the amendments included in this en bloc do not spend any more taxpayer money and provide some needed accountability.

Mr. Speaker, I support the en bloc, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I am glad we found an area of agreement this afternoon. I think we have more agreement than people realize.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE), the author of one of these very critical amendments.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to be yielded to by the gentlewoman. I thank her for championing this outstanding legislation, and I thank my good friend for acknowledging the en bloc.

I will say that there is good news. The good news is that the Recovering America's Wildlife Act is once-in-a-generation funding for the conservation of threatened species of animals and plants as well as habitat preservation. I will discuss the importance of it as I also present to the body my amendment.

Let me, first of all, say I pay tribute to Ellison, 7 years old, and to Roy, 7 years old, my twin grandchildren who love every species that they can find within their backyard or anyplace else that you would take them. I see in their lifetime the vision of this legislation. They love the outdoors. They love

to see crawling things, and they are a boy and a girl.

Yet, what are we facing today? The world is facing an unprecedented loss of wildlife. Bird populations have declined almost 30 percent in the U.S. and Canada since 1970. Over 40 percent of America's freshwater fish are at risk of extinction, and State agencies have identified 12,000 species of wildlife in need of conservation.

The Speaker pro tempore knows that Texas and Louisiana experienced a catastrophic oil spill some years ago. I remember visiting oyster fishermen and others who were devastated. We need to get in there and make a difference.

Mr. Speaker, 12,000 species are currently identified as endangered in the United States, and 1,300 of them are in my State of Texas. As I said, fishermen are still crying out for help. Climate change poses an unprecedented challenge to plant and animal species due to wildfires, droughts, floods, and temperature shifts. Hurricane Harvey devastated the coast and the opportunities for wildlife. The resulting threat to biodiversity has the potential to disrupt our ecosystem and, with it, human quality of life and sustainability.

Urban sprawl as well as development of suburbs and exurbs also encroach on the habitat that supports biodiversity, and it has ripple effects that compound the gradation of our environment from climate change.

We want to be hanging in there with fisherman, sportsmen, bikers, hikers—bikers in the appropriate atmosphere, but hikers in particular.

Our children deserve to know the natural beauty of their country. They deserve to see the beauty of wildlife. They deserve to be good custodians of that, and the children need to be diverse.

So the amendment that I offer is to ensure that children will continue to spend their days fishing, gardening alongside bees, watching the migratory birds, but also looking at the wilds and the species that are in them.

The Recovering America's Wildlife Act provides \$1.3 billion in funding to protect our Nation's wildlife, \$50 million of which will go to Texas.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Texas.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, this is a great effort. My amendment fixes and adds to this. By adding title IV, we stipulate the Secretary of the Interior must, no later than 1 year after passage, provide a report on the dollar amount of grants, contracts, and subcontracts that were allocated to historically Black colleges and universities, Hispanic-serving educational institutions, tribally controlled colleges and universities, and women- and minority-owned businesses.

My amendment goes into the broad span of Americans, brings them into

the arena, and gives a needed investment in people of color who deserve to be not only included but intentionally targeted in new conservation investments to open their eyes, to give them the opportunity, and to ensure our Native American friends are included as well along with women- and minority-owned businesses. Let them have an investment as well.

In addition, with the enactment of this legislation, my amendment would create a framework for prioritizing historically disadvantaged groups in environmental efforts, bring them, again, into the fold, which should be replicated in future efforts. This is an important step.

I want you to listen to me, historically Black colleges and Hispanic-serving institutions, this is also a day for you. Support this legislation, and we will expand and build and support America.

Mr. Speaker, as a staunch advocate for the environment I rise in support of the Recovering America's Wildlife Act of 2021.

This bill provides once-in-a-generation funding for the conservation of threatened species of animals and plants, as well as habitat preservation.

12,000 species are currently identified as endangered in the United States. 1,300 of those are in my home state of Texas.

In addition to providing \$1.3 billion in funding to protect our nation's wildlife—\$50 million of which will go to Texas—the Recovering America's Wildlife Act of 2021 designates portion of this federal funding for special projects that revitalize species facing a conservation need.

In addition to my support of H.R. 2773, I rise to put forth an important amendment to today's legislation.

Firstly, this legislation does not stipulate significant transparency regarding the handling of these funds.

Secondly, nowhere in this bill does it require the Department of the Interior to include people of color.

My amendment fixes both of those issues. By adding Title IV, we stipulate the Secretary of the Interior must, no later than one year after passage, provide a report on the dollar amount of grants, contracts, and subcontracts that were allocated to Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic-serving educational institutions, Tribally controlled colleges and universities, and women and minority owned business.

My amendment addresses a needed investment in people of color who deserve to be not only included, but intentionally targeted in new conservation investments.

Passage of this bill will encourage fairness in the allocation of contract, subcontract, and grant dollars, as well as greater transparency into the details of those allocations.

Climate change poses unprecedented challenges to plant and animal species due to wildfires, droughts, floods, and temperature shifts.

The resulting threat to biodiversity has the potential to disrupt our ecosystem, and with it, human quality-of-life and sustainability.

Urban sprawl as well as development of suburbs and exurbs also encroach on the habitat that supports biodiversity, and it has

ripple effects that compound the degradation of our environment from climate change.

This bill takes these problems seriously and provides funding for programs that are essential for human sustainability as well as the resilience of plants and animals.

Our children deserve to know the natural beauty of their country.

They deserve to grow up in an America teeming with wild strength, diversity, and beauty.

They deserve to embrace the long American history of wildlife sportsmanship, recreation, and appreciation.

By supporting H.R. 2773, we ensure that childhood days spent fishing at the lake, gardening alongside bees, or watching the flight of migratory birds are not things of the past.

Through this bill we preserve the heritage of our country.

Additionally, enactment of this legislation would create a framework for prioritizing historically disadvantaged groups in environmental efforts that should be replicated in future efforts.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, again, I support this group of amendments en bloc and encourage a "yes" vote, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to support this en bloc package as well as the bill upon final passage, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 1170, the previous question is ordered on the amendments en bloc offered by the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. DINGELL).

The question is on the amendments en bloc.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. TIFFANY. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 3(s) of House Resolution 8, the yeas and nays are ordered.

Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question are postponed.

AMENDMENTS EN BLOC NO. 2 OFFERED BY MRS. DINGELL OF MICHIGAN

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 1170, I offer amendments en bloc.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will designate the amendments en bloc.

Amendments en bloc No. 2 consisting of amendment Nos. 2 and 8, printed in part D of House Report 117-366, offered by Mrs. DINGELL of Michigan:

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MR. BENTZ OF OREGON

Page 34, after line 13, add the following new subsection:

(k) ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS.—Of the funds made available under each of paragraphs (1) and (3) of subsection (e), not more than 1.85 percent may be used by the Secretary for administrative costs.

AMENDMENT NO. 8 OFFERED BY MR. TIFFANY OF WISCONSIN

Page 34, after line 13, add the following new subsection:

(k) INSPECTOR GENERAL.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Office of the Inspector General of the Department of the Interior ½ of 1 percent of the amounts made available under subsection (c) for the purposes of providing oversight and accountability with respect to expenditure of funds authorized under such subsection, to remain available until September 30, 2029.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 1170, the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. DINGELL) and the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) each will control 10 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Michigan.

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, en bloc No. 2 consists of two good-government amendments offered by my Republican colleagues: amendment No. 2 offered by the gentleman from Oregon and amendment No. 8 offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin.

Amendment No. 2 stipulates that no more than 1.85 percent of funds can be used for administrative costs in the grant programs authorized by title III.

The purpose of the Recovering America's Wildlife Act is to fund on-the-ground efforts that are focused on conserving and restoring wildlife and habitat. This 1.85 percent cap will ensure that these dollars are being used toward actions that create the most impact.

Amendment No. 8 offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin requires that half of 1 percent of the money in the Endangered Species Recovery and Habitat Conservation Legacy Fund be directed to the Office of the Inspector General of the Department of the Interior to oversee the expenditure of the fund.

This amendment will ensure that money from the Endangered Species Recovery and Habitat Conservation Legacy Fund is used appropriately and in a manner that is in line with the spirit of this legislation.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on en bloc No. 2, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise in wholehearted support of these amendments en bloc, which include amendments from our colleagues from Oregon (Mr. BENTZ) and from Wisconsin (Mr. TIFFANY).

These amendments would ensure that the funds provided in title III are subject to the same overhead cap requirements and oversight measures as title I.

The original point of this bill was to empower States and Tribes to carry out species conservation, not set up another Washington, D.C.-based Federal program, which is now what the bill does. Not only does title III change that intent by giving more than \$180 million annually in the first 4 years to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, but it was also added at the Rules Committee and was not part of the bill that the Committee on Natural Resources marked up. Because the Committee on Natural Resources never had the

chance to debate this title when we marked up the original bill, we did not have the opportunity to add these good-governance amendments to it like we did for titles I and II.

I believe that title III should be removed altogether. Unfortunately, Representative MOORE's amendment, which would have removed title III, was not made in order, so we didn't even get the chance to debate it, much less vote on it today.

□ 1615

In the absence of that amendment, the least we can do is ensure funds allocated by title III are being spent responsibly and with some oversight.

I urge my colleagues to join me in support of the amendments, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. DINGELL. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. TIFFANY).

Mr. TIFFANY. Madam Speaker, I thank the ranking member for saying it quite well. The least we can do here is make sure that with these funds we try to have some oversight and responsibility in terms of how they are going to be spent. I thank the author for including this amendment in the bill.

If there is no pay-for, then there must be some measure of accountability for the expenditure of these funds ensuring the Department of the Interior Inspector General's office has the proper resources to monitor this spending.

Unfortunately, the bill in its current form has no sunset on the mandatory spending of \$1.4 billion, so I thank the gentlewoman for including this in the package.

Mrs. DINGELL. Madam Speaker, I am prepared to close, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BENTZ).

Mr. BENTZ. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of my amendment No. 8.

This fiscally responsible amendment would establish a 1.85 percent administrative cap for the Department of the Interior when implementing title III of this bill.

Title I of the bill, which provides funding to State fish and wildlife departments for species conservation, includes a 1.85 percent administrative cap.

Title II of the bill, which covers Tribal Wildlife Conservation and Restoration, includes a 3 percent administrative cap for the Department of the Interior.

However, as currently drafted, title III does not have an administrative cap.

The original intent of this bill was to provide States with funding to conserve species of greatest conservation need.

Unfortunately, the majority decided to ignore the committee process by

airdropping in title III to give more funding to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Not only did they circumvent process to add the entire title to the bill, they didn't carry over any of the good government amendments made in committee.

Under the current text, the State and Tribal portions of the bill would be subject to strict administrative caps, but the Federal Government would not be. This is backwards, as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service needs much more oversight since the agency is part of the reason we find ourselves in the position we are currently in with respect to the broken Endangered Species Act.

Additionally, the programs funded in title III already receive existing appropriations, and if the majority would like to increase them, they should do it through the appropriations process instead of airdropping in another layer of statute and bureaucracy into the legislation.

For these reasons, title III should be struck from the bill. Unfortunately, the majority refused to allow a vote on my colleague from Utah's amendment that would have done just that.

The very least we can do is at least ensure that title III is subject to the same administrative requirements as the other titles.

I urge my colleagues to support this amendment.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Madam Speaker, I again encourage adoption of these amendments, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. DINGELL. Madam Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to support the en bloc package as well as the bill upon final passage, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. JACKSON LEE). Pursuant to House Resolution Number 1170, the previous question is ordered on the amendments en bloc offered by the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. DINGELL).

The question is on the amendments en bloc.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mrs. DINGELL. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 3(s) of House Resolution 8, the yeas and nays are ordered.

Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question are postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 4 OFFERED BY MR. KILDEE.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 4 printed in part D of House Report 117-366.

Mr. KILDEE. Madam Speaker, I have an amendment at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 29, line 18, insert "and efforts to manage, control, and prevent invasive species,

disease, and other risks to such species" after "efforts".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 1170, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KILDEE) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan.

Mr. KILDEE. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. DINGELL) for offering this very important piece of legislation and to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. MEIJER) for his support on the amendment that I am offering and all of our dedication to the Great Lakes being quite evident by this work.

Growing up in Michigan, my family would camp and fish every year in East Tawas, Michigan. We grew up on the Great Lakes. These are really fond memories I have from my childhood, and it is a particular honor as a result to represent 118 miles of Lake Huron shoreline in Congress.

Over the past couple of centuries, nearly 200 non-native species have established populations in the Great Lakes. In my home State, invasive species like Asian carp, zebra mussels, and phragmites threaten the health of our Great Lakes. Zebra mussels have clogged our water infrastructure costing millions in cleanup. Asian carp eat the wetland plants that are critical habitats for native fish and waterfowl. We have to prevent the spread of invasive species in our Great Lakes, we have an obligation to do that.

This bipartisan amendment would expand the ability of the Fish and Wildlife Service Endangered Species Recovery and Habitat Conservation Legacy Fund to manage and prevent invasive species. We believe this simple amendment makes this very good bill stronger and will have a positive impact on the Great Lakes economy.

When we protect our wildlife and natural resources, we strengthen our economy and we preserve our way of life. The Great Lakes are a source of drinking water for millions, a critical wildlife habitat, and help support 1 million jobs in boating, fishing, and tourism industries.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on this bipartisan amendment to protect our Great Lakes and strengthen our natural resources, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Arkansas is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition to this amendment, which adds more responsibilities to the already duplicative and expensive title III portion of this bill, which was never debated in the Committee on Natural Resources.

I have no objection to efforts aimed at controlling invasive species, and these efforts are already being carried

out by many Federal agencies. For example, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the agency funded by title III at the expense of State and Tribal funding, already administers invasive species control programs, including the Coastal Program and the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program, two programs that title III would duplicate.

The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, or APHIS, at USDA monitors, responds to, and conducts control and eradication programs to address invasive species that pose a threat to U.S. agriculture.

These and other similar programs are subject to Federal appropriations, which is what title III should be subject to as well—not permanent mandatory funding. If the majority would like to increase Federal funding for invasive species control, they should do it through the appropriations process instead of airdropping another layer of bureaucracy into this bill.

For these reasons, we should be striking title III from the bill, at least until the committee of jurisdiction has a chance to consider and mark up its provisions. Unfortunately, the majority refused to allow a vote on my colleague from Utah, Mr. MOORE's amendment, which would have done just that.

I oppose this amendment to allow the funding for title III to be used for even more duplicative Federal bureaucracy.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. KILDEE. Madam Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman's comments, and I agree that we ought to do everything we can to address this issue of invasive species. I just happen to believe that this bill is a very appropriate approach to this.

Coming from the Great Lakes, I will say we need every tool we can get our hands on to protect this incredible resource. I welcome the opportunity to include this language in this legislation.

Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. DINGELL), my colleague, friend, and the sponsor of this legislation.

Mrs. DINGELL. Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague and friend from Michigan for this amendment.

This bipartisan amendment offered by the gentleman from Michigan and cosponsored by the Republican gentleman from northern Michigan makes it clear—or western Michigan, not from where DAN and I are, but it is Michigan—makes it clear that eligible funding for conservation activities under the Endangered Species Recovery and Habitat Conservation Legacy Fund include invasive species and disease management control and prevention efforts.

Invasive species and diseases pose severe threats to our Nation's wildlife population, especially for species that are already threatened or endangered.

Few places in the United States are more familiar with invasive species than the Great Lakes region which has

been battling sea lampreys, zebra and quagga mussels, and now Asian carp. Native fish species are smaller and less plentiful than they once were thanks to these invasive species.

On the disease front, chronic waste and disease, a fatal disease for North America's deer, elk, and moose have spread to 25 States posing significant risks to those populations.

To properly recover native species, we must provide the resources and coordinate efforts to eradicate or control invasive species, prevent new introductions, and better understand emerging diseases.

I urge my colleagues to support this amendment.

Mr. KILDEE. Madam Speaker, I have no more speakers, and I am prepared to close.

Madam Speaker, I appreciate the debate and the conversation, but for me and I think for Congresswoman DINGELL, and certainly for Congressman MELJER and anybody else who has grown up knowing and loving the Great Lakes, this is an important economic resource. It is an important cultural resource. It is literally the definition of the lines of our State.

Protecting the Great Lakes is an incredibly high priority for Democrats and Republicans, liberals and conservatives, people all across the spectrum. And every opportunity we have to take even a small step to do more to protect this precious water resource we are going to take that opportunity.

For that reason, I support the underlying legislation. I advocate on behalf of my amendment. I hope my colleagues will join me, Mr. MELJER and Mrs. DINGELL in supporting it, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Madam Speaker, once again, we all have invasive species that we deal with. It is something we should be focusing on. We just don't need another duplicative Federal program to do that.

Madam Speaker, I encourage a “no” vote on the amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 1170, the previous question is ordered on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KILDEE).

The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KILDEE).

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 3(s) of House Resolution 8, the yeas and nays are ordered.

Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question are postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 5 OFFERED BY MR. BUTTERFIELD

The SPEAKER pro tempore. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 5 printed in part D of House Report 117-366.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Madam Speaker, as the designee of Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, I have an amendment at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 3, line 24, insert “nonprofit organizations,” after “territories.”

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 1170, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BUTTERFIELD) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina.

□ 1630

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Madam Speaker, I thank Mrs. DINGELL and the ranking member for their courtesy, and I also thank the Natural Resources Committee for all the work they do. I am not on that committee, but I have great respect and admiration for the committee and its chairman. I thank you for letting me have 5 minutes to present this amendment.

Madam Speaker, this amendment is rather simple. It is straightforward. The underlying bill establishes a new, competitive grant program to support innovative strategies to help species recovery. That is the underlying bill we have been debating all afternoon. However, as drafted, the bill limits those competitive grants to only State wildlife agencies.

Specifically, my amendment expands the eligibility of the grant program to include nonprofit organizations like the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission, the North Carolina Wildlife Federation, the Pamlico Albemarle Wildlife Conservationists, and so many more wonderful organizations in my State, and perhaps in your States all across the country.

Many of these nonprofits have tremendous expertise in helping species recover and they should be eligible to participate in this new program under this amendment.

Madam Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to support this amendment, which will strengthen our species recovery efforts.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Arkansas is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Madam Speaker, this amendment would actually make the bill worse by authorizing nonprofit organizations to receive funding under title I.

This amendment is in direct contravention to the original intent of this legislation, which is to empower States and Tribes in species conservation.

The current bill directs funds provided under this program to State and Tribal fish and wildlife departments or

to regional associations of fish and wildlife departments.

The amendment would allow activist environmental groups, many of whom are serial litigants against the kinds of projects this bill aims to support, to receive funding under title I, decreasing money available for State fish and game departments.

Radical special interest groups have weaponized the Endangered Species Act by continuously suing the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. This sue-and-settle process overwhelms regulatory agencies, resulting in settlement agreements and consent decrees that require agencies to promulgate major regulations within an arbitrarily imposed timeline.

These agreements are often negotiated behind closed doors with little or no transparency or public input, allowing radical special interest groups to promote their own Federal policy agendas, outside of the normal processes.

To make matters worse, these groups are financially rewarded for suing the government, for suing the American taxpayer. According to the Government Accountability Office, from 2000 to 2010, ESA lawsuits cost taxpayers nearly \$24 million in attorneys' fees and associated costs.

Private citizens with a net worth of \$2 million and for-profit businesses with a net worth of \$7 million cannot receive attorneys' fees under the Equal Access to Justice Act. However, there is no such cap for nonprofit organizations, which allows these wealthy groups to rake in taxpayer money.

According to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, from 2009 to 2017, there were 109 Endangered Species Act settlements. The majority of these settlements came from just three groups: the Center for Biological Diversity, Defenders of Wildlife, and the WildEarth Guardians. The Center for Biological Diversity was individually responsible for 41 of the 109 settlements.

This is not surprising after the Center for Biological Diversity's director said, in 2009, that "When we stop the same timber sale three or four times running, the timber planners want to tear their hair out. They feel like their careers are being mocked and destroyed—and they are. Psychological warfare is a very underappreciated aspect of environmental campaigning." We are paying them to do that.

Today we can see the legacy of this mentality and these lawsuits out West where we have had two of our worst fire years back-to-back, and this year is not looking any better.

I cannot in good conscience support allowing these radical groups to receive funding under this bill, especially since it will pull money away from State fish and wildlife agencies and Tribes, as the bill was intended to fund.

Madam Speaker, I oppose this amendment, and I urge my colleagues to join me in opposition.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Madam Speaker, I listened very carefully to the gentleman from Arkansas, and I respect his position, but I just want to remind my colleagues that in my State and most States these organizations that are not nonprofits who care about the environment and care about protecting endangered species—in most States and in all of your States—these are not radical groups. These are good grassroots nonprofit organizations who really care about the environment and want to do their part in protecting our economy and our environmental economy.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to please vote for this amendment. I understand the gentleman's concern, but I assure him that the nonprofits that I speak of are not radical groups, they are good environmental organizations.

Madam Speaker, I yield as much time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. DINGELL).

Mrs. DINGELL. Madam Speaker, this amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Arizona and the gentleman from North Carolina adds nonprofit organizations to the list of entities that are eligible to compete for innovation grants funded by the Wildlife Conservation and Restoration Subaccount.

Ten percent of subaccount funds are used to fund innovation grants. These grants are meant to catalyze the innovation of techniques, tools, and strategies while fostering collaborative partnerships that accelerate, expand, or replicate effective and measurable recovery efforts for species of greatest conservation need and species listed under the Endangered Species Act.

Including nonprofit organizations in this competitive grant process will foster collaboration and ensure that the best strategies and efforts are being funded.

Madam Speaker, I am sure that none of the groups are the radical groups that you are referring to, but I don't know. It is a competitive process that will be carefully managed.

Madam Speaker, I support my colleague's amendment.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Madam Speaker, there are some wonderful groups out there that do great work, but this bill is not about funding private groups or nonprofit groups. This bill is about funding State and Tribal entities. It is what it was originally about. It has changed, it is now funding the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as well. I guess the majority is thinking, why not just throw in some of these environmental groups. Who else will this bill be putting funding out to before it is said and done?

There are groups that abuse the process. They abuse it greatly. They abuse it at the expense of the American taxpayer. They abuse it at the expense of the environment. They claim they are wanting to help the environment and they are destroying the environment.

Madam Speaker, I am opposed to this amendment, and I hope my colleagues will join me in opposing it.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Madam Speaker, in closing, let me thank the gentlewoman from Michigan for supporting this amendment. It is a very simple amendment. It is a very commonsense amendment. It will allow and authorize nonprofit organizations, as Mrs. DINGELL said, to compete for funding.

It will not be a guarantee of funding. It will be an opportunity to compete for funding. It is a worthwhile amendment, and I ask my colleagues to vote "yea."

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 1170, the previous question is ordered on the amendment offered by the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BUTTERFIELD).

The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BUTTERFIELD).

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the yeas appeared to have it.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays. The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 3(s) of House Resolution 8, the yeas and nays are ordered.

Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question are postponed.

#### ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Proceedings will now resume on questions previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

The following amendments to H.R. 2773:

Amendments En Bloc No. 1;  
Amendments En Bloc No. 2;  
Amendment No. 4, offered by Mr. KILDEE of Michigan; and  
Amendment No. 5, offered by Mr. BUTTERFIELD of North Carolina.

A motion to recommit H.R. 2773, if offered;

Passage of H.R. 2773, if ordered; and  
Motions to suspend the rules and pass:

S. 516; and  
H.R. 7211.

The first vote in the series will be a 15-minute vote. Remaining electronic votes will be 5-minute votes.

AMENDMENTS EN BLOC NO. 1 OFFERED BY MRS. DINGELL OF MICHIGAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the unfinished business is the question on the adoption of amendments en bloc No. 1, printed in part D of House Report 117-366, on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendments en bloc.