

Programs, are the cornerstones of our efforts to wipe out hunger.

Recently, the Department of Agriculture and the Agency for International Development approached my committee, asking to extend the authorities of these programs which are set to expire at the end of this year. While a new farm bill would be the preferred way of extending the life of these programs, it is becoming clear that will not be possible during this session of Congress. I have been working with Chairman ROBERTS and Chairman LUGAR hopefully to preserve these programs while a new farm bill is finalized.

Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing a bill that has been cosponsored by the ranking Democratic member of our committee, Mr. HAMILTON of Indiana. It protects authorities for programs that directly save lives. For example, one-third of all Bosnians depend on this program for food. We can all agree that keeping the food flowing to Bosnia is a key part of our peace efforts in that region of the world.

This bill will extend the authority of the title II minimum tonnage requirements, the Food Consultative Group, the Food for Progress Act, and the authorities for Agricultural Exports to Emerging Democracies under the Food, Agriculture and Conservation Trade Act of 1990.

This bill is needed to keep these life-saving programs functioning while a new farm bill is finished. As chairman of the International Relations Committee, I will call on my committee to mark up this bill shortly. I will also work with the Agriculture Committees of both House and Senate as well as the administration to seek its swift passage in the Congress.

I request that the full text of H.R. 2775 be inserted at this point in the RECORD.

H.R. 2775

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

SECTION 1. EXTENSION OF AUTHORITIES UNDER PUBLIC LAW 480.

(a) LEVELS OF ASSISTANCE FOR TITLE II.—
(1) MINIMUM ASSISTANCE.—Section 204(a)(1)(E) of the Agricultural Trade Development and Assistance Act of 1954 (7 U.S.C. 1724(a)(1)(E)) is amended by striking “for fiscal year 1995” and inserting “for each of the fiscal years 1995 and 1996”.

(2) MINIMUM NON-EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE.—Section 204(a)(2)(E) of such Act (7 U.S.C. 1724(a)(2)(E)) is amended by striking “for fiscal year 1995” and inserting “for each of the fiscal years 1995 and 1996”.

(b) FOOD AID CONSULTATIVE GROUP.—Section 205(f) of such Act (7 U.S.C. 1725(f)) is amended by striking “1995” and inserting “1996”.

(c) EXPIRATION DATE FOR ASSISTANCE.—Section 408 of such Act (7 U.S.C. 1736b) is amended by striking “1995” and inserting “1996”.

SEC. 2. EXTENSION OF AUTHORITIES UNDER THE FOOD FOR PROGRESS ACT OF 1985.

(a) EFFECTIVE AND TERMINATION DATES.—Section 1110 of the Food Security Act of 1985 (known as the “Food for Progress Act of 1985”; 7 U.S.C. 1736o) is amended in subsection (k) by striking “1995” and inserting “1996”.

(b) ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE IN ADMINISTRATION OF FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS.—Section 1110 of such Act (7 U.S.C. 1736o) is amended in subsection (l)(1) by striking “1995” and inserting “1996”.

SEC. 3. EXTENSION OF AUTHORITIES FOR AGRICULTURAL EXPORTS TO EMERGING DEMOCRACIES UNDER THE FOOD, AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION, AND TRADE ACT OF 1990.

Section 1542(a) of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C.

5622 note) is amended by striking “1995” and inserting “1996”.

CROATIA'S VIOLATION OF HELSINKI PRINCIPLES

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 13, 1995

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, after nearly 4 years of war, the leaders of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, and Serbia have made a tangible commitment to peace. The Dayton peace agreement is, as Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic stated, an unjust peace, but less unjust than the continuation of war. We can be hopeful, though, that the peace can be more just if there is international resolve to keep the signatories to the agreement in line with the commitments they have undertaken, not only in Dayton but, more broadly, in the OSCE and in international law.

Most of us recognize that the chief concern in this regard will be the adherence to the agreement on the part of the Serb militants who have engaged in aggression and genocide against non-Serbs, and have undertaken a massive propaganda campaign to garner support from the Bosnian Serb population. However, there is a real cause for concern regarding the recent policies and actions of Croatia, and the Bosnian Croats over whom it exercises control.

For example, since retaking last summer territory occupied by Serb militants, Croatian authorities have tolerated and even encouraged the harassment of fleeing Serbs, the looting and burning of their property, and the killing of dozens of Serbs—many elderly—who remained behind, in their homes. I commend my colleague and fellow Helsinki commissioner, FRANK WOLF, for taking the lead in raising this issue here in Congress.

Croatia held elections in October of this year in an effort to capitalize on military successes. By severely cutting back the representation of the Serb community in the parliament, the electoral process sent departed Serbs the message that they are not welcome back. At the same time, they sought to sway the loyalties of Croats from Bosnia and Herzegovina by giving them large representation in parliament. While observers concluded the elections to be free, controls on the media and other subtle manipulations of the electoral process made them less than fair.

Croatia states its readiness to cooperate with the International Tribunal in the Hague where alleged war criminals from the former Yugoslavia are to be tried, but in reality the Croatian Government has refused to do so. One indicted Bosnian Croat general, Tihomir Blaskic, was transferred to the Croatian Army rather than surrendered to the court, while Ivica Rajic, a Bosnian Croat commander indicted for his role in the slaughter of civilians at the village of Stupni Do; was just released from custody by Bosnian Croat authorities who were holding him for unrelated reasons.

Last Sunday's newspaper reported on the massive burning and destruction of property in Croat-controlled parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina that are to become parts of the Serb entity under the Dayton agreements.

These actions, Mr. Speaker, are an outrage. As chairman of the Helsinki Commission, and

as a Member of Congress who condemned the Serb aggression to which the international community allowed Croatia to be a victim, I nevertheless find these acts in violation of Helsinki principles to be inexcusable. Tactically, they do more to validate the fears of the average Serb than the most efficient propaganda machine, and damage Croatia's image abroad. Strategically, they feed on a cycle of hate, and ensure that Croats will again someday be the victims of that cycle. Morally—above all, morally—they are reprehensible, and deserve our condemnation.

Beyond this expression, we should consider, for the new year, the implications of these policies on our relations with Croatia. If the burning, looting, and killing go on; if the indicted are not surrendered; if intolerance continues to dominate Government policy; then we cannot maintain the good, friendly relations with Croatia that we may nevertheless want. Our State Department may want to consider diplomatic action, such as the recalling of ambassadors, and possible economic actions as well.

Let there be no mistake about it, Serb aggression remains the main problem in the former Yugoslavia. That does not mean we can turn a blind eye to the violations of others.

VETERANS HOUSING, EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS, AND EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS BENEFITS ACT OF 1995

SPEECH OF

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 12, 1995

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, yesterday the House of Representatives voted for legislation to ensure continued assistance to our Nation's veterans. I voted for this bill, the Veterans Housing and Employment Rights Benefits Act, which would permanently extend programs which provide invaluable assistance to our Nation's veterans and military retirees.

The bill would extend a number of important home-loan programs. One such program permits veterans to negotiate for favorable interest rates and terms for mortgages. Another service allows veterans to get mortgage loans with interest rates fixed by the Department of Veterans Affairs. A third program extended by the bill allows veterans to secure mortgages for energy-saving improvements to their homes.

All of these services allow veterans, who often do not have the collateral or financial resources normally needed to purchase a home, a chance to pursue the American dream of owning and maintaining their own home.

Other programs reauthorized by the bill include the Homeless Veterans Employment Program, and the VA program providing housing assistance to homeless veterans. It also makes changes to current law to help veterans further and prevent discrimination against veterans—such as a measure ensuring that employers cannot force employees to use their vacation time to participate in military training programs.

I thank my colleagues, Chairman BOB STUMP and Representative SONNY MONTGOMERY, for bringing this important legislation to

the House floor. It is my hope that we shall soon see this bill signed into law.

THE STERLING FOREST

HON. WILLIAM J. MARTINI

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 13, 1995

Mr. MARTINI. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased today to introduce, along with my colleagues RICHARD POMBO and FRANK LUCAS, the Federal Lands Prioritization Act of 1995. This legislation will sell idle public lands deemed pointless for Federal ownership and will use the proceeds to purchase Sterling Forest; therefore ending the funding deadlock that has existed in Congress with regard to Sterling Forest.

With the help of Representatives POMBO and LUCAS, I now introduce a bill that, not only saves Sterling Forest, but also specifies a funding source for its acquisition. Last week I heard of Representative FRANK LUCAS' desire to sell public lands in Oklahoma and approached Representative POMBO of the House Resources Committee to propose that Sterling Forest be the beneficiary of funds from those Federal lands being reverted to private ownership.

Together, we were able to propose a bill that makes the Federal land acquisition process more fiscally responsible, and sets a precedent that the Federal Government reprioritize its land holding policies and streamline its inventory to better target budget resources and meet environmental goals.

As a Passaic County Freeholder, I understood early on the need to take action to protect Sterling Forest. In fact, during my service on the Passaic County Board of Freeholders, the board was the first entity to secure part of Sterling Forest in 1993—purchasing 2,000 acres. I have since been looking forward to the day that the reserve would have complete Federal protection. Selling dead-weight public lands to buy Sterling Forest is a fiscally responsible solution to a decade-old stalemate.

Located in southern New York and bordering northern New Jersey, Sterling Forest, in its current undeveloped State, is important to the residents of both States for a variety of reasons.

Sterling Forest is a 17,500-acre water and recreational reserve that area residents and public officials have repeatedly requested the Federal Government protect. Stalls in the actual purchase have been attributed to budget-cutting times and the concern about adding more public land to the already bloated Federal Government inventory.

As a recreational area for New York and New Jersey, Sterling Forest offers a haven for families and individuals interested in leaving behind stresses of everyday life. The picturesque beauty of this natural sanctuary provides a wide variety of outdoor activities for the enjoyment of everyone. Sterling Forest even serves as a connections to the Northeast with the Appalachian trail winding its way through the forest's rough terrain.

Most importantly, however, Sterling Forest is a watershed for most of northern New Jersey and the surrounding area. It provides nearly 2 million New Jersey residents with clean and safe drinking water.

Proposed development and urbanization of this area will destroy a great bounty of natural resources to the entire Northeast. Furthermore, if the land is developed, the water that flows from Sterling Forest could become polluted. The only viable solution at that point would be to build a water treatment center at the cost of \$150 million to New Jersey taxpayers. Not only would this cost the taxpayers revenue they just don't have, but it is, at best, a second-rate solution. Truthfully, Mr. Speaker, there is just no comparison between treated water and water from a natural watershed such as Sterling Forest.

Sterling Forest is an issue of national significance, involving one of Government's most essential functions: the preservation of a vital, life-sustaining resource—water. As stated before, Sterling Forest provides clean water for 2 million Americans in New Jersey alone—a fact that transcends any suggestion of parochial interests.

For this reason, an alliance of governmental agencies and public interest groups have joined together in the fight to save this vital resource. This legislation sets up a management and fiscal partnership between all levels of Government. In fact, purchasing this land is just a one-time expense. The Department of the Interior will not be burdened by the costs of managing and maintaining the forest, for this will be done jointly by New York and New Jersey. A partnership such as this of local, State, and Federal Government is positive for all involved and should serve as a model for future land acquisition. It is our responsibility to protect Sterling Forest and assure an ample water supply for generations to come.

It is important to note that there is a bipartisan consensus to save Sterling Forest. Senator BILL BRADLEY of New Jersey has already sponsored a bill in the U.S. Senate, Gov. Christine Todd Whitman of New Jersey signed the appropriation and authorization of \$10 million toward the project, and Gov. George Pataki of New York approved the 1995–96 budget including \$18 million for land conservation. Many members in the New Jersey delegation have been active in the collective pursuit of this achievement, and I commend them for all they have done.

The States and the Federal Government have been working to preserve this vital resource to insure that Sterling Forest is around to meet both the recreation and environment needs of the area. It is time that we realize our goals.

No matter how you look at this project, saving the forest yields no negative repercussions. The preservation of a vital source of water to one of the most populated areas of the country is not simply a laudable aspiration, but rather a necessary undertaking. Furthermore, the residents are opposed to development; the local governments are opposed to development; and the taxpayers are opposed to development.

Three sites totalling 56,000 acres will be put up for sale to the private sector: Optima "Lake"—the failed flood control project, which now consists of a 17,000-foot earthen dam and a dry lake bed (13,500 acres), Black Kettle National Grasslands (30,710 acres), and Rita Blanca National Grasslands (13,576 acres). Both Black Kettle and Rita Blanca are odd-lot Federal tracts. These proceeds will be earmarked for the purchase of the Washita National Battlefield and Sterling Forest.

Please support this budget-friendly preservation of land that actually needs the Federal Government protection. Support the Federal Lands Prioritization Act of 1995.

EXTENDING AU PAIR PROGRAMS, H.R. 2767

HON. BENJAMIN A. GILMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 13, 1995

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing a bill to extend the authorization for a program important to many American families. This measure renews the authority for the Au Pair program that expired on September 30. This bipartisan measure includes as original sponsors the ranking Democrat on the International Relations Committee, the gentleman from Indiana, Mr. Hamilton, the chairman of the International Operations and Human Rights Subcommittee, Mr. Smith of New Jersey the gentlelady from Maryland, Mrs. Morella, the gentleman from Virginia, Mr. Moran, the gentleman from California Mr. Baker, the gentleman from Virginia, Mr. Wolf, and the gentleman from Virginia, Mr. Davis.

This measure will: Extend the authority for the program for 2 years; open it up to world wide participation; lift the limitation on the number of organizations that may participate and manage an au pair program; and, require the U.S. Information Agency to report on the compliance of the au pair organizations with recently adopted regulations.

Many families rely on the au pair program for their child care and particularly welcome the opportunity to broaden their children's experience by having someone from another country live with them for a year. The lapse in the program has caused untold inconvenience to many families turning their child care plans upside down. It is time to fix this problem.

Accordingly, I am pleased to be able to introduce this bipartisan bill and will seek rapid consideration by both Houses of Congress.

I request that the entire text of H.R. 2767 be inserted at this point in the RECORD.

H.R. 2767

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

SECTION 1. EXTENSION OF AU PAIR PROGRAMS.

(a) REPEAL.—Section 8 of the Eisenhower Exchange Fellowship Act of 1990 (Public Law 101-454) is repealed.

(b) AUTHORITY FOR AU PAIR PROGRAMS.—The Director of the United States Information Agency is authorized to continue to administer an au pair program, operating on a world-wide basis, through fiscal year 1997.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than October 1, 1996, the Director of the United States Information Agency shall submit a report regarding the continued extension of au pair programs to the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on International Relations of the House of Representatives. This report shall specifically detail the compliance of all au pair organizations with regulations governing au pair programs as published on February 15, 1995.