

grants available to preserve the most threatened farmland, farmland in States, counties, municipalities, or private entities all agree are vital to preserve.

Simply put, if a State contributes 25 percent, a county contributes 25 percent, and a municipality or private entity contributes 25 percent towards the preservation of eligible farmland, the effort would then be eligible for a 25 percent Federal match.

I know that every, State, county, and municipality's commitment to farmland preservation is different, but it is my hope that creating this challenge grant will encourage more efforts at these levels of government.

States like Pennsylvania and Pennsylvania's counties and municipalities have invested heavily in preserving farmland. The challenge grant created through H.R. 5313 would only help to encourage other States in more local municipalities to follow this example and compete for Federal dollars available through the challenge grant.

I also believe that this challenge grant will steer Federal resources towards those projects already getting wide support from counties, States, and municipalities, or private organizations. This ensures that the increasingly limited Federal resources are being used to preserve the most threatened farmland.

This is an important measure that will help preserve farmland and open space in suburban and exurban communities. For residents of these areas like my constituents in Pennsylvania's Sixth Congressional District, preservation of open space and farmland is a quality of life issue that can not be overlooked.

I want to thank Chairman GOODLATTE and his staff for their efforts in bringing this bill to the floor today, as well as the efforts of Ranking Member PETERSON. I would also like to thank my colleague, Congressman MARK KIRK of Illinois, for his foresight and leadership in the creation of the Suburban Agenda Caucus. His efforts and the efforts of the leaders of the Caucus have helped shed light on the issues that those of us in the suburban communities care deeply about.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 5313, the Open Space and Farmland Preservation Act.

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

Mr. GOODLATTE. Madam Speaker, at this time, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. KIRK).

Mr. KIRK. Madam Speaker, I want to thank Congressman JIM GERLACH for his leadership for the entire Nation in protecting suburban green and open space.

Now, we all support the National Park System, and I believe the next President should set a goal of doubling the National Park System. But we also need to take action to protect more green and open space near home.

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Without this bill, more green and open space would disappear in an unending series of strip malls. In my own district, we just set aside 77 acres of Lake Michigan shoreline as part of a new park to preserve habitat for all time. But we need to do more.

Under Congressman GERLACH's leadership, this bill became part of our bipartisan suburban agenda to meet the education, health care, conservation and economic needs of suburban families. This bill advances those needs by making sure that we preserve more green and open space in the suburbs.

In my own State of Illinois, we are losing over 41,000 acres of farmland to development, 71 percent in suburban areas. The rate of farmland loss in our State has increased over 130 percent in the 1990s. This bill directly meets that need, and I want to thank Chairman GOODLATTE for moving this legislation that makes sure that suburban families have more green and open space near home.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5313.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

PROVIDING FOR CONVEYANCE OF FORMER KONNAROCK LUTHERAN GIRLS SCHOOL IN SMYTH COUNTY, VIRGINIA

Mr. GOODLATTE. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5103) to provide for the conveyance of the former Konnarock Lutheran Girls School in Smyth County, Virginia, which is currently owned by the United States and administered by the Forest Service, to facilitate the restoration and reuse of the property, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 5103

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

SECTION 1. LAND CONVEYANCE, FORMER KONNAROCK LUTHERAN GIRLS SCHOOL, JEFFERSON NATIONAL FOREST, SMYTH COUNTY, VIRGINIA.

(a) CONVEYANCE REQUIRED.—The Secretary of Agriculture shall convey, without consid-

eration, to the Evangelical Lutheran Coalition for Mission in Appalachia (in this section referred to as the "recipient") all right, title, and interest of the United States in and to a parcel of real property in the Mount Rogers National Recreation Area, Smyth County, Virginia, located in the vicinity of the junction of Virginia Routes 600 and 603, consisting of not more than six acres, and containing the former Konnarock Lutheran Girls School and its outbuildings, as depicted on the map entitled "Proposed Area for New Legislation or Sale—Konnarock School—Being a Portion of USA Tract J-935".

(b) CONDITION OF CONVEYANCE.—The conveyance under subsection (a) shall be subject to the condition that the recipient accept the real property described in such subsection in its condition at the time of the conveyance, commonly known as conveyance "as is".

(c) DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY.—Subject to the acreage limitation specified in subsection (a), the exact acreage and legal description of the real property to be conveyed under such subsection shall be determined by a survey satisfactory to the Secretary. The cost of the survey shall be borne by the recipient.

(d) ADDITIONAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—The Secretary may require such additional terms and conditions in connection with the conveyance under subsection (a) as the Secretary considers appropriate to protect the interests of the United States.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) and the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. PETERSON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia.

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

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 5103, a bill to provide for the conveyance of the former Konnarock Lutheran Girls School in Smyth County, Virginia. The Konnarock property is located in Representative RICK BOUCHER's congressional district, just south of my district in the southwestern part of Virginia. The land and buildings were acquired by the Forest Service in 1967. The facility, at that time, was not in use. It was last used as a school in 1959.

The Forest Service used the buildings to house fire crews and summer trail crews, as well as the job corps operations. By the early 1980s, continued deterioration rendered the facility unusable. There has been considerable continued deterioration since that time. The facility is now in severe disrepair.

Prior to Forest Service acquisition, the facility was owned by the local Lutheran Church. This legislation would convey the land to the Evangelical Lutheran Coalition for the mission in Appalachia, which plans to restore/preserve the historic structures; develop a retreat center; partner with area colleges to use the property as an environmental learning center; and develop, archive, and exhibit the history of the school and the community.

This bill was passed by the House Committee on Agriculture favorably last week with the recommendation

that it does pass. Today's bill takes the bare minimum necessary to convey this property to an owner who will have an opportunity to invest in the buildings and restore them to their historical significance.

Prior to the committee's consideration of the bill, we were advised by the Congressional Budget Office that the small area conveyed and the deterioration of the buildings ensures that the bill will not have a significant impact on spending.

I thank my colleague, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BOUCHER), for introducing this good measure and the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. PETERSON), the ranking member, for helping us get it to the floor. I urge my colleagues to adopt this bill.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I rise in support of H.R. 5103. Mr. BOUCHER's bill will convey about 6 acres of land within Jefferson National Forest back to the Lutheran Church to allow them to restore and preserve the historic Konnarock Lutheran Girls School in Smyth County, Virginia.

The Lutheran Evangelical Coalition for Missions in the Appalachias has developed a thoughtful plan for the site that includes the restoration and preservation of the building, a retreat center, and an environmental learning center that will work in conjunction with local schools.

This is a worthwhile use of Federal forest land and an excellent project which deserves congressional support.

Madam Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BOUCHER), the author of the bill.

(Mr. BOUCHER asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BOUCHER. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time, and I want to express my appreciation to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE), chairman of the House Agriculture Committee, and the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. PETERSON) for moving this measure through the committee and bringing the bill to the House floor today.

The Lutheran Girls School building in Konnarock, Virginia, is a historic structure; and it is presently listed on the National Register of Historic Places. It was constructed of wood and stone, hewed from the mountains where the building is located during the 1920s, and has graceful architecture that is typical of the rustic buildings constructed during that era.

It was constructed by the Women's Missionary Society of the Lutheran Church in America and was operated by the Lutheran Church as a girls school from the middle 1920s until 1959. At that time the school was closed and the building at that point entered a very long period of disuse.

In 1967 the Forest Service acquired that building as part of a much larger

acquisition of 680 acres, all of which bordered the national forest. Today, the building has fallen into a severe state of disrepair and is in danger of collapse unless substantial remedial work is performed in the very near future.

The bill before us would convey the building and up to 6 acres of lands, the exact amount to be determined by conducting a survey, from the Federal Government and to the Evangelical Lutheran Coalition for Mission in Appalachia. That is an organization that is affiliated with the Lutheran Church.

The Lutheran Coalition intends to restore and renovate the property in a manner consistent with its historic status. Its future use will be as a retreat center for the Lutheran Coalition, and it will be available for use as a retreat center and by other nonprofit entities and faith-based organizations.

The coalition also plans to partner with area colleges to establish exhibits and a learning center for matters relating to the unique mountain environment in which this building is located.

Through this conveyance, we can assure that the restoration and future maintenance of this historic structure will occur. I thank Chairman GOODLATTE and Mr. PETERSON for their work in bringing this bill to the floor. I join with them in urging its approval by the House

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

Mr. GOODLATTE. Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5103, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

PROVIDING FOR CONVEYANCE OF CERTAIN NATIONAL FOREST SYSTEM LAND TO LAONA AND WABENO, WISCONSIN

Mr. GOODLATTE. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4559) to provide for the conveyance of National Forest System land to the towns of Laona and

Wabeno, Wisconsin, to authorize the Secretary of Agriculture to convey certain isolated parcels of National Forest System land in Florence and Langlade Counties, Wisconsin, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 4559

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

SECTION 1. CONVEYANCE OF CHEQUAMEGON-NICOLET NATIONAL FOREST LAND TO TOWNS OF LAONA AND WABENO, WISCONSIN.

(a) CONVEYANCE TO TOWN OF LAONA.—

(1) CONVEYANCE.—At the request of the town of Laona, Wisconsin (referred to in this subsection as the "town"), the Secretary of Agriculture shall convey to the town all right, title, and interest of the United States in and to the parcel of National Forest System land in Forest County, Wisconsin, consisting of approximately 176 acres, as further described in paragraph (2), for the purpose of permitting the town to use the parcel as a site for an industrial park and for other purposes.

(2) LEGAL DESCRIPTION.—The parcel of land referred to in paragraph (1) consists of the N $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$, SW $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$, S $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$, and that part of the W $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ lying south of the Rat River, excluding Lot #1 of Forest County Certified Survey Map #157861 and a 100-foot wide former rail road right-of-way running through the W $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$, all in section 6, township 35 north, range 15 east, Laona Township, Forest County, Wisconsin.

(3) CONSIDERATION.—As consideration for the conveyance under this subsection, the town shall pay to the Secretary an amount equal to \$300,000, which is the appraised fair market value of the parcel of National Forest System land to be conveyed.

(b) CONVEYANCE TO TOWN OF WABENO.—

(1) CONVEYANCE.—At the request of the town of Wabeno, Wisconsin (referred to in this subsection as the "town"), the Secretary of Agriculture shall convey to the town all right, title, and interest of the United States in and to the parcel of National Forest System land in Forest County, Wisconsin, consisting of approximately 173 acres, as further described in paragraph (2), for the purpose of permitting the town to use the parcel as a site for an industrial park and for other purposes.

(2) LEGAL DESCRIPTION.—The parcel of land referred to in paragraph (1) consists of the S $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$, E $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$, and east 17.30 acres of the NW $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$, excluding a 100-foot wide former rail road right-of-way running through the NE $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ and SE $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ and a 0.02 acre parcel in the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$, a 0.93 acre parcel in the SE $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$, and a 2.36 acre parcel in the E $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ reserved for highway purposes, as described in volume 7, 276-277, Forest County Records, and all in section 7, township 34 north, range 15 east, Wabeno Township, Forest County, Wisconsin.

(3) CONSIDERATION.—As consideration for the conveyance under this subsection, the town shall pay to the Secretary an amount equal to \$320,000, which is the appraised fair market value of the parcel of National Forest System land to be conveyed.

(c) SURVEY.—If necessary, the exact acreage and legal description of the lands to be conveyed under subsections (a) and (b) shall be determined by surveys satisfactory to the Secretary. The cost of a survey shall be borne by the recipient of the land.

(d) DEPOSIT AND USE OF PROCEEDS.—

(1) DEPOSIT.—The Secretary shall deposit the proceeds from the conveyance of land under this section in the fund established