

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