

declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 37 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1516

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HASTINGS of Washington) at 3 o'clock and 16 minutes p.m.

PROTECTING INVESTMENT IN OIL SHALE THE NEXT GENERATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL, ENERGY, AND RESOURCE SECURITY ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 547 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 3408.

□ 1517

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill (H.R. 3408) to set clear rules for the development of United States oil shale resources, to promote shale technology research and development, and for other purposes, with Mr. WOODALL (Acting Chair) in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The Acting CHAIR. When the Committee of the Whole rose on Wednesday, February 15, 2012, amendment No. 12 printed in part A of House Report 112-398, offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DEUTCH), had been disposed of.

AMENDMENT NO. 13 OFFERED BY MR. THOMPSON OF CALIFORNIA

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 13 printed in part A of House Report 112-398.

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 954, after line 19, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . LIMITATION ON LEASING OFF THE COAST OF NORTHERN CALIFORNIA.

Section 8(a) of the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act (43 U.S.C. 1337) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(9) No oil and gas lease may be issued under this Act for any area of the outer Continental Shelf for which the State of California is an affected State under section 2(f)(1) and that is located west of Marin, Sonoma, Mendocino, Humboldt, or Del Norte County, California.”.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 547, the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMPSON) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I represent a coastal community and we take seriously threats to our Nation's coastline. The Thompson-Woolsey amendment would clarify that H.R. 3408 would not open drilling along the northern California coast.

Proponents of H.R. 3408 claim that northern California does not meet the minimum production potential to be eligible for offshore drilling; however, I do not simply want to take the House majority's word for it. In a Congress that has seen an unprecedented push to weaken safety standards for our environment, I don't want to leave the door open for alternative interpretations. The people of the north coast of California want to make sure that their environmentally unique and critical coast is protected, period.

Because this amendment is a clarification of the legislation's intent, there is no cost associated with it. It's important to me and to my constituents that H.R. 3408 makes clear that drilling will not occur in the northern California planning area along the coast of Mendocino, Humboldt, Del Norte, Sonoma, and Marin Counties. The coastal area of my district is one of the most productive ecosystems in the world and supports salmon, Dungeness crab, rockfish, sole, and urchin populations.

□ 1520

It also boasts an important and successful tourism industry which represents millions of dollars to the local economies and to the working families of our area. If an oil spill were to occur in this area, the environmental and economic cost would be staggering. Response and cleanup efforts would be hazardous and minimally effective given the rocky shores and rough waters. Drilling for oil or gas off California's north coast would cause serious harm to a unique and productive ecosystem, abundant marine life, and tourism businesses. This amendment will simply clarify that this bill does not require drilling off the north coast of California.

I urge a “yes” vote on the amendment, and I yield 2 minutes to Ms. WOOLSEY.

Ms. WOOLSEY. I thank my friend and neighbor for yielding.

I don't know how many of my colleagues have visited the California north coast that Mr. THOMPSON and I represent. If you haven't, I don't know what you're waiting for. The waters off our shore are quite simply the most abundant and exquisitely beautiful on the face of the Earth. Our commercial fishing industry depends on this thriving marine ecosystem; these waters are invaluable to the research of university scientists; and more than 16,000 tourism jobs in Sonoma County alone depend on these open, beautiful waters. If the majority were truly interested in helping job creators, they would not be

supporting a drill-everywhere approach.

Actually, oil and gas resources available off our coasts don't come close to justifying opening this area in the first place to any drilling; and even in parts of the country where there is oil, I believe the costs to our natural environment are much too great when we start punching holes in the ocean floor. We have learned nothing, it would appear, from the Deepwater Horizon disaster if we don't pass this amendment.

We can and we must address our energy security challenges with a stronger commitment to green technologies and to clean and renewable energy sources. And we can start by saying no to drilling in northern California. I strongly urge my colleagues to support the Thompson-Woolsey amendment.

Mr. THOMPSON of California. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

Mr. Chairman, I rise to oppose this amendment. Last year, during our offshore debate, an identical amendment was offered, and it failed in the House by a bipartisan vote. In fact, 263 of our colleagues voted “no” on this amendment. Right now, under existing law, the Northern California Planning Area is available for leasing. It's been available since 2008 when gasoline prices hit \$4 per gallon and the President and the Congress at that time lifted the offshore drilling moratoria.

I'll remind the House that in 2008 when gas prices were rising and the Democrats controlled the House, nothing was done regarding these \$4-a-gallon gasoline prices until after the session ended and the President ended his moratoria and the Congress entered that moratoria. So going into 2009, there essentially was no moratoria that existed.

This legislation, then, aims to open up our Federal resources and increase energy production despite President Obama's failure to do just the opposite. This amendment would simply block additional areas from energy production in the future. The Outer Continental Shelf and the resources it contains are under the jurisdiction of the Federal Government. It belongs to all of the people of the United States.

The State of California—and I need to remind colleagues of this—the State of California's top import is petroleum from overseas. This amendment would block the domestic production potentially of petroleum off their coast—production that could be used to help California consumers and provide California people with jobs.

This amendment would do just the opposite of what the underlying bill intends to do, so I urge my colleagues to vote “no” on the amendment.