

Such rollcall votes, if postponed, will be taken after debate has concluded on all motions to suspend the rules, but not before 6 p.m. today.

# PROVIDING ASSISTANCE TO NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAILS INTERPRETIVE CENTER IN CASPER, WYOMING

Mrs. CUBIN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2186) to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to provide assistance to the National Historic Trails Interpretive Center in Casper, Wyoming.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 2186

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

## SECTION 1. FINDINGS AND PURPOSES.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Congress finds and declares the following:

(1) The city of Casper, Wyoming, is nationally significant as the only geographic location in the western United States where 4 congressionally recognized historic trails (the Oregon Trail, the Mormon Trail, the California Trail, and the Pony Express Trail), the Bridger Trail, the Bozeman Trail, and many Indian routes converged.

(2) The historic trails that passed through the Casper area are a distinctive part of the national character and possess important historical and cultural values representing themes of migration, settlement, transportation, and commerce that shaped the landscape of the West.

(3) The Bureau of Land Management has not yet established a historic trails interpretive center in Wyoming or in any adjacent State to educate and focus national attention on the history of the mid-19th century immigrant trails that crossed public lands in the Intermountain West.

(4) At the invitation of the Bureau of Land Management, the city of Casper and the National Historic Trails Foundation, Inc. (a nonprofit corporation established under the laws of the State of Wyoming) entered into a memorandum of understanding in 1992, and have since signed an assistance agreement in 1993 and a cooperative agreement in 1997, to create, manage, and sustain a National Historic Trails Interpretive Center to be located in Casper, Wyoming, to professionally interpret the historic trails in the Casper area for the benefit of the public.

(5) The National Historic Trails Interpretive Center authorized by this Act is consistent with the purposes and objectives of the National Trails System Act (16 U.S.C. 1241 et seq.), which directs the Secretary of the Interior to protect, interpret, and manage the remnants of historic trails on public lands.

(6) The State of Wyoming effectively joined the partnership to establish the National Historic Trails Interpretive Center through a legislative allocation of supporting funds, and the citizens of the city of Casper have increased local taxes to meet their financial obligations under the assistance agreement and the cooperative agreement referred to in paragraph (4).

(7) The National Historic Trails Foundation, Inc. has secured most of the \$5,000,000 of non-Federal funding pledged by State and local governments and private interests pursuant to the cooperative agreement referred to in paragraph (4).

(8) The Bureau of Land Management has completed the engineering and design phase of the National Historic Trails Interpretive Center, and the National Historic Trails

Foundation, Inc. is ready for Federal financial and technical assistance to construct the Center pursuant to the cooperative agreement referred to in paragraph (4).

(b) PURPOSES.—The purposes of this Act are the following:

(1) To recognize the importance of the historic trails that passed through the Casper, Wyoming, area as a distinctive aspect of American heritage worthy of interpretation and preservation.

(2) To assist the city of Casper, Wyoming, and the National Historic Trails Foundation, Inc. in establishing the National Historic Trails Interpretive Center to memorialize and interpret the significant role of those historic trails in the history of the United States.

(3) To highlight and showcase the Bureau of Land Management's stewardship of public lands in Wyoming and the West.

## SEC. 2. NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAILS INTERPRETIVE CENTER.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Director of the Bureau of Land Management (in this section referred to as the "Secretary"), shall establish in Casper, Wyoming, a center for the interpretation of the historic trails in the vicinity of Casper, including the Oregon Trail, the Mormon Trail, the California Trail, and the Pony Express Trail, the Bridger Trail, the Bozeman Trail, and various Indian routes. The center shall be known as the National Historic Trails Interpretive Center (in this section referred to as the "Center").

(b) FACILITIES.—The Secretary, subject to the availability of appropriations, shall construct, operate, and maintain facilities for the Center—

(1) on land provided by the city of Casper, Wyoming;

(2) in cooperation with the city of Casper and the National Historic Trails Interpretive Center Foundation, Inc. (a nonprofit corporation established under the laws of the State of Wyoming); and

(3) in accordance with—

(A) the Memorandum of Understanding entered into on March 4, 1993, by the city, the foundation, and the Wyoming State Director of the Bureau of Land Management; and

(B) the cooperative agreement between the foundation and the Wyoming State Director of the Bureau of Land Management, numbered K910A970020.

(c) DONATIONS.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary may accept, retain, and, subject to the availability of appropriations, expend donations of funds, property, or services from individuals, foundations, corporations, or public entities for the purpose of development and operation of the Center.

(d) ENTRANCE FEE.—Notwithstanding section 4 of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965 (16 U.S.C. 4601-6a), the Secretary may—

(1) collect an entrance fee from visitors to the Center; and

(2) subject to appropriations, use amounts received by the United States from that fee for expenses of operation of the Center.

(e) CONCESSIONS.—The Secretary may—

(1) take actions to encourage and enable private persons to provide and operate facilities and services at the Center in the same manner and extent as the Secretary may take such actions, with respect to areas administered by the National Park Service, under the Public Law 89-249 (16 U.S.C. 20a et seq.), popularly known as the National Park System Concessions Policy Act; and

(2) subject to appropriations, use amounts received by the United States from such facilities and services for development and operation of the Center.

(f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to

the Secretary \$5,000,000 to carry out this section.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Wyoming (Mrs. CUBIN) and the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Wyoming (Mrs. CUBIN).

(Mrs. CUBIN asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

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

Mr. Speaker, this bill would establish the National Historic Trails Center and Interpretive Center in Casper, Wyoming.

H.R. 2186 was introduced in an effort to preserve and interpret several historic trails which crossed western America during the 1800s. These historic trails represent valuable historic and cultural themes that help shaped the West. This bill is the result of a cooperative partnership with Federal and non-Federal interests which will help fund, construct, operate and maintain the trails center. The partnership includes the Bureau of Land Management, the City of Casper, the State of Wyoming and the nonprofit National Historic Trails Foundation, which have been invaluable in their contribution to this effort. The non-Federal partners have made a clear commitment to share approximately one-half of the total cost to construct, maintain and operate the trails center.

At this point the design work is done, the land is available, and most of the non-Federal funds have been accrued. Now the actual interpretive center needs to be constructed. H.R. 2186 authorizes the appropriation of funds to complete this construction.

This bill really is a showpiece of what can be accomplished as a result of cooperative partnerships between Federal and non-Federal interests. This bill is noncontroversial, Mr. Speaker, and is supported by the administration. I urge my colleagues to voice support for passage of H.R. 2186.

H.R. 2186, the National Historic Trails Interpretive Center Authorization Act, requests an amount of \$5 million be authorized for use by the Bureau of Land Management in the Department of the Interior to construct the National Historic Trails Interpretive Center in Casper, Wyoming.

Over a century and a half has now passed since the historic overland migrations of people across America's western frontier began. Their stories of hardship, perseverance and courage are legendary, and they figure prominently in the history of the West. The trails they traveled, especially in Wyoming, still remain a visible testimony to the great struggles of these early American pioneers.

During the mid-1800's, Casper, Wyoming was the only geographic location in the western United States where the Oregon, Mormon, California and Pony Express trails, as well as many Indian trails converged. A fork of the Bozeman Trail and the beginnings of the Bridger Trail also originated in Casper. These

trails are a distinctive part of our nation's past and they possess important historical and cultural values representing themes of migration, settlement, transportation, and commerce that shaped the landscape of the West.

Congress has recognized the historical significance of these trails. The National Trails Systems Act, as amended in 1978 and 1992, designates the Oregon, Mormon, California, and Pony Express Trails as National Historic Trails. The Act also directs the Secretary of the Interior to protect, interpret and manage the remnants of these trails on federal lands.

While large segments of these trails, and their associated historic sites, lie on Bureau of Land Management (BLM) lands in Wyoming, no interpretive center is available in Wyoming, or any adjacent state, to educate the public on the role of these trails in our nation's history.

In an effort to preserve and interpret this important history, I have introduced H.R. 2186 to establish the National Historic Trails Interpretive Center (NHTIC) in Casper, Wyoming. The bill encompasses a unique partnership of federal and non-federal interests to jointly construct and operate this Center. These interests include the BLM, the city of Casper, and the nonprofit National Historic Trails Foundation. These entities came together in 1992 to build a center to memorialize and interpret the national historic trails in the West.

The interpretive and educational programs that will be associated with the Trails Center in Casper will enable visitors to discover and appreciate the miles of untouched trails that lie on public lands in the West. The Center will identify and help protect sensitive historic trail remnants to prevent degradation. The National Historic Trails Centers will also provide an opportunity for the BLM to showcase public lands emphasizing the bureau's commitment to preserve lands of historical value.

Under the cooperative agreement, there is a clear commitment of non-federal partners to share costs to construct, maintain and operate the Trails Center. City, state, foundation and private interests will bear approximately half of the total costs of the project. The City of Casper provided funds to initiate work on the Center. The city has also donated more than 10 acres of prime land overlooking the site of the North Platte River crossings of the historic trails for the Center. Furthermore, the citizens of Casper increased local sales taxes and have raised the required 1.5 million of construction dollars to meet their financial commitment under the cooperative agreement. The State of Wyoming has joined the partnership by giving \$700,000 for the Center. The cooperative agreement also requires non-Federal entities to establish a \$1 million endowment, the interest thereof to maintain exhibits for the life of the Center. The overwhelming amount of non-federal support for the Center is precisely the kind of cooperation Congress intended in managing and interpreting the historic trails of the nation.

The BLM, under the cooperative agreement, has an important but limited role in establishing and operating the National Historic Trails Interpretive Center. The BLM has already completed a striking design as well as the engineering blueprints of the Center. With this work completed, the land available, and most of the non-federal funds in hand, the Center is now ready for construction. This legislation provides congressional authorization of funds for the BLM to do so. Once the Center is com-

pleted, the BLM will own and operate the facility. However, with the endowment, the authorization to charge visitors a modest entrance fee, and commitments for volunteer staffing, the facility will be largely self-sustaining from a financial perspective. This is important in view of the present and anticipated future funding restrictions of the Federal government.

In Wyoming, we are experiencing great interest in the historic trails that cross the state. In 1992, a year when visitation to Yellowstone National Park and Grand Teton National Park was down, the Wyoming Department of Tourism reported an increase in tourism along the Oregon Trail route during the sesquicentennial of that trail. This year is the sesquicentennial of the Mormon Pioneer Trail. BLM officials have estimated that between 200,000 and one million visitors participated in "trails" events in Wyoming this year. We expect similar interest in trails during the sesquicentennials of the California and Pony Express historic trails. In truth, an increasing number of Americans are discovering, enjoying, and learning the history of these treks and are seeking to experience natural settings, landmarks, and physical remains of the trails.

I am pleased with the broad level of support the National Historic Trails Interpretive Center enjoys. Wyoming State Representative Dorothy Perkins, who testified on behalf of the bill before the Resource Subcommittee on National Parks and Public Lands, along with Executive Director of the Center, Edna Kennell, have both worked tirelessly to make this project a reality. As noted earlier, the city of Casper and the State of Wyoming have provided tremendous assistance to the effort—for that I thank them. The governor of Wyoming, Jim Geringer, as well as Wyoming's former governor, Mike Sullivan, have endorsed the Center from the beginning. Wyoming's U.S. Senators, MIKE ENZI and CRAIG THOMAS, support the project. Especially gratifying has been the support and encouragement from interests outside of Wyoming, such as the Oregon-California Trails Association. I deeply appreciate the support of my respected colleague from Utah, Representative JIM HANSEN, Chairman of the House National Parks and Public Lands Subcommittee.

The establishment of the National Historic Trails Interpretive Center is in the public interest. The project contains the best elements of private and public cooperation. The construction and operation of this Trails Center is altogether consistent with the BLM's criteria for projects of this kind. I urge my colleagues to help advance our efforts to preserve and interpret a significant chapter of American history by lending their support for this legislation.

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

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

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

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 2186 directs the Secretary of the Interior to establish a National Historic Trails Interpretive Center in Casper, Wyoming, and to carry out this legislation the bill authorizes an appropriation of \$5 million, and I want to certainly commend my good friend, the gentlewoman from Wyoming (Mrs.

CUBIN), who is the chief sponsor of this piece of legislation.

Mr. Speaker, the center would encompass 4 designated historic trails, national historic trails, the Oregon Trail, the California trail, the Mormon Pioneer Trail and the Pony Express Trail, that pass through the Casper area. The center would include displays and provide visitor education on the historical impacts of the trails. Exhibits would depict the pioneers' travels, and I have been told that that would also include a focus on Native Americans.

The Bureau of Land Management is currently a partner with the State of Wyoming, the City of Casper and the National Historic Trails Center Foundation on this project. The partners are operating under a 1992 memorandum of understanding and a 1997 cooperative agreement.

The Bureau of Land Management has also committed \$450,000 for the engineering and design of the center, and the Wyoming legislature has appropriated \$700,000, and the local county has provided \$1.5 million for the center through local sales taxes. The City of Casper has donated \$700,000 to the foundation and has pledged to provide the land on which the center will be built. The foundation has raised \$3 million towards the \$4.5 million commitment to the project. In addition, efforts are underway to establish an endowment of at least \$1 million to help with the maintenance and operation costs of the center.

Mr. Speaker, as this statement shows, there has already been a significant amount of work done to establish a National Historic Trails Center in Casper, Wyoming, and I add my support to these efforts in the bill. I believe H.R. 2186 is a noncontroversial measure, it does have the support of the administration, and I ask my colleagues to support this piece of legislation.

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

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

I wish to thank my colleague from American Samoa for his support and work on this bill.

I do not have any further speakers, so is the gentleman prepared to yield back the balance of his time?

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. ROEMER) to speak on this legislation.

Mr. ROEMER. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend for yielding this time to me, and congratulate him and gentlewoman from Wyoming (Mrs. CUBIN) for her hard work on this very important noncontroversial bill on the trails interpretive center. Certainly the engineering design center that they are discussing is important in a host of different ways, and the money they have worked to allocate for this legislation is extremely important too. But I would say, Mr. Speaker, in terms of

this historic trail that is going to lead somewhere and has been designed for specific purposes, certainly the campaign trail for finance reform in this country is leading absolutely nowhere.

Mr. Speaker, we have scheduled it tonight, we have scheduled it at a time when we are supposed to be debating during the course of today's calendar, we are debating, I am sure, a very important piece of legislation here today for this National Historic Trails Interpretive Center in Casper, Wyoming, and we are giving 20 minutes to this particular bill and the same amount of time and importance to each one of the campaign finance bills tonight, 20 minutes apiece.

Then, Mr. Speaker, we are also saying tonight that these bills have to be on the suspension calendar, which I think is a travesty to the system, it is unfair to the American people's desire for campaign finance reform, and it does not do justice to the amount of work that many Members of Congress have put into this historic campaign finance reform legislation that they have worked hard on, that they think that their constituents are very interested in, that they think is important for the integrity of our system here in America.

And certainly as we look at the calendar for the rest of the day, 20 minutes today on this National Historic Trails Interpretive Center in Casper, Wyoming, 20 minutes on these particular bills on campaign finance reform, I am sure that we are going to spend more than 20 minutes on the tobacco legislation that is going to be coming before Congress. And with the amount of money that big tobacco has put into the legislation that is going to be before Congress, certainly there might be some out there, Mr. Speaker, that do not want any kind of legitimate campaign finance reform going on tonight to talk about the roles of special interest groups in the system today.

I think the American people, whether they are in Indiana or California or New Jersey, want to do specific things to try to clean up the system. They want to have more faith in their people in public service, they want to see some lids on the amount of money being spent in campaigns across the country today. They want to see this soft money or sewer money not being flushed into every particular district in the country at the last minute and having no accountability to either one of the candidates, Democrat or Republican. They want to see that we have a fair system in the campaign finance reform system in the future.

I think more and more, Mr. Speaker, we are seeing the candidates that are running for different elective office out there more and more reflective of the higher income groups, and more and more the middle class and lower income people are not going to be able to run for office in the future if we are not able to debate and discuss in a genuine sense, with a lot of integrity and some

considerable time, campaign finance reform.

So to put campaign finance reform on a Monday night, to put campaign finance reform before the American people at the same time that there is a very important basketball game taking place tonight, to put campaign finance reform at 20-minute intervals, the same 20 minutes that I am sure that this important bill deserves, but I think campaign finance reform is certainly something the American people are probably more interested in and affects more of them than this National Historic Trails Interpretive Center in Casper, Wyoming.

We need to make sure that we are doing a service to campaign finance reform, and let the American people know what is in these bills, let the American people contact our offices and let us know how we should vote on a particular matter of this kind of importance to the American people.

I would hope that the Republican leadership, Mr. Speaker, would do a service to the body, do a service to the people of this country and not put such an important bill up for debate when Members are traveling back from the Midwest and back from the West Coast, when many of them are not even here to partake in the debate or listen to the debate, and when we only put 20 minutes forward on such an important piece of legislation.

So, Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this very important bill before us, and I appreciate my colleagues' patience.

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

Mr. Speaker, I thank the fine gentleman from Indiana for his support, and I congratulate him on his creativity in debate. I would add one little bit of information. Actually there is 20 minutes of time allocated to each side, so if it makes my colleague feel any better, it is 40, but I doubt that is the case.

Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, so I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. FARR).

Mr. FARR of California. Mr. Speaker, it is nice to see a speaker from Nevada, an author from Wyoming and a legislator from California all up here to support the National Historic Trails Center in Casper, Wyoming. I am a big supporter of historic trails. In fact, we are going to authorize to spend \$5 million of taxpayers' money, and I think it is money well spent. But we are going to see probably everybody is voting for this bill because it is a good thing to do, to support historic trails.

I wonder if this trail is going to lead us into some meaningful campaign finance reform. Do my colleagues think that we could sort of get, in a bipartisan spirit, this idea that we ought to probably limit the amount of money that goes into campaigns, not expand them, that I understand is the pro-

posal, kind of limit it down here? I mean, there was so much money spent in campaigns in the 1996 election, if we limited it to \$5 million like the center would have, we would have meaningful reform.

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Mr. Speaker, I appreciate this, and I hope that when we have similar type legislation for similar bills in California, that Wyoming supports us as well. I hope this trail center, when you interpret it, it will be able to interpret why we have not had meaningful campaign reform here on the floor of the House in March of 1998.

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

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for her tremendous patience, and I want to commend the gentleman from California for his remarks. I think that perhaps we should provide a special area in this historic center we are going to build in Casper, Wyoming, and put all the memorabilia about campaign finance reform in it. Maybe that might be of help.

I want to truly thank the gentlewoman for our dialogue this afternoon and in passage of this bill. I urge my colleagues to vote for passage of this legislation.

Mr. HANSEN. Mr. Speaker, I wish to support H.R. 2186, a bill introduced by my colleague Congresswoman BARBARA CUBIN from the State of Wyoming. Mrs. CUBIN has worked very hard for the citizens of Wyoming to help establish the National Historic Trails Interpretive Center. These historic trails, including four Congressionally designed trails, form a distinctive part of our Nation's history and represent valuable historic and cultural themes which helped shaped the West.

This bill is showpiece of a cooperative partnerships between federal and non-federal interests that will fund, construct, operate, and maintain the Trails Center.

This bill is non-controversial and is supported by the Administration, trails groups, and the City of Casper, Wyoming. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 2186.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. CUBIN. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GIBBONS). The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Wyoming (Mrs. CUBIN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2186.

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

Mrs. CUBIN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within