

THE DAILY WHIP

Tuesday, May 20, 2003 | Floor News from Democratic Whip Steny Hoyer

HOUSE MEETS AT...	LAST VOTE PREDICTED...
9:00 a.m.: Morning Hour 10:00 a.m.: Legislative Business	4:00-5:00 p.m.
Unlimited "One-Minutes"	

***** THE REPUBLICAN LEADERSHIP HAS ANNOUNCED THAT THE HOUSE WILL BE IN SESSION ON FRIDAY AND THAT MEMBERS SHOULD BE PREPARED TO STAY LATE INTO THE EVENING, IF NECESSARY, IN ORDER TO COMPLETE ACTION ON A VARIETY OF PENDING LEGISLATIVE BUSINESS.**

FLOOR SCHEDULE AND PROCEDURE

The House will convene at 9:00 a.m. for Morning Hour and 10:00 a.m. for legislative business.

Suspensions (7 bills):

- 1) S. 330** - Veterans' Memorial Preservation and Recognition Act of 2003 (*Sen. Campbell - Judiciary*).
- 2) H.Res. 180** - Supporting the goals and ideals of "National Correctional Officers and Employees Week" and honoring the service of correctional officers and employees (*Strickland - Judiciary*).
- 3) H.R. 1925** - Runaway, Homeless, and Missing Children Protection Act (Gingrey - Ed & Work).
- 4) H.Res. 217** - Commending the University of Minnesota Golden Gophers for winning the 2003 National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I Men's Ice Hockey Championship (*Sabo - Ed & Work*).
- 5) H.R. 1911** - To amend title 38, United States Code, to enhance cooperation and the sharing of resources between the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Defense (*Boozman - Veterans Affairs*).
- 6) H.R. 1683** - Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2003 (*C. Smith - Veterans Affairs*).
- 7) H.R. 1257** - Selected Reserve Home Loan Equity Act (*Evans - Veterans Affairs*)

H.R. 1904 - Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (*McInnis - Agriculture*)
(Subject to a Rule)

BILL SUMMARY AND KEY ISSUES

H.R. 1904 - Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (McInnis - Agriculture) (Subject to a Rule). This bill is based largely on the Bush Administration's Healthy Forests Initiative to improve wildfire protection by reducing hazardous fuels. While there is broad agreement that this objective must be achieved, H.R. 1904 is an inadequate response to the needs of many communities across the nation.

- **H.R. 1904 fails to offer meaningful protection to our communities** by allowing the logging of remote backcountry with no requirement that homes and communities be protected first; and failing to provide adequate funding assistance for local fire districts, communities, homeowner associations, or tribes.
- **H.R. 1904 undermines current environmental protections** by providing exemptions from the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to allow commercial logging projects to proceed with little environmental analysis or opportunities for public involvement; sensitive areas such as old-growth forests and road-less areas are not adequately protected.
- **H.R. 1904 weakens basic citizens' rights** by virtually eliminating the right to appeal bad projects and requiring courts to give unprecedented weight to the government's arguments.
- **H.R. 1904 jeopardizes forest jobs** by creating more controversy and gridlock. Jobs from thinning projects depend on project approval. The wholesale changes in the approval process and lack of environmental protections are certain to generate more controversy, distrust, and litigation

Steny Hoyer

Office of the Democratic Whip

Visit democraticwhip.house.gov for more press, floor and member resources.

(202) 225-3130

THE DAILY WHIP

Tuesday, May 20, 2003 | Floor News from Democratic Whip Steny Hoyer

instead of rebuilding relationships between federal agencies, communities, and conservation interests.

- **H.R. 1904 is opposed by all major environmental groups** including the Defenders of Wildlife, Earth Justice Legal Defense Fund, Natural Resources Defense Council, National Environmental Trust, Sierra Club, Trout Unlimited, U.S. PIRG, the Wilderness Society, and the World Wildlife Fund. It is also opposed by major civil rights groups including Americans for Democratic Action, the Mexican American Legal Defense Fund, National Organization for Women, the NAACP and Planned Parenthood.

The Rules Committee has recommended a modified closed rule that provides for one hour of general debate; waives all points of order against consideration of the bill; and provides one motion to recommit with or without instructions. In addition, the Rule makes in order one amendment (Democratic Substitute) to be offered by Rep. George Miller (CA) or his designee that is debatable for one hour.

The Miller (CA)/DeFazio/Rahall/Conyers Democratic substitute addresses critical hazardous fuels reduction needs without compromising environmental laws or current judicial protections.

- **The Democratic substitute will create jobs for local communities** by authorizing funding to thin 20 million acres of federal lands and prioritizing thinning projects in non-controversial areas and funding projects on public, private, state, and Tribal lands.
- **The Democratic substitute offers meaningful protection to our communities** by requiring that 85% of the bill's funding is spent near communities and watersheds; and providing for accelerated consideration of forest thinning projects near communities in non-controversial areas.
- **The Democratic substitute provides efficient wildfire protection** by giving new authority to the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management that allows for coordinated fuel reduction projects across ownership boundaries. The substitute also codifies Bush Administration environmental review recommendations that Bush Administration officials assert will reduce the cost of reviews from \$100,000 to \$25,000.
- **The Democratic substitute maintains current environmental protections.** The Democratic substitute does not amend the National Environmental Policy Act, the Endangered Species Act, the National Forest Management Act or the Clean Water Act. Old growth and pristine forests are protected.
- **The Democratic substitute protects the rights of citizens** by retaining basic safeguards and keeping judicial review fully intact and requiring full public disclosure of documents needed to file administrative appeals.

Democrats are strongly urged to VOTE YES on the Democratic Substitute.

DAILY QUOTE...

"Supporters of making dividends tax-free like to paint critics as promoters of class warfare. The fact is, however, that their proposal promotes class *welfare*. For my class."

- Warren Buffett, chief executive officer of Berkshire Hathaway Inc., in *The Washington Post* today

Steny Hoyer

Office of the Democratic Whip

Visit democraticwhip.house.gov for more press, floor and member resources.

(202) 225-3130