

June 19, 2000

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The following measures may be voted on by the House on Monday, June 19:

H.R. 4642 — General Accounting Office Personnel Flexibility Act

Cost to the Taxpayers: A CBO cost estimate is not available.

Does the Bill Create New Government Programs or Regulations: The bill establishes a new career track for technical experts at GAO with benefits similar to the Senior Executive Service. The bill also authorizes the GAO to offer voluntary early retirement to employees for the purpose of realignment. Separation pay may not exceed \$25,000.

Constitutional Authority: A Committee report and therefore a citation of Constitutional Authority was unavailable.

H.R. 3292 — Establishing the Cat Island National Wildlife Refuge

Cost to the Taxpayers: CBO estimates that implementing H.R. 3292 would cost about \$30 million over the next 5 to 7 years to acquire and manage all of the acreage for the new refuge. Thereafter, CBO estimates the agency would spend \$500,000 annually on operations and in payments to local governments under the Refuge Revenue Sharing Act.

Does the Bill Create New Government Programs or Regulations: Yes. The bill authorizes the Secretary of the Interior 1) to establish a new Cat Island National Wildlife Refuge of approximately 36,500 acres, 2) to "acquire lands and waters, or interests therein, within the acquisition boundary," 3) to "administer all lands, waters, and interests therein acquired under this Act," and 4) to "make such minor revisions of the boundary ... as may be appropriate to carry out the purposes of the Refuge or to facilitate the acquisition of property within the Refuge."

Constitutional Authority: The Committee cites Article I, section 8 (Taxing Power and General Welfare) of the Constitution as its authority, though it does not cite a specific subsection.

Summary: The bill would authorize the Secretary of the Interior to claim approximately 36,500 acres of land in West Feliciana Parish, Louisiana as federal land and establish such land as a National Wildlife Refuge. The original refugee proposal was for 9,477 acres, but Mr. Saxton of New Jersey increased the acreage to 36,500 in committee. According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, only about 9,500 acres of woodlands--the core tract and the highest priority lands within Cat Island--are currently for sale.

Other Concerns: Some Members may have concerns that the Secretary is authorized to buy 27,000 acres more than is currently for sale, and the Committee does not state if this property is currently privately owned, nor how the Secretary will carry out further acquisitions. In addition, the bill does not have any

private property protections such as against land condemnation.

H.R. 4642 — Establishing the Abraham Lincoln Interpretive Center

Cost to the Taxpayers: The bill authorizes \$50 million in grants to be made to an entity selected by the Secretary of the Interior to establish an Interpretive Center in Springfield, Illinois related to the life of Abraham Lincoln. The bill requires a 2-to-1 non-federal match.

Does the Bill Create New Government Programs or Regulations: No, the bill authorizes a single-purpose grant.

Constitutional Authority: A Committee report and therefore a citation of Constitutional Authority was unavailable.

Other Information: On February 25th, President Clinton signed into law the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission Act which authorized \$1 to \$1.5 million to create a commission to study ways of celebrating Lincoln's 200th Birthday. Enaction of the legislation under consideration today, would bring total spending on the memory of Abraham Lincoln by this Session of Congress to \$51.5 million.

S. 1967 — Taking Certain Land Into Trust for the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians

Cost to the Taxpayers: None.

Does the Bill Create New Government Programs or Regulations: No.

Constitutional Authority: A Committee report and therefore a citation of Constitutional Authority was unavailable.

Summary: The bill declares approximately 8,500 acres of land as land taken into trust. While this legislation circumvents the normal administrative process, it is being proposed in response to inordinate delays in the approval of the application to the Bureau of Indian Affairs by the Mississippi Choctaw Tribe to have the land taken into trust. Section 3 of the bill specifies land declared in trust under this act shall be treated for purposes of the Indian Regulatory Gaming Act as if it had been acquired administratively.

H.R. 2778 — Taunton River Wild and Scenic Study

Cost to the Taxpayers: A CBO study of the companion Senate legislation indicates that carrying out the study would cost a total of less than \$250,000 over the next three years, assuming appropriation of the necessary amounts.

Does the Bill Create New Government Programs or Regulations: The bill requires the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study regarding the addition of the Taunton River in Massachusetts to the Federal Wild and Scenic Rivers.

Constitutional Authority: A Committee report and therefore a citation of Constitutional Authority was unavailable.

H.RES. 522—THE IMPORTANCE OF RESPONSIBLE FATHERHOOD

Cost to the Taxpayer: None. Sense of the House Resolution

Does the Bill Create New Government Programs or Regulations: No.

Constitutional Authority: No committee report was filed and no Constitutional authority is cited in the bill.

Summary and Background: H.Res. 522, a product of the Congressional Task Force on Fatherhood Promotion, resolves that the House of Representatives:

(1) recognizes that the creation of a better America depends in large part on the active involvement of fathers in the rearing and development of their children;

(2) urges each father in America to accept his full share of responsibility for the lives of his children, to be actively involved in rearing his children, and to encourage the academic, moral, and spiritual development of his children;

(3) urges governments and institutions at every level to remove barriers to father involvement and enact public policies that encourage and support the efforts of fathers who want to become more engaged in the lives of their children;

(4) encourages each father to devote time, energy, and resources to his children, recognizing that children need not only material support, but more importantly a secure, nurturing, family environment; and

(5) expresses its support for the National Fatherhood Initiative, and its work to inspire and equip fathers to be positively involved in the raising and development of their children.

H.RES. 495—INTERNATIONAL MONEY LAUNDERING

Cost to the Taxpayer: None. Sense of the House Resolution

Does the Bill Create New Government Programs or Regulations: The resolution states 1) that the Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering (FATF) should identify noncooperative jurisdictions and publicly release this list; 2) that the US should encourage the adoption of international action to encourage compliance; 3) and that the US should take the necessary countermeasures to protect the US economy against money of unlawful origin.

Constitutional Authority: No committee report was filed and no Constitutional authority is cited in the bill.

Other Concerns: H.Res. 495 does not make any mention of financial privacy, though it encourages the US to take “necessary countermeasures” to protect against money laundering. Last year, the FDIC issued a regulation called “Know Your Customer.” This regulation was proposed

to deal with international and domestic money laundering. On March 23, 1999 the FDIC withdrew its Know Your Customer regulation after receiving more than 300,000 negative public comments.

In response to this Know Your Customer regulation Rep. Ron Paul (R-TX) introduced three bills: the Financial Privacy Protection Package to block implementation of the Know Your Customer regulations (H.R.516), H.R.518 to sunset the Bank Secrecy Act that has encouraged such overreaching regulations, and H.R.517 to allow Americans to see their own FinCEN files (similar to laws that allow us to see our own FBI and credit bureau files).

The views expressed in this Legislative Bulletin do not necessarily reflect the views of all Members of the Conservative Action Team.

The Conservative Action Team is a Congressional Member Organization of over 50 Republican House Members and is chaired by Representative John Shadegg (R-AZ).