



Dissenting Views

**The Honorable Doc Hastings (R-WA) and the Honorable Jason Chaffetz (R-UT)
H.R. 4416, to extend the Great Ape Conservation Act**

The Committee on Natural Resources has ordered reported H. R. 4416 which increases the authorization level of the Great Ape Conservation Fund from its existing level of \$5 million per year to \$7.5 million annually. As an alternative, we supported a reasonable amendment offered by Congressman Jason Chaffetz to level fund this Act for the next five years. Regrettably, this amendment was rejected on a party line vote.

While we recognize that we are not talking about a huge sum of money, this bill is a just another symptom of a much larger problem which is the Democrats' insatiable appetite to spend our constituents' hard earned tax dollars. There is no rationale for increasing this authorization level. Since its inception eleven years ago, no Administration has ever requested more than \$2 million in a single fiscal year for the Great Ape Conservation Fund. The greatest amount ever appropriated by the Congress to the Fund was \$2.5 million for the current fiscal year; this is exactly half of what has been authorized. In terms of total funding, \$50 million has been authorized and slightly less than \$15 million has been appropriated.

Who is asking for this increase? Based on the testimony given at the Subcommittee hearing, it is apparently a number of nongovernmental organizations -- like the Wildlife Conservation Society and the World Wildlife Fund -- who frankly are in far better financial shape than the federal government. Our nation now has a national debt of \$13.4 trillion dollars, and this Congress has been piling a mountain of debt on our children and grandchildren that will strangle economic prosperity in this country.

We urge our colleagues to vote NO on H. R. 4416 when it is considered on the floor of the House of Representatives. We simply cannot afford this increase for the Great Ape Conservation Fund.

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