

RECOGNIZING AND HONORING THE AMERICAN ZOO AND
AQUARIUM ASSOCIATION AND ITS MEMBER INSTITUTIONS

JULY 11, 2002.—Referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed

Mr. HANSEN, from the Committee on Resources,
submitted the following

R E P O R T

[To accompany H. Con. Res. 408]

The Committee on Resources, to whom was referred the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 408) honoring the American Zoo and Aquarium Association and its accredited member institutions for their continued service to animal welfare, conservation education, conservation research, and wildlife conservation programs, having considered the same, report favorably thereon without amendment and recommend that the concurrent resolution be agreed to.

PURPOSE OF THE BILL

The purpose of H. Con. Res. 408 is to honor the American Zoo and Aquarium Association and its accredited member institutions for their continued service to animal welfare, conservation education, conservation research, and wildlife conservation programs.

BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR LEGISLATION

Founded in 1924, the American Zoo and Aquarium Association (AZA), is a non-profit organization dedicated to the advancement of zoos and aquariums. AZA's vision is to work cooperatively with state agencies, Federal agencies, conservation organizations, the private sector and the countries of origin to save and protect the wonders of the living natural world.

AZA is a leader in establishing and maintaining high curatorial and veterinary standards for zoos and aquariums through its accreditation process. The accreditation process examines all aspects of an institution's operation, including the animal collection, veterinary care, physical facilities, finance, support organization, education programs, conservation, and research. There are currently over 2500 animal exhibitors licensed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture in the U.S. AZA accreditation involves a thorough peer re-

view and inspection process by which zoos and aquariums are evaluated. To be officially recognized, an institution must be: a permanent cultural facility which owns and maintains wildlife; be open to the public on a regular basis; and be under the direction of a professional staff. The granting of accreditation is for five years, and expires at the end of that period. Facilities wishing to remain certified must successfully complete the process again, before the end of that period.

Over 200 zoos and aquariums throughout North America have met AZA's strict accreditation standards. The standards established by AZA have been recognized by the National Marine Fisheries Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as the "professionally accepted standards" on which a public display facility must base its marine mammal education and conservation programs.

Collectively, AZA member institutions draw over 135 million visitors annually and have more than 5 million zoo and aquarium members. These institutions teach more than 12 million people each year in living classrooms, dedicate an estimated \$50 million annually to education programs, invest an estimated \$50 million annually to scientific research, and support over 1300 field conservation and research projects in 80 countries.

The mission of educational exhibits and programming at AZA member facilities is to enhance the public's appreciation and understanding of species and their ecosystems. Knowledge acquired with animals in AZA public display facilities, in tandem with field research, has proven to be fundamental in contributing to species conservation. Communicating this knowledge is one of the most effective means of ensuring the health of fish and wildlife populations in the 21st century. Tens of millions of dollars are being spent on research at AZA member facilities which helps in understanding the anatomy and physiology of wild animals and in learning to better assist threatened and endangered species. Additionally, many AZA facilities and scientists collaborate with researchers from colleges, universities, and other scientific institutions to conduct studies important to species' conservation and health. Over the years, this body of work has increased the present knowledge about the biology, physiology, reproduction, behavior and conservation of many wild species. These studies have led to improvements in diagnosing and treating diseases; and for testing for toxic substances and their effects on wild species.

AZA facilities have developed conservation research efforts for various species referred to as Species Survival Plans (SSP). An SSP is a cooperative long-term breeding and conservation plan that provides many species with an insurance policy against extinction. Currently the AZA has 97 SSPs for 140 species of animals. A large majority of those SSPs cover species which are listed under the Endangered Species Act or the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). Some of the species covered by an SSP include: all the great apes; African and Asian elephants; Siberian and Sumatran tigers; and black, white, Sumatran and greater one-horned rhinos. SSPs ensure that these animals are carefully managed to maintain a healthy, self-sustaining population that is genetically diverse and demographically stable. In addition, SSPs are cooperative conservation programs that support both field and zoo and aquarium-based efforts in re-

search, public education, fund-raising, species reintroduction, and field projects to protect species and their habitats.

AZA institutions also work collectively with the Congress, Federal agencies, and state agencies to shape wildlife conservation policy by providing input on such issues as biological diversity, wildlife trade, endangered species, marine mammal protection and international species conservation.

COMMITTEE ACTION

H. Con. Res. 408 was introduced on May 22, 2002 by Congressman Wayne T. Gilchrest (R-MD), and was referred to the Committee on Resources and the Committee on Agriculture. On June 3, 2002, the bill was referred within the Resources Committee to the Subcommittee on Fisheries Conservation, Wildlife and Oceans. On June 12, 2002, the Subcommittee held a hearing on the bill. On June 20, 2002, the Subcommittee met to mark up the bill, and the bill was forwarded without amendment to the Full Committee by unanimous consent. On June 26, 2002, the Full Resources Committee met to consider the bill and, without amendment, the bill was ordered favorably reported to the House of Representatives by unanimous consent.

COMMITTEE OVERSIGHT FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Regarding clause 2(b)(1) of rule X and clause 3(c)(1) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Committee on Resources' oversight findings and recommendations are reflected in the body of this report.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Article I, section 8 of the Constitution of the United States grants Congress the authority to enact this bill.

COMPLIANCE WITH HOUSE RULE XIII

1. Cost of Legislation. Clause 3(d)(2) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives requires an estimate and a comparison by the Committee of the costs which would be incurred in carrying out this bill. The bill expresses a sense of Congress regarding the American Zoo and Aquarium Association and therefore, no costs are incurred.

2. Congressional Budget Act. As required by clause 3(c)(2) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives and section 308(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, this bill does not contain any new budget authority, spending authority, credit authority, or an increase or decrease in revenues or tax expenditures.

3. General Performance Goals and Objectives. This bill does not authorize funding and therefore, clause 3(c)(4) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives does not apply.

4. Congressional Budget Office Cost Estimate. H. Con. Res. 408 is a sense of Congress resolution and therefore, no costs are incurred. No cost estimate was requested from the Congressional Budget Office.

COMPLIANCE WITH PUBLIC LAW 104-4

This bill contains no unfunded mandates.

PREEMPTION OF STATE, LOCAL OR TRIBAL LAW

This bill is not intended to preempt any State, local or tribal law.

CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW

If enacted, this bill would make no changes in existing law.

