

LARSON OPPOSES ROLLBACK OF ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT; SAYS GOES TOO FAR IN ERODING PROTECTIONS

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – Congressman John B. Larson Thursday spoke out against the Threatened and Endangered Species Act (H.R. 3824), calling it a backwards reform that “will dismantle our nation’s most fundamental wildlife protection law.”

During floor debate, Larson backed the bipartisan substitute amendment that struck a balance between property rights and the protection of threatened species.

Larson released the following statement:

“While I agree that the current Endangered Species Act (ESA) needs improvements and updating, the controversial bill before us today does little to improve the current ESA. Among other things, the Threatened and Endangered Species Act would remove the federal protection of critical habitats that are necessary for the recovery of a species. I also find it extremely disturbing that my colleagues are so intent on establishing an entirely new entitlement program to pay landowners for compliance at the taxpayers’ expense at the same time they are working so hard to privatize entitlement programs like Medicare and Social Security.

I believe there is more we can do to support the goals of the ESA. That is why I support the bipartisan substitute amendment offered by Representative George Miller and Representative Sherwood Boehlert. This compromise amendment would proactively conserve species using both real science standards and conservation incentives for landowners. This amendment maintains several provisions in the underlying bill, but would, among other things, take a more comprehensive approach to recovery plans and create an advisory board to provide scientific advice to the Interior Department about applying the best science when enforcing endangered species law.

It took decades for many of our nation’s species to reach the point of extinction. It is unrealistic to propose that there will be a quick fix to the recovery of animals and plants facing decline. For over thirty years, the ESA has been a work in progress. Now is not the time to turn back the clock on wildlife protection.

Environmental preservation is about self-preservation and about the land we are leaving our children. As Members of Congress, as responsible citizens, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting real reforms to the ESA by supporting the bipartisan substitute amendment and rejecting the underlying bill.”

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