106TH CONGRESS, 1st Session | HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES | REPORT 106–195

RUSSIAN FEDERATION FISHERY AGREEMENT

JUNE 22, 1999.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union and ordered to be printed

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, from the Committee on Resources, submitted the following

REPORT

[To accompany H.R. 1653]

[Including cost estimate of the Congressional Budget Office]

The Committee on Resources, to whom was referred the bill (H.R. 1653) to approve a governing international fishery agreement between the United States and the Russian Federation, having considered the same, report favorably thereon without amendment and recommend that the bill do pass.

PURPOSE OF THE BILL

The purpose of H.R. 1653 is to approve a governing international fisheries agreement between the United States and the Russian Federation.

BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR LEGISLATION

The United States and Russian Federation maintain the bilateral Intergovernmental Consultative Committee (ICC) fisheries forum pursuant to the U.S.-Soviet Comprehensive Fisheries Agreement, signed on May 31, 1988. The ICC is responsible for furthering the objectives of the Comprehensive Fisheries Agreement. The objectives of the Agreement include maintaining a mutually beneficial and equitable fisheries relationship through cooperative scientific research and exchanges; reciprocal allocation of surplus fish within the respective 200-mile Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs), consistent with national laws; cooperation and the establishment of joint fishing ventures; general consultations on fisheries matters of mutual concern; and cooperation to address illegal fishing on the high seas of the North Pacific and the Bering Sea.

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The first meeting of the ICC was held in Washington, D.C., in February 1989. Through the ICC forum, the U.S. and Russia have developed or coordinated the development of multilateral international conventions designed to address major fisheries conservation problems in the North Pacific Ocean and associated seas. The Convention for the Conservation of Anadromous Stocks in the North Pacific Ocean brought an end to the last legal high seas salmon fishery in the world and was developed through the ICC forum. In addition, the two countries signed an agreement to govern the harvest of salmon stocks within their EEZs. Among other things, this agreement restricts salmon fisheries to within 25 nautical miles of the countries' respective coastlines. This agreement went into effect in September 1992. The two countries have also cooperated on addressing the conservation of pollock and other species.

The most recent ICC meeting was held in January 1999, in Seattle, Washington. One issue which was raised at this meeting concerns the interception of U.S.-origin salmon in Russian waters by either Russian or Japanese vessels.

The ICC forum has allowed the U.S. industry the opportunity to enter into harvesting, marketing, processing and other commercial fishing ventures with the Russian industry in the Russian zone.

The original U.S.-Soviet Comprehensive Fisheries Agreement was authorized as a Governing International Fishery Agreement (GIFA) for the period of 1988–1993. In 1993, the Agreement was extended, by diplomatic notes, until December 31, 1998. GIFAs go into effect in one of two ways. Congress can pass legislation which specifically authorizes the GIFA or if Congress does not act, the GIFA goes into effect 120 days (excluding any days when the Congress is adjourned sine die) after the President transmits to the GIFA to Congress. H.R. 1653 approves the U.S.-Russia GIFA to allow continued participation in the ICC.

COMMITTEE ACTION

H.R. 1653 was introduced by request on April 29, 1999, by Congressmen Don Young (R–AK), Jim Saxton (R–NJ), and Eni Faleomavaega (D–AS). The bill was referred to the Committee on Resources, and within the Committee to the Subcommittee on Fisheries Conservation, Wildlife and Oceans. On March 11, 1999, the Subcommittee held a hearing where the merits of the U.S.-Soviet Comprehensive Fishery Agreement was discussed. Administration testified in support of this Agreement. On May 6, 1999, the Subcommittee met to mark up the bill. No amendments were offered and it was ordered favorably reported to the Full Committee by voice vote. On June 9, 1999, the Full Resources Committee met to consider the bill. No amendments were offered and 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. However, clause 3(d)(3)(B) of that Rule provides that this requirement does not apply when the Committee has included in its report a timely submitted cost estimate of the bill prepared by the Director of the Congressional Budget Office under section 402 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974.

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. Government Reform Oversight Findings.—Under clause 3(c)(4) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Committee has received no report of oversight findings and recommendations from the Committee on Government Reform on this bill.

4. Congressional Budget Office Cost Estimate.—Under clause 3(c)(3) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives and section 403 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, the Committee has received the following cost estimate for this bill from the Director of the Congressional Budget Office:

U.S. CONGRESS,
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,
Washington, DC, June 17, 1999.

Hon. DON YOUNG,
Chairman, Committee on Resources,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: The Congressional Budget Office has prepared the enclosed cost estimate for H.R. 1653, a bill to approve a governing international fishery agreement between the United States and the Russian Federation.

If you wish further details on this estimate, we will be pleased to provide them. The CBO staff contact is Deborah Reis.

Sincerely,

BARRY B. ANDERSON
(For Dan L. Crippen, Director).

Enclosure.

CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

H.R. 1653—A bill to approve a governing international fishery agreement between the United States and the Russian Federation

H.R. 1633 would approve a fishing agreement between the United States and the Russian Federation. CBO estimates that en-

acting the bill would have no budgetary impact. H.R. 1653 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act and would have no significant impact on the budgets of state, local, or tribal governments.

The agreement with the Russian Federation provides for cooperating on scientific research and exchanges, allocating surplus fish within exclusive economic zones, establishing joint fishing ventures, consulting on fisheries matters of mutual concern, and cooperating to address illegal fishing on the high seas of the North Pacific and the Bering Sea. The Congress may pass legislation specifically authorizing the agreement or, if the Congress does not act, the agreement will go into effect 120 days after the President transmits the agreement to the Congress.

The CBO staff contacts is Deborah Reis. The estimate was approved by Robert A. Sunshine, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.

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.

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