Statements made during the debate over the Conservation and Reinvestment Act (HR701/S25) were provided by the American Land Rights Association for evaluation and comment—particularly the emphasized portions (here in bold). The items have been generally grouped according to the questions asked by ALRA.
Our comments are in italics.

QUESTION #1 – RATE OF WETLANDS LOSS

Senator Mary Landrieu (D-La) Website: CARA Background
http://www.senate.gov/~landrieu/issues/cara.html

Since the federal government began collecting revenues from Outer Continental Shelf oil and gas drilling in the mid-1950s, it has taken in more than $120 billion. **However, coastal states are platforms for this vital industry, but have received only a minute portion of those revenues – in some cases less than 1 percent.**

In the meantime, no one can argue that offshore drilling, while vastly important to this nation, is hard on our environment. In the past 10 years, 3,500 square miles of Louisiana coastline have been lost. Every 10 minutes we lose another 25 acres. At least some of this loss can be attributed to federal Outer Continental Shelf oil and gas development.

Senator Landrieu has Louisiana disappearing ten times too fast; should be 250 to 350, not 3,500 square miles per TEN years lost and then only one acre every 25 minutes, not 25 acres every 10 minutes.

Landrieu uses here an old associative technique that leaves the majority of her readers with the impression that OCS development is responsible for the (incorrect) mega-catastrophic wetlands losses she is publicizing.

In the first sentence she talks about offshore drilling. Then in the next, massive losses of land. And finally, "At least some of this loss can be attributed to OCS." No specific cause and effect is ever stated. In reality, OCS development might be responsible for 10 to 15% of a much lower rate of wetland loss. And that means something else is responsible for 85 to 90% of the problem.

A more accurate statement would replace "offshore oil drilling" with "Mississippi River flood control levees" in the first sentence of the paragraph.

Rep. Chris John (D-La) Congressional Record, 5/11/00, Page H2942

First and foremost, it delays this program. We addressed that issue in this House decided overwhelmingly to defeat that proposal. But more than that, it delays and asks people in the communities that are most needy as far as coastlines to wait 5 years. I beg the gentleman from Texas, Louisiana cannot wait 5 years.

If my colleagues see the map beside me, the red is what we will lose over the next few short years. Five years is too much. We are losing 25 square miles a year. Times five, that is 125 square miles of Louisiana will be gone before this bill is enacted, before we can get to that point. **My district may be gone by that time, because I represent 250 miles of coastline.**

Second of all, a difference that the gentleman has is that he says he has $200 million for maintenance. Well, I fall back on my first argument. If he does say that we want $200 million, he says but let us wait 5 years before we get $200 million. That puts us a billion dollars in backlog and also payment in lieu of taxes.

Rep. Chris John (D-La) Congressional Record, 5/10/00, Page H2828

We lose 25 square miles of Louisiana's coastline a year, 25 square miles, a football field a day. Looking at some of the amendments, there are some that say, let us wait 5 years before we implement this. **I may not have a district in 5 years at the rate of the eroding coastline of Louisiana.** So I suggest to my colleagues that now is the time that we do something.

What does CARA do? It does what we do in Congress every day of the week. It puts money in priority programs that we want to see happen. Not only does it fund fully for the first time and keep our promise, as the gentleman from California (Mr. George Miller) said with the authorized $900 million of the Land Water Conservation Fund, we are going to fund that, $1 billion for coastal restoration.

I talked a little bit about Louisiana's coastline. But this bill is so much larger and bigger than just Louisiana. **We have 35 States around the United States with coastlines with the same type of problem that we have.** I think it is important that we prioritize some of these dollars.

He said this twice – he must really believe it. Rep. Chris John's district (La-7th) actually covers about 7,000 square miles. Even if the 25 square miles a year loss rate continued forever, it would take 280 years for his district to disappear. In reality, losses would certainly stop after the coastal marshes were gone (in perhaps 50 years). And Louisiana is unique – no other state has this kind of wetlands loss taking place, certainly not 35 other states.

QUESTION #2 – IS OCS THE CAUSE OF WETLANDS LOSS?

Below follow 13 clippings where CARA Title I money ($ one billion) is described as being for compensation for damage done by oil drilling, OCS activity damage etc. In the state of Louisiana, considered to have suffered substantial impacts, OCS activities are responsible for only 10 to 15 percent of all wetlands losses.

Rep. George Miller (D-Ca) Congressional Record, 5/10/00, Page H2837

We said, when we use up a finite resource in terms of gas or oil revenues on the Outer Continental Shelf, we are going to bring some of those dollars back in and fund some programs that will help and be the legacy of future generation of our children. In the process, we are going to preserve these areas, we are going to conserve them, and we are going to provide the restoration. **What could be more elemental in terms of fairness than providing the States that are enduring the problems of gas and oil development and the damage from that to correct that?**

Mr. Chairman, that is what this bill does. It is a well-balanced bill. It is a bill that we should enthusiastically vote for and vote against the amendments that will unbraid the agreement that has been made here today, the mischievous amendments. Vote against the bogus arguments

The bill is not very fair if the problems are not that significant, nor if funds are given to states that don't even have any oil development.

01/11/2000 The Des Moines Register Page 8

CARA for the environment–

It could be the most significant congressional action in years.

The formula shorts Iowa and the majority of other states because **it directs $1 billion to coastal states to enable them to repair shoreline damage caused by oil drilling offshore.** "Coastal" states, by CARA's definition, include those whose coastline is one of the Great Lakes, where there is no offshore oil drilling. Compensating for damages when there are no damages to compensate may baffle oil geologists and taxpayers, but makes perfect sense to politicians, who say CARA hasn't got a prayer without the pork.

Anchorage (Alaska) Daily News Sunday, May 14, 2000, Editorial

Thursday, the House of Representatives passed the crowning achievement of Rep. Young's career, the Conservation and Reinvestment Act.

The multibillion dollar bill will create parks, greenbelts, wildlife habitat and recreational sites for Americans in every state. **It will send nearly $1 billion a year to coastal states to defray the environmental costs of offshore oil drilling.**

$45 BILLION CONSERVATION PLAN HEADS TO SMITH'S SENATE PANEL
Robert Braile, 05/21/2000 The Boston Globe

The federal government receives about $4 billion a year in oil and gas revenues, most of it from drilling in the Gulf of Mexico and off Alaska. But for years, much of the money has gone toward balancing the federal budget. The bill would commit $3 billion a year for 15 years to seven categories of state aid for the environment.

Under the House version of the bill, $1 billion would be distributed each year to the states for coastal conservation projects, aimed, its sponsors say, at restoring and protecting those coastal areas vulnerable to oil and gas exploration.

...

One of the environmentalists' concerns is whether the bill would spur oil and gas drilling, since the closer the state is to drill sites, the more money it would get. **And since much of the money would pay to protect coasts from the effects of drilling,** they fear the bill might be used as a rationale to promote new drilling.

Editorial - Look Again at Land Bill - 05/15/2000 Omaha World-Herald Sunrise Page 6

The bill would give states $45 billion over the next 15 years to buy parkland, protect wildlife, build trails and recreation areas and repair environmental damage. **A full third of the money would go to coastal states - Louisiana, Texas, California, Florida and Alaska - to restore areas harmed by offshore oil and gas drilling. The work would include wetlands restoration and beach erosion repair.**

House OKs aid to parks, wildlife Texas could receive up to $237 million Neil Strassman 05/12/2000 The Fort Worth Star-Telegram FINAL Page 1

The biggest winners are California with $324.3 million, Louisiana with $311.7 million, Alaska with $163.4 million, Florida with $141.3 million and Texas. The states get more money because they are coastal areas affected by oil drilling.

Nationwide, the bill would spend $1 billion a year to restore coastal areas hurt by oil drilling, $900 million a year for state and federal land and water conservation purchases, $350 million a year for wildlife preservation and $125 million for urban parks and recreation.

USA, POLITICS OF PLENTY Quietly, vast bill reveals green side of Congress Bid to allot $2.9 billion for preservation has bipartisan support. Todd Wilkinson, Christian Science Monitor 05/09/2000

Among CARA's other key provisions:

***Steering $1 billion annually to coastal regions and to Great Lakes states to mitigate the impacts of oil drilling on aquatic ecosystems.**

> *There never has been any oil and gas leasing on the Great Lakes nor are there any federal waters located there.*

Can property 'rightsniks' stop a popular bill? Jon Margolis WRITERS ON THE RANGE 06/14/2000 Denver Post Page B-11 But first, no one should underestimate the scope of this legislation. Unlike most of what Congress does, CARA could actually affect the lives of most Americans. The measure would provide $900 million every year for the federal government to purchase land that is ecologically sensitive and/or desirable for outdoor recreation. **It provides another $1 billion for what is known as Impact Assistance and Coastal Conservation , to compensate localities for oil drilling impacts.**

COMMENTARY - CARA taxpayer abuse in green wrapper Robert Nelson 06/28/2000 The Washington Times Page A16

Although the land acquisition provisions of the bill have been the focus of public criticism, the most egregious part mandates a full $1 billion for "coastal states" to mitigate the "impacts" of the federal program for oil and gas leasing on the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS). In order to spread the money around, Michigan - not coincidentally the home state of John Dingell, an early leading sponsor - and other Great Lake states are defined as coastal. There has never been a federal oil and gas lease in the Great Lakes.

Indeed, today only six states -Alabama, California, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi and Texas -have any significant federal oil and gas development off their coastlines. There has been virtually no new leasing in the Atlantic or Pacific for a number of years.

Yet, CARA would distribute money to 30 states. The pattern of funding defies any rational understanding. New York State would get $40 million per year while Maine with a long and ecologically sensitive coastline would get $15 million. Illinois would receive $13 million while Georgia, with a 100-mile stretch of Atlantic coastline, would get $7 million. Pennsylvania -which borders on a small part of Lake Erie - would receive $7 million while Oregon with its long and beautiful Pacific coastline would receive $6 million.

The biggest winners would be Alaska ($89 million per year), California ($67 million), Florida ($69 million), Louisiana ($285 million), Mississippi ($61 million), and Texas ($131 million). Little oil or gas has been found in federal waters off Alaska and almost no development has occurred. There has not been any new federal oil and gas leasing off California since the mid-1980s.

But Alaskans chair both the House Resources Committee and the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee. The majority leader, Trent Lott, is from Mississippi, another big winner. Louisiana gets the biggest payments and also happens to have two key Democratic senators. In the House of Representatives, it is politically necessary to spread the money among the most populated states, accounting for New York State getting so much more than Maine.

It is all a spectacle of Congress at its worse. Pay off enough members, CARA is telling us, and it seems you can get virtually anything passed. If the real purpose of CARA is simply better coastal management, why should Louisiana receive $285 million per year for its coastline improvements, and Washington State $15 million? What will Alaska - a state with a very long coastline but one that is very sparsely settled in most places -do with another $87 million a year for its coastal efforts? On the whole, CARA would simply shower large amounts of money - based on the flimsiest of excuses - on politically powerful recipients.

In the new era of budget surpluses, it was inevitable that the prospect of "free money" would prove too great a temptation for many members of Congress to resist. If CARA becomes law, Congress will be behaving more like an alcoholic finding a new bottle than any process of sober legislating.

Robert H. Nelson is a professor in the School of Public Affairs at the University of Maryland and a senior fellow of the Competitive Enterprise Institute. He is the author of "A Burning Issue: A Case for Abolishing the U.S. Forest Service" (Rowman & Littlefield, 2000).

6/19/2000 Houston Chronicle A LIFELINE FOR WETLANDS
Bill in Senate would finance land for parks, conservation PATTY REINERT 3 STAR Page 1

The money would be taken from royalties the federal government already collects from oil and gas companies that drill in the Gulf of Mexico and other U.S. waters.

But while parks officials around the country are already making wish lists of how they would spend the money, things in Washington aren't nearly so certain. Despite its 315-102 passage in the House and its blatant pork-barreling of money for every state in the union, the bill is facing strong opposition.

...

Besides replenishing the Land and Water Conservation Fund, **the bill calls for spending about $1 billion each year on coastal conservation - rebuilding sand dunes and cleaning up beaches in states like Texas, Louisiana and Alaska, where most of the country's offshore drilling takes place.**

The bill also sets aside $350 million a year for wildlife conservation nationwide and $150 million to protect endangered species. Another $125 million would go to urban parks and ball fields and $100 million to historic preservation.

Every state would get some money, but because the intention is to compensate coastal states for environmental damage caused by oil production, Texas would get a considerable chunk - more than $234 million a year.

...

Some environmental groups also are withholding their wholehearted support but say they will work with senators to salvage the bill by closing loopholes they believe could backfire and harm the environment instead of help it. They are concerned that the bill would give coastal states like Texas too much latitude in using coastal restoration money for infrastructure.

"This is supposed to address the effects of oil drilling, and if one of the effects is a one-lane road crumpled by oil trucks, maybe a state will decide they need a six-lane highway right along the coast," said Melanie Griffin, director of land protection programs for the Sierra Club.

QUESTION #4 – LOUISIANA GETS NO OCS MONEY

Rep. Billy Tauzin (R-La) Congressional Record, 5/10/00, Page H2830

Just to give my colleagues an idea what happened since then, this Government, our taxpaying public, has benefitted from the benefits of oil and gas production offshore to the tune of $122 billion, 80 percent of which was derived off my own State of Louisiana, right off of the coastal district of the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. John) and myself, 80 percent of which was derived off that coastal area, which simultaneously produces nearly a third of America's seafood.

The bounty of this Nation's catch in fish and crab and shrimp come, basically, from our coastal areas; and our two districts produce nearly a third of this country's bounty.

At the same time that that occurs, we have opened up the gate of our coastal areas to offshore production; and the Government and the people of our country have benefitted to the tune of $122 billion. **We receive no share, no compensation, for what occurs on our coastline.**

The gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. John) told us the story, but let me repeat it. If a colleague was **losing 25 square miles, some States are losing 35 square miles, of their district along their coastline every day**, I suspect the National Guard would have been alerted, we would have had a national emergency declared. **Yet, it happens every day in coastal Louisiana.**

Immeasurably to the human eye, the land is washing away, it is eroding to all the pipeline canals and all the salt water intrusion that is occurring along our coast. **We are literally losing this incredible national resource, with no money to deal with it.**

No, you are not losing 25 square miles a day; try 25 square miles a year. Also, no other states are experiencing as high an erosion rate as Louisiana.

Louisiana HAS received money from the OCS; $867 million in 8(g) funds alone from the 27% share of the 3 to 6 mile zone of federal waters!

FOSTER SAYS IT'S TIME LA GOT SHARE OF OCS FUNDS
MIKE DUNNE 05/11/1999 The Baton Rouge Advocate (Page 9)

While Gov. Mike Foster has been too busy to get to a favorite fishing spot in the marsh not far from his Grand Isle camp, the marsh has been busy disappearing.

"The places I went have disappeared," he said. "In my lifetime, I have noticed dramatic changes" in the coast. "We have lost 1,000 square miles of our coastal land in the last 50 years and are projected to lose another 1,000 square miles in the next 50 years," the governor told a group of congressmen recently. **Much of the state's land loss is blamed on oil and gas production,** which carved up the coastline in the decades right after World War II. That production now largely occurs more than three miles off the Louisiana coast in an area known as the Outer Continental Shelf, or OCS. Since 1920, the Mineral Leasing Act has required the federal Mineral Management Service to share 50 percent of its mineral receipts produced within a state with that state. Since 1986, the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act has required the federal government to share 27 percent of its mineral receipts produced from within three miles offshore of a state with that state. But for oil and gas produced beyond three miles, **in the OCS, the federal government is required to share nothing,** even though the states provide roadways, fresh water and other infrastructure needed for production.

....

"Federal oil and gas operations and the thousands of miles of pipelines that cut across our coast, not to mention the wear and tear on our highways, have contributed to our coastal losses and infrastructure damage," Foster testified recently before the U.S. House Resources Committee. "Many of those roads are not only conduits for our nation's oil- and gas-related industries, but also serve as hurricane evacuation routes for our citizens. The nation receives billions in revenue (from beyond the three-mile limit) at great cost to Louisiana's coastal towns and cities, our people and their culture," Foster said.

Foster said it is also an issue of equity.

Five states - California, Utah, Colorado, Wyoming and New Mexico - received more in returned mineral revenue from the federal government than did Louisiana in federal fiscal year 1997. Yet the federal mineral receipts from Louisiana were more than five times greater than the amounts generated from any of those states, Foster said.

That's because so much of the federal mineral receipts from Louisiana come from production in the OCS.

For example, from New Mexico, the federal government received $376 million from production and returned $188 million, Foster said. From Wyoming, the government received $478 million and returned $239 million. Neither state has an offshore area and all minerals extracted by the federal government came from within the state.

From California, which, like Louisiana, has offshore and onshore drilling, the government received $232.5 million and returned $52.9 million - about 23 percent. **But from Louisiana, the federal treasury received $3.2 billion and returned $26.8 million - about 8 percent.**

"Our state has borne the brunt of 90 percent of the federal offshore mineral development, and it is time to provide relief," Foster said.

Only some of the state's land losses can be blamed on OCS. The federal government shares 27% of the 8(g) funds! $867 has been paid to Louisiana since 1986.

Coast-states royalties face fray JOAN McKINNEY 05/11/2000 The Baton Rouge Advocate Page 13-A

U.S. Rep. George Miller, D-Calif., said that offshore oil and gas royalties always have been promised to the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund, but the promise has not been kept. The bill - called CARA for Conservation and Reinvestment Act - is a commitment for "redeeming that (trust) fund," he said.

Offshore drilling for oil and gas harms coastal environments, and some of the oil and gas royalties should be spent on the environment, Miller said.

"I can think of no better legacy that I can give my twin sons than (protecting) the outdoors I have enjoyed," said U.S. Rep. Chris John, D-Crowley.

The special funding for coastal states is fair, because states like Louisiana have never been adequately compensated for the onshore damages caused by federal offshore oil and gas leasing, said U.S. Rep. Billy Tauzin, R-Chackbay. The federal government has earned $122 billion from offshore oil and gas leasing and production "80 percent of which was derived off (the coastline) of my own state of Louisiana," said Tauzin.

The federal government shares 27% of the 8(g) funds! Louisiana has received $867 million to date! This may very well be adequate to compensate for OCS damage.