

COMMUNITIES REBUILD AFTER
HURRICANE IKE

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 15, 2009

Mr. PAUL. Madam Speaker, at a time when the financial headlines are dominated by stories of financial institutions seeking taxpayer funds and other special privileges, I am pleased to call my colleagues' attention to a story from the Galveston Daily News about how four community banks came together to help their friends, neighbors and customers begin to recover and rebuild from Hurricane Ike.

Last fall, as the people of Galveston were assessing the damage from Hurricane Ike and Congress was beginning debate on spending billions of taxpayer funds to bail out irresponsible financial institutions, representatives of Frost, HomeTown, Moody National and Texas First banks meet to discuss how these banks could help jumpstart hurricane recovery efforts. The four banks agreed to make unsecured bridge loans to Galveston businesses to ensure these businesses had access to capital while they waited for federal assistance and insurance payments.

The four banks made more than \$40 million in recovery loans. These loans provided lifelines to many businesses struggling with both the devastation of Hurricane Ike and the credit crisis. Without the efforts of these four banks, several Galveston businesses would have had to shut their doors.

In conclusion, Madam Speaker, I extend my thanks to management and employees of Frost, HomeTown, Moody National, and Texas First banks for their efforts to help the businesses and people of Galveston recover from Hurricane Ike.

[From the Galveston Daily News, May 24, 2009]

BANKS STEPPED UP WHEN CHIPS, ECONOMY
WERE DOWN
(By Laura Elder)

Just days after Hurricane Ike, as failing Wall Street institutions roiled the U.S. financial system, civic leaders and representatives of four banks forged an agreement that would profoundly shape the island's economic recovery.

After several meetings, some in storm-swamped buildings under generator-powered lights, representatives of Frost, HomeTown, Moody National and Texas First banks agreed to make unsecured bridge loans to island businesses for rebuilding until federal money and insurance payments materialized.

The community banks made more than \$40 million in recovery loans at a time when lending by industry giants had all but ground to a halt. The 180-day loans, at 5 percent interest, were a lifeline to local businesses hoping to recover quickly from a hurricane that inflicted \$11.4 billion in damage along the upper Texas Coast.

Some island business owners said their livelihoods would have been lost for good had it not been for the help of community bankers.

LINE OF CREDIT

Charley DiBella, owner of DiBella's Italian Restaurant, which took in 4 feet of storm surge, was helped by HomeTown Bank not once but twice after Hurricane Ike, which struck Sept. 13.

DiBella credits the bank and Gary Gilliland, chief commercial lending officer,

for providing a line of credit to the restaurant.

With the loan, DiBella's was able to make storm repairs and open in November. But in January, disaster struck again when a fire broke out on the second floor of the 20-year-old restaurant. HomeTown Bank helped again, DiBella said. DiBella's Italian Restaurant plans to reopen Tuesday.

"Without HomeTown Bank and Gary Gilliland, there wouldn't be a DiBella's Restaurant," DiBella said. "I had insurance, but you know what that's like."

Gilliland, who checked on properties for his clients who had evacuated and weren't allowed back on the island for days after the storm, was in May named Indie Banker of the Month by Independent Banker Magazine for his work during Hurricane Ike.

BRIDGE OF DOLLARS

HomeTown Bank, at last count, had made more than \$6 million in bridge loans to area businesses after the storm, said Jimmy Rasmussen, president and chief executive officer.

Two days after Ike struck, Wall Street institution Lehman Brothers filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy, deepening a financial crisis and already painful credit crunch that had stalled lending. Fast-and-loose credit practices by the banking giants had come home to roost.

NO 'VOODOO' PRODUCTS

But independent and community banks were never caught holding a bundle of bad loans.

"We're not sitting here selling voodoo products to peddle to people," said Matt Doyle, vice chairman of Texas First Bank.

That local competing banks got together in one room after the hurricane wasn't so unusual, Doyle said.

"We may be competitors, but we're community bankers," Doyle said. "When our community is suffering, all that goes out the window, and it's never really even in the house."

Texas First Bank lent \$8.5 million in recovery loans.

Bankers are the first to say their efforts weren't without self-interest. They certainly earned money from the loans. And they made loans based on credit history, longstanding relations and with the understanding they would be repaid.

IN IT TOGETHER

And if a lot of local businesses failed, the local banks were going to feel it, so they had an interest in the success of their neighbors.

"If Galveston business didn't recover, we're all going to be damaged, all going to take losses," said Vic Pierson, president of Moody National Bank, which made about \$21 million in recovery loans after the storm.

"It was in our best interest to do whatever we could to assist as rapidly as we could for business recovery on the island."

STRONG RELATIONSHIPS

Those who didn't have strong relationships with their bankers were left waiting for help from the Small Business Administration and the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Pierson said.

"Those programs are very good, but to finally get some dollars can take 90 to 120 days or longer," Pierson said.

"A business couldn't wait three or four months to get started and I think that's where the local community banks came in."

Watching a business rebuild can encourage others to follow, Pierson said.

"It was absolutely critical that people started putting their businesses back together and making a statement," Pierson said.

NEED REMAINS

Albert Shannon, Frost Bank's group president in this region, and other bankers inter-

viewed for this story credited Mayor Lyda Ann Thomas and Jeff Sjostrom, president of Galveston Economic Development Partnership, for the idea of recovery loans. Island businessman Gerald Sullivan, who early after the storm was appointed by Thomas to help with recovery, also played a role in encouraging recovery loans, bankers said.

Frost Bank, headquartered in San Antonio, made \$5 million in recovery loans, Shannon said.

Sjostrom recently traveled to Manatee, Fla., to share ideas with officials there about recovery efforts.

"They were just amazed at the response of our local lenders," Sjostrom said.

Still only about 75 percent of the island's 2,500 businesses have returned, Sjostrom said. Many were uninsured for flood damage when Ike struck.

Businesses that aren't able to turn to the banks are doing what they can to recover, Sjostrom said.

"They're not sitting back waiting and crying," Sjostrom said. "They're going forward doing what they have to make it work. We still have a lot of businesses that need financial help."

EARMARK DECLARATION

HON. J. RANDY FORBES

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 15, 2009

Mr. FORBES. Madam Speaker, pursuant to the Republican Leadership standards on earmarks, I am submitting the following information regarding earmarks I received as part of H.Q. 3183, the Energy and Water Development and Related Agencies Appropriations Act of 2010.

Requesting Member: Congressman J. RANDY FORBES

Bill Number: H.R. 3183

Account: Army Corps of Engineers, Construction

Legal Name of Requesting Entity: City of Chesapeake, VA

Address of Requesting Entity: 306 Cedar Road, Chesapeake, VA 23322

Description of Request: Provides \$100,000 to replace the existing 2-lane Deep Creek AIW Bridge with a 5-lane, dual bascule bridge, thus providing a new structurally sound bridge and reducing traffic congestion along the corridor. AIW Deep Creek Bridge (owned and operated by the Army Corps of Engineers) was built in 1934 and is functionally obsolete. The City and State (along with FHWA) have made improvements on either side of the bridge and now replacement of the bridge is critical to the movement of people and goods along U.S. Rt. 17 as well as the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway.

Requesting Member: Congressman J. RANDY FORBES

Bill Number: H.R. 3183

Account: Army Corps of Engineers, O&M

Legal Name of Requesting Entity: Army Corps of Engineers

Address of Requesting Entity: 803 Front Street, Norfolk, VA 23510

Description of Request: Provides \$2,620,000 for the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway Albarle and Chesapeake Canal to protect the navigation route between the Southern Branch of the Elizabeth River and the VA-NC state line in the North Landing River, a

distance of 27 miles. The ACC is of critical importance to transportation, especially to the U.S. Navy which transported over 55 million gallons of jet fuel yearly from the Craney Island to Oceana Naval Air Station in Virginia Beach. Failure to fund the ACC will result in the Navy being unable to meet the fuel demand of the Oceana Naval Station. The Navy has stated that trucking this much fuel would not be feasible on a long-term basis. In addition, commercial and recreation vessels travel the ACC in lieu of the Atlantic Ocean to prevent entry into the dangerous waters off Cape Hatteras. An average of over 1,000,000 tons of commerce passed through the Great Bridge Lock yearly. Funds will be used to continue to operate the navigation lock, swing bridge, and canal.

Requesting Member: Congressman J. RANDY FORBES

Bill Number: H.R. 3183

Account: Army Corps of Engineers, Investigations

Legal Name of Requesting Entity: Army Corps of Engineers

Address of Requesting Entity: 803 Front Street, Norfolk, VA 23510

Description of Request: Provides \$100,000 to investigate federal flood control projects in the Chowan River Basin. In many locations within the basin, six of the top 10 historical high water marks have occurred from 1998 forward, including the flood of record (Hurricane Floyd in 1999), October 2006 cold core upper level low (second highest), and Hurricane Isabel in 2003 (5th highest). Damages from these storm events have ranged from \$10M to over \$100M (February 2008 dollars). The reconnaissance study will evaluate the Federal interest in ways to protect the water resources of this highly productive basin with particular emphasis on restoring wetlands and forested buffers lost from erosion and flooding, reducing flood damages throughout the basin, and improving navigation and to determine the Federal interest in conducting a more detailed feasibility study.

Requesting Member: Congressman J. RANDY FORBES

Bill Number: H.R. 3183

Account: Army Corps of Engineers, O&M

Legal Name of Requesting Entity: City of Hopewell, VA

Address of Requesting Entity: 300 North Main Street, Hopewell, VA 23860

Description of Request: Provides \$600,000 to obtain funding for the maintenance dredge of the Appomattox River. The dredging of the Appomattox River will be of benefit to the region in that it will: (1) restore the Appomattox River to the free-flowing, fully navigable river that it was until the late 1970s; (2) reconnect the City to the navigable portions of the Appomattox River; (3) serve as a catalyst for the commercial and residential revitalization; (4) enhance local and regional tourism and recreational opportunities; and (5) improve the environmental condition of the Appomattox River.

Requesting Member: Congressman J. RANDY FORBES

Bill Number: H.R. 3183

Account: Department of Energy, EERE

Legal Name of Requesting Entity: City of Hopewell, VA

Address of Requesting Entity: 300 North Main Street, Hopewell, VA 23860

Description of Request: Provides \$350,000 to support the city's Green Building and Retro-

fitting Program. Building green requires the wise use of available materials and resources through energy and water efficiency strategies, the recycling of waste, and the use of recycled materials. Energy use is reduced through strategies such as low-e glazing, thicker insulation, energy recovery, demand-controlled ventilation, efficient mechanical equipment, and the use of renewable energy. The focus on indoor air quality that is characteristic of green buildings and better health, increases productivity, and, among students, higher test scores.

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF MOUNT TABOR MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

HON. VERN BUCHANAN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 15, 2009

Mr. BUCHANAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Mount Tabor Missionary Baptist Church in Tallevast, Florida, on its 100th Anniversary and recognize Pastor Ezell Patterson who has served as the congregation's spiritual leader for the past 33 years.

The 150-member church was founded in 1909 by the children of former slaves and has since provided a spiritual home to generations of Tallevast residents who have been able to count on the enduring spiritual support and presence of Mount Tabor.

Though its challenges have changed over the years, Mount Tabor Missionary Baptist has remained strongly committed to its core mission: provide spiritual guidance to all of its members and their families.

For the past few years, the church has provided comfort and a meeting place for area residents impacted by the recent discovery that some residents of the polluted community were drinking contaminated water for possibly up to 40 years.

For more than a century now, Mount Tabor has been the spiritual heart of the Tallevast community.

Resident Ms. Virginia Massie told The Bradenton Herald the church is "the most important thing in my life." And Associate Pastor Willie C. Shaw told the paper, it "has always been an extension of my immediate family."

I have had the pleasure of visiting with local residents in the church hall and attending Sunday service there.

I congratulate Mount Tabor Missionary Baptist Church and its members for reaching this important milestone. I recognize its many accomplishments, and I appreciate their successful efforts to provide a spiritual home to the Tallevast community.

EARMARK DECLARATION

HON. CHRISTOPHER JOHN LEE

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 15, 2009

Mr. LEE of New York. Madam Speaker, pursuant to the Republican Leadership standards on earmarks, I am submitting the following information regarding earmarks I received as

part of the FY10 Energy & Water Appropriations bill.

Requesting Member: Congressman CHRISTOPHER LEE (NY-26)

Bill Number: H.R. 3183

Account: Department of Energy—Biomass and Biorefinery Systems R&D

Legal Name of Requesting Entity: County of Monroe NY Department of Environmental Services

Address of Requesting Entity: 50 West Main Street, Suite 7100, Rochester, NY 14614

Description of Request: Provide an earmark of \$1,000,000 for the continued transformation of the Mill Seat Landfill in Riga in to a very efficient bioreactor through innovative harnessing of methane to create energy with large and/or small generating system. This second power plant will result in increased Methane production to produce up to 12.8 Megawatts of Renewable Green power and associated Thermal Load. The project will allow the County to utilize the thermal output to spur economic development adjacent to the Landfill and sell the electricity and related green benefits to offset utility costs.

Of the total amount, 100 percent is for purchase and installation of equipment.

This state of the art process would provide many environmentally friendly results: eliminates the need for incinerating sludge at the wastewater treatment plant saving non-renewable energy; reduces the use of non-renewable fuel and emissions; and improves the decomposition process via the use of the "chemically treated biosolids". This is the first use of chemically treated biosolids from a Waste Water Treatment Plant to increase the decomposition of Municipal solid waste resulting in increased Methane production while extending the life of the landfill by 30-50 percent. Also, Monroe County will use the free thermal associated with the project to entice companies to relocate to the eight 25-acre economic development parcels adjacent to the landfill.

Requesting Member: Congressman CHRISTOPHER LEE (NY-26)

Bill Number: H.R. 3183

Account: Department of Energy—Science

Legal Name of Requesting Entity: State University of New York at Geneseo

Address of Requesting Entity: Erwin 218, SUNY Geneseo, Geneseo, NY 14454

Description of Request: Provide an earmark of \$500,000 for the purchase of a Fourier Transform Nuclear Magnetic Resonance Spectrometer for SUNY Geneseo's Integrated Science Center.

Of the total amount, 100 percent is for purchase and installation of equipment.

This instrument will replace an aging spectrometer at the College thus allowing Geneseo to continue attracting competitive research grants, training students in critical fields of science and technology, and contribute to economic development efforts in the region.

Requesting Member: Congressman CHRISTOPHER LEE (NY-26)

Bill Number: H.R. 3183

Account: Corps of Engineers—Operations and Maintenance

Legal Name of Requesting Entity: Army Corps of Engineers Buffalo District

Address of Requesting Entity: 1776 Niagara Street, Buffalo, NY 14207

Description of Request: Provide an earmark of \$2,696,000 for the routine operations and