

schools have increased in participation, scholarship dollars, coaches' salaries, and recruiting expenditures over the past 5 years. As a result, the average number of women athletes per school in the NCAA Division One increased from 112 to 130 over the past 5 years.

Internationally, women's basketball has also become very popular. Many people may not realize it, but 80 million women play basketball worldwide. Let me repeat that; 80 million women play basketball worldwide, an amazing figure.

Last year, I saw firsthand how talented some of those women are when I attended one of the Team USA women's basketball games at the Olympics in Atlanta. It was very exciting and wonderful to see such a large crowd at this event. The USA female basketball team went on to win the gold medal. It is obvious that American women are the best players in the world.

□ 1800

The success of women's sports has proved that America is ready for women's professional basketball. We have built a generation of talented players who can compete internationally, and now it is time to showcase this talent here in our own country. These leagues will offer role models to younger women and promote greater chances for female athletes, continuing the tradition of gender equity in sports, first promoted through title IX.

This Saturday the WNBA will begin its first season, while the ABL is gearing up for a second successful season in the fall. As a Member of Congress, we should honor these professional women athletes and support them. As we congratulate the ABL and the WNBA on their inaugural season, we should also recognize the sponsors, owners, and fans of the leagues' teams for their commitment.

Mr. Speaker, it is my hope that Members of both parties will sign on as original cosponsors to my bill and pass this resolution in the near future.

GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN PREVENTION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. GEKAS] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GEKAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to introduce a bill that we call the Government Shutdown Prevention Act. This should be of no surprise to the Speaker or to any of the Members. For some 10 years now I have persisted in introducing this legislation and presenting it through the Committee on Rules and the policy committees and to interest groups throughout the Nation for their support.

Everyone says it is a great idea; that we need some mechanism to prevent Government shutdown, to make sure that when the budget deadline comes and goes that that will not result in a

shutdown, but rather a mechanism that will allow for a transition until a full budget can be produced by the Congress of the United States.

What is so tough about that concept, Mr. Speaker? This last exercise that we had with disaster relief, the administration and the Democrat leaders in the House continued to say that this was an extraneous measure, the shutdown prevention, added to the disaster relief bill.

Mr. Speaker, everyone knows that the disaster relief bill was made up 100 percent of money, appropriations, for the flood victims in the Midwest. This money, the billions of dollars that were appropriated, has to take a long period of time before it settles in the hands and the bank accounts of the flood victims. Suppose September 30 comes by and we have not completed the work of the budget and the next day a Government shutdown occurs? It means those people who were supposed to be recipients of disaster relief would get no further checks until we reached a budget agreement.

My bill was very germane then to the disaster relief bill. It made certain that the checks that were going to be issued to the disaster victims would continue beyond the budget deadline of September 30 in the event no full budget was agreed on by the Congress of the United States. It was highly germane and relevant, and yet we heard the rhetoric from the Democrat leadership and the White House that this was extraneous and it would draw a veto because it had nothing to do with flood relief.

It was these same individuals who said this was extraneous, who then voted for a disaster relief bill, Mr. Speaker, that contained these provisions, or this kind of provision. For instance: Marine Mammal Protection Act amendment to allow for the importation of polar bears for the purpose of trophy collection. Mr. Speaker, this was in the disaster relief bill that we just passed.

I ask, Mr. Speaker, is that extraneous to the bill or is it relevant to the bill? They can accept polar bear trophy amendments but not an amendment that would prevent a Government shutdown.

There were provisions that would allow the Small Business Competitive Demonstration Program to provide enhanced competition in the business of dredging U.S. waterways. I ask, Mr. Speaker, if that was relevant to disaster relief, why was not my Government shutdown prevention amendment relevant to disaster relief? I ask these questions but I get no answers.

Further, there was an amendment in this disaster relief that had to do with the Susquehanna River Basin Compact, had nothing to do with disaster relief for the Middle West; to the Higher Education Act of 1965. Nothing; the Relief Food Stamp Act of 1977.

These were amendments, riders, that were in the disaster relief that the Democrat leadership supported whole-

heartedly, even though they know in their heart of hearts that these were extraneous, nongermane, irrelevant to disaster relief. Yet they said, Mr. Speaker, that preventing Government shutdown is extraneous, irrelevant, nongermane; has nothing to do with disaster relief, even though it would be personally responsible for a continuation of funding beyond any budget breakdown.

What is this? I know where we stand. The President and the Democrat leadership would rather risk Government shutdown than allow a transitional budgetary period to make sure that a Government shutdown does not occur and allow the Congress and the President to negotiate a final budget. That is against their political interests. They want the risk of Government shutdown.

Well, I insist that to the last day that I serve in this Congress I will attempt to make sure that the people of the United States know that we are trying to prevent Government shutdown and all the chaos that accompanies it.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas [Ms. JACKSON-LEE] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida [Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. GOSS] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. GOSS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

TRIBUTE TO MASON LANKFORD

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. WELDON] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening to pay tribute to a great American who passed away yesterday evening while involved in a State conference involving the fire service of the State of Texas.

Nine years ago, Mr. Speaker, in my first term in this Congress, in an attempt to provide representation for the 1.2 million men and women who every day of the year respond to disasters in this country, I formed what has become the largest caucus in the Congress, the congressional fire and emergency services caucus.

During that first term, I was able to convince minority leader Bob Michel to join with us and to help us kick off what would be a tremendous decade of success for the men and women who every day risk their lives. I was not, however, able to convince Speaker Wright to join.

I gave a speech out at the National Fire Academy, and one of the attendees there was a man by the name of Mason Lankford from Texas. Mason came up to me after that meeting and said, "You need the Speaker to be involved?" And I said yes, and within a week Mason had convinced his good friend, Speaker Jim Wright, to support our efforts. Jim became a very aggressive supporter of the fire service during the rest of his tenure as the Speaker of this body.

Mason Lankford, over the past 9 years, Mr. Speaker, as a representative of the Texas Fire Service, past president of their State association, past active member of the Fort Worth Fire Department, known throughout Fort Worth and the Arlington area as someone who was always willing to give of himself, was doing what he liked best yesterday, Mr. Speaker. He was addressing the members of the Texas Fire Service in Galveston.

He had been introduced by his good friend, Chief Willie Wiscow of the Galveston Fire Department, and following Mason's brief comments, unfortunately, he passed away.

Mason will be remembered, Mr. Speaker, by the 1.2 million men and women across this country who every day risk their lives, for having helped create a new awareness of fire and life safety issues in this Congress. It was Mason Lankford who over the past 9 years helped convince over 400 Members of Congress to join our efforts to provide more awareness and more support for these brave men and women.

Mason attended each of our nine dinners here in Washington, where he helped organize those events, annually raising between \$400,000 and \$500,000 to provide staff support for the issues important to firefighters and emergency medical personnel across the country.

Day in and day out Mason Lankford was there helping those who he knew best, those men and women who he worked with in Texas and throughout this country in both the paid and the volunteer fire and EMS services.

We are going to miss Mason, Mr. Speaker, and I rise tonight to pay tribute to him. I know all of our colleagues on both sides of the aisle wish Mason's family well through these very difficult times. And I know that all of us will join in remembering Mason for the outstanding contribution that he made to society, that he made to mankind.

The services for Mason will be Thursday at 2 p.m. At the First Methodist Church in Arlington, TX, and I ask all of my colleagues, Mr. Speaker, to join together and extend our condolences and best wishes to Mason's wife, Lynn, and his children Joe and Nancy, who are following in Mason's footsteps.

Again, Mr. Speaker, it is a tragic loss. We are all going to miss Mason, but Mason certainly has completed an outstanding effort on behalf of those firefighters in this country who are better off, who are better equipped, who are better trained and who are better served because of his efforts, not just over the past 9 years but even before that as an active member of the largest group of unsung heroes in this country, our domestic defenders, our fire and EMS personnel.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Washington [Mrs. LINDA SMITH] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mrs. LINDA SMITH of Washington addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

THE PRIVATE CALENDAR

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Wisconsin [Mr. SENSENBRENNER] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to set forth some of the history behind, as well as describe the workings of the Private Calendar. I hope this might be of some value to the Members of this House, especially our newer colleagues.

Of the five House Calendars, the Private Calendar is the one to which all private bills are referred. Private bills deal with specific individuals, corporations, institutions, and so forth, as distinguished from public bills which deal with classes only.

Of the 108 laws approved by the First Congress, only 5 were private laws. But their number quickly grew as the wars of the new Republic produced veterans and veterans' widows seeking pensions and as more citizens came to have private claims and demands against the Federal Government. The 49th Congress, 1885 to 1887, the first Congress for which complete workload and output data is available—passed 1,031 private laws, as compared with 434 public laws. At the turn of the century the 56th Congress passed 1,498 private laws and 443 public laws—a better than 3 to 1 ratio.

Private bills were referred to the Committee on the Whole House as far back as 1820, and a calendar of private bills was established in 1839. These bills were initially brought before the House by special orders, but the 62d Congress changed this procedure by its rule XXIV, clause 6 which provided for the consideration of the Private Calendar in lieu of special orders. This rule was amended in 1932, and then adopted in its present form on March 22, 1935.

A determined effort to reduce the private bill workload of the Congress was made in the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946. Section 131 of that act banned the introduction or the consideration of four types of private bills: first, those authorizing the payment of money for pensions; second, for personal or property damages for which suit may be brought under the Federal tort claims procedure; third, those authorizing the construction of a bridge across

a navigable stream, or fourth, those authorizing the correction of a military or naval record.

This ban afforded some temporary relief but was soon offset by the rising postwar and cold war flood for private immigration bills. The 82d Congress passed 1,023 private laws, as compared with 594 public laws. The 88th Congress passed 360 private laws compared with 666 public laws.

Under rule XXIV, clause 6, the Private Calendar is called the first and third Tuesday of each month. The consideration of the Private Calendar bills on the first Tuesday is mandatory unless dispensed with by a two-thirds vote. On the third Tuesday, however, recognition for consideration of the Private Calendar is within the discretion of the Speaker and does not take precedence over other privileged business in the House.

On the first Tuesday of each month, after disposition of business on the Speaker's table for reference only, the Speaker directs the call of the Private Calendar. If a bill called is objected to by two or more Members, it is automatically recommitted to the committee reporting it. No reservation of objection is entertained. Bills unobjected to are considered in the House in the Committee of the Whole.

On the third Tuesday of each month, the same procedure is followed with the exception that omnibus bills embodying bills previously rejected have preference and are in order regardless of objection.

Such omnibus bills are read by paragraph, and no amendments are entertained except to strike out or reduce amounts or provide limitations. Matters so stricken out shall not be again included in an omnibus bill during that session. Debate is limited to motions allowable under the rule and does not admit motions to strike out the last word or reservation of objections. The rules prohibit the Speaker from recognizing Members for statements or for requests for unanimous consent for debate. Omnibus bills so passed are thereupon resolved in their component bills, which are engrossed separately and disposed of as if passed separately.

Private Calendar bills unfinished on one Tuesday go over to the next Tuesday on which such bills are in order and are considered before the call of bills subsequently on the calendar. Omnibus bills follows the same procedure and go over to the next Tuesday on which that class of business is again in order. When the previous question is ordered on a Private Calendar bill, the bill comes up for disposition on the next legislative day.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to describe to the newer Members the Official Objectors system the House has established to deal with the great volume of private bills.

The majority leader and the minority leader each appoint three Members to serve as Private Calendar Objectors during a Congress. The Objectors are on the floor ready to object to any private bill which they feel is objectionable for any reason. Seated near them to provide technical assistance are the majority and minority legislative clerks.

Should any Member have a doubt or questions about a particular private bill, he or she can get assistance from objectors, their clerks, or from the Member who introduced the bill.

The great volume of private bills and the desire to have an opportunity to study them carefully before they are called on the Private Calendar has caused the six objectors to