

parks and green space, not only along Town Lake but throughout central Texas.

Mr. Speaker, I think the same kind of thing can happen around the country, whether it is along the Anacostia here in Washington, the Chattahoochee in Atlanta, or along the Los Angeles River, these bonds provide the opportunity to reinvigorate downtown areas, make them more livable, and reinvigorate the economy in some of these areas.

The Better America Bonds initiative has received support from the American Institute of Architects and the National Realty Committee because they support strong neighborhood planning and this program provides the means for communities to do just that. Communities and local governments are also supporting the Better America Bonds program because these bonds are much less costly to a local government for them to use than the traditional interest bearing ones.

As Vice President GORE said earlier this year, "Plan well, and you have a community that nurtures commerce and private life. Plan badly, and you have what many of us suffer from firsthand: Gridlock, sprawl and that uniquely modern evil of all, too little time."

We incorporated this concept of Better America Bonds in the Democratic tax substitute. It received a substantial number of votes, and I hope that we can come together in a bipartisan effort to support Better America Bonds in the future. I believe that we must all be active participants in preserving our livable communities for our children and grandchildren. Through innovative conservation programs like Better America Bonds, we can ensure this legacy.

OCALA, FLORIDA POLICE DEPARTMENT CRIME PREVENTION: "WEED AND SEED"

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MICA). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 19, 1999, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to bring to the attention of my colleagues a report that was issued this spring of this year from the Department of Justice Office of Justice Programs called "Weed and Seed Best Practices." I thought this was a very interesting report and in this report is featured an officer from my hometown of Ocala, Florida.

For many of my colleagues, the "Weed and Seed" program, as they know, is a community-based crime prevention program. Federal, State, and local law enforcement agencies, community support services, local businesses, and ordinary citizens get together to weed out violent crime and drug use and plant the seeds to foster new community growth and, of course, stability in that community.

The "Weed and Seed" program began with three pilot sites in 1991. As of today, there are over 200 pilot sites and one of those, of course, Mr. Speaker, is in my hometown of Ocala, Florida, which is in my congressional district. The article, as I mentioned earlier, is written by Ken DeVilling, a lieutenant with the Ocala Police Department, the Crime Prevention section. I would like to share what Lieutenant DeVilling's observations were and actually the eminent success of the Ocala Police Department and the surrounding community in their fight against crime.

As Lieutenant DeVilling mentioned in his article, the City of Ocala was, of course, not immune to the effects of crack cocaine and the subsequent surge of crime. Additional resources were needed and the Ocala Police Department had the foresight to recognize the newly developed "Weed and Seed" program as a viable solution to rising crime in my hometown. So myself, and with the help of my other colleagues in Florida and the Florida delegation, they assisted me in getting Ocala as a site designated as a "Weed and Seed" program.

A number of initiatives were created by the Ocala Police Department using the funds that were provided by this "Weed and Seed" program. One initiative was the creation of a community organization called the Community Council Against Substance Abuse which was comprised of members of the local Community Commission, the city council, school board, State attorney's office and of course other community organizations.

As a result of these organizations getting together, Ocala recorded its lowest crime rate in 1998. Furthermore, in 1997, the city's homicide rate was only one, and in the previous decades it went as high as 20 per year.

Another program that is cited in this article is called "Problem-Oriented Policing." Under this program, officers identify possible areas which, quote, detract from good living conditions in the neighborhoods they patrol, end quote. These areas may be abandoned lots or houses that are abandoned or they might be areas that provide haven for drug trafficking and criminal activities.

Once they identify these areas, a form is completed by the officer and is sent through the chain of command. The identified site is then referred to the city department best able to handle the situation. Let me quote from Lieutenant DeVilling in the article when he says, "It is not uncommon for a police officer to identify a dilapidated building which is used as a crack House. Within a short time, the building is burned to the ground by firemen to practice and improve their skills. The property is then cleared and recycled. These recycled properties are frequently used for purposes such as building a brand-new home by Habitat for Humanity."

Other programs operated by the Ocala Police Department include drug

education for young people, drug abuse resistance education, and of course dealing with the gangs through education and training.

Mr. Speaker, this morning I am pleased to be here. I commend the Ocala Police Department, the local and State officials, and all the organizations involved in this dramatic, dramatic success achieved in crime prevention. As we here in Congress attempt to find solutions to the violence that is sweeping this country and this Nation, it is comforting to know that our local law enforcement and community organizations working hard to combat this problem at its source and it is happening in my hometown of Ocala. They are succeeding.

Mr. Speaker, I will submit to enter into the RECORD Lieutenant DeVilling's article as it appears in the Department of Justice's spring 1999 report, "Weed and Seed and Best Practices Report." For brevity, Mr. Speaker, I will submit only that section dealing with "Taking it to the Streets," which is a small part of this article explaining how the Ocala Police Department actually reduced crime in my hometown using the "Weed and Seed" program.

My efforts this morning are also to recognize the fine things being done by the Ocala Police Department to reduce and eliminate crime in my hometown of Ocala, Florida.

TAKING IT TO THE STREETS

The programs and projects conducted by the Ocala Police Department, Crime Prevention Section include:

Drug Education For Youth (DEFY): This program was developed by the U.S. Navy and offered through the Department of Justice to local law enforcement organizations. The program at our level reaches out to underprivileged children and offers one-on-one mentoring for a full year. Most of the mentors are police personnel. We conduct a summer day camp and the local Army Reserve personnel attend and provide various instructional topics for the kids. We take the children on field trips to places offering educational and inspirational experiences. We also arrange for them to conduct their own community programs such as delivering fruit baskets to the elderly.

DARE (Drug Abuse Resistance Education): DARE is a well-known elementary school program which we have implemented in all of the primary schools in Ocala with the assistance of the Marion County School Board. Our program reaches over 1000 school-children each year.

GREAT (Gang Resistance Education and Training): the GREAT program is similar in concept to DARE, but it is directed toward an older group of students and offers a different message. Street gangs are becoming a serious problem in the United States. Some cities are already overburdened with "after the fact" abatement programs and additional police efforts to cope with the violence, destruction, and crime created by these groups. The Ocala Police Department and the Marion County School Board, with the help of CCASA have implemented the GREAT program in all seventh grade classes in the city schools. The classes teach anti-violence, drug resistance, gang resistance, self-esteem, conflict resolution, and other important topics. This program will soon reach 1000 students each school year.

Other ongoing programs implemented through the Ocala Police Department are designed to address specific challenges in issue areas at various times. These projects may be operated for only a short time (one to two days) or for extended periods (a full year). We employ a concept of dynamic approach and response to community needs in order to provide our services in a timely manner. Programs can be implemented and discontinued as community needs indicate.

The following activities and events are only part of those conducted by Crime Prevention Section and the Ocala Police Department family as part of their regular duties:

- Business Police Academy.
- Citizens Police Academy.
- Citizens Police Academy Alumni Association.
- Bicycle Safety Rodeos.
- "Cops" Kids & Firemen Day.
- Crime Prevention Week.
- Neighborhood Watch.
- Business Watch.
- Safe Halloween.
- Community Clean-up Days.
- Special Olympics Picnic.
- DARE and GREAT Skate Nights.
- "AMI" (Aid to the Mentally Impaired).
- Police Explorers Post.
- Neighborhood Cookouts.
- "SAFE HOME" Program.
- Police Recruit Academy.
- Scholarships.
- Community Resource Center.
- Crime Prevention Programs.
- Security Surveys.
- McGruff Program Activity.
- "Crash Dummies" Program.
- "Casey" the talking car.
- Operation "Kid ID"
- Project Graduation.
- Host Statewide DARE Day.
- HUD Summer Programs.
- Red Ribbon Campaign.
- Vacation Bible School.
- Health Fairs.

The future of law enforcement is already here. Crime prevention has proven to be successful and will continue to be the foundation of progressive law enforcement as we move into the 21st century.

For more information contact: Lt. Ken DeVilling, Phone (352) 629-8290, Fax (352) 629-8391.

TWO FLOODS AND YOU ARE OUT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 19, 1999, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, there is a theme this morning on the floor of the House: dealing with how we can promote livable communities. Whether it is dealing with community-oriented policing, "Weed and Seed," or associating the comments of the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DOGGETT) about Better America Bonds, there is a lot that the Federal Government can do to make a difference for things that people really care about, making their families safe, economically secure and healthy.

Mr. Speaker, a critical part of making the Federal Government a better partner in promoting livable communities is the work we do with basic infrastructure. Rather than spending a lot of new money, making new rules

and regulations and starting new programs, one the most important contributions the Federal Government can make is using our existing resources more wisely.

Nowhere is that more clearly illustrated than what we do with water resources. Currently, the Federal Government makes it easier to spend money paving a creek to stop flooding than to restore wetlands to achieve the same goal. I have already introduced legislation that would make it easier for communities to invest in cheaper, greener approaches to flood protection. This approach does not need to cost the Federal Government an additional dime, and it gives the communities more choices as they solve their problems and increase livability.

The National Flood Insurance program poses another critical water resource management challenge. It is appropriate for the Federal Government to step in when there is a case of unforeseen natural disaster. However, if it is clear that some people make it hard on themselves by continuing to invest in unwise anti-environmental, unsustainable situations, then we have an obligation to draw the line. The Federal taxpayer should not be paying for people to live in places where God repeatedly has shown that he does not want them.

There is a home in Houston which has an appraised value of \$114,000 which has received over \$800,000 in flood insurance payments in 16 events in the last 10 years. Over 5,600 properties, nearly 1 in 10, have loss claims which exceed the value of the property. Forty percent of our flood insurance goes to 2 percent of the property that is repeatedly flooded.

Mr. Speaker, if the local government and private property owners are going to be foolish, they need to do it on their own dime. Indeed, it is not just our money they are wasting; these development patterns take on a life of their own. They pressure organizations like the Corps of Engineers, FEMA and state and local communities to further engineer the environment and protect ill-advised development from flooding, often succeeding in making matters worse.

Despite having spent over \$40 billion since 1960, our losses adjusted for inflation are three times greater than when we started the building spree. Our disaster relief costs have increased 550 percent in the last 10 years.

It is time for us to rethink our policies and our investments. It is time to stop the waste of money, predictable loss of property, and threat to public safety. As a basic simple common sense step, it is time to reform the National Flood Insurance program.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join with the gentleman from Nebraska, (Mr. BEREUTER) who has long been a champion of reforming the Flood Insurance Program to propose a simple approach to repetitive flood loss. We retool the Flood Insurance Program so

that rather than continuing to rebuild a repeatedly flooded home, the program would provide homeowners with money to help them move away from flood waters or at least floodproof their homes. Those who refuse assistance must start paying the real actuarial insurance costs for the risks that they choose to take.

This policy is both humanitarian and fiscally responsible, allowing people to move out of harm's way and protecting the Federal taxpayer by making the National Flood Insurance program solvent. We need to enforce the existing rules and regulations to keep people out of harm's way. We need to spend money to prevent loss rather than repeatedly cleaning up after it is too late.

This basic solution to more livable communities will not require more money or bureaucratic regulations. As usual, a livable community is possible if the Federal Government is a thoughtful partner with citizens and their local government. I would like to urge my colleagues to join with me and the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER) to reform the National Flood Insurance program and to sign on as cosponsors of our "Two Floods and You're Out" legislation.

WHO IS RECKLESS?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 19, 1999, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MICA) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. MICA. Mr. Speaker, from time to time the comments from this administration and the President of the United States lead me to the floor to comment. I think my colleagues and the American people saw the President of the United States calling the Republicans reckless. And I guess I am included in that, I am a Republican. We were called reckless for proposing a significant tax cut for the American people.

Mr. Speaker, I almost had to chuckle to hear the President of the United States call me reckless and the Republicans for offering a tax cut. It is almost hysterical when we think about it when the other side of the aisle for some 40 years had control of this body and under the Constitution of the United States we all know bills, financial bills start in the House of Representatives on the basis of a judgment made by our founding fathers. For 40 years, the recklessness of the other side nearly bankrupt this Nation.

When I came into the House of Representatives in 1992, we were facing financial disaster. This was carried through with the reckless policy of this President who instituted one of the largest tax increases in American history a few months after his election. And again when he had complete majorities in the House, the Senate, and controlled the White House.

What was reckless is 40 years of taking money out of Social Security. It is