risk or already have diabetes. Recent research suggests that more than five million people have the disease but have not been diagnosed.

Another major cause of concern is the number of serious diabetes related illnesses. Diabetes is the leading cause of blindness among adults between 20 and 74 years of age. People with diabetes are also at higher risk for heart disease, kidney failure, extremity amputations, and other chronic conditions.

To ensure the future health of our Nation, we can safeguard our children and our families from diabetes by encouraging good health and regular exercise. Following the guidelines for good nutrition, getting physical exercise, and maintaining proper weight can help prevent diabetes and reduce the chance of severe complications.

As the sixth leading cause of death in the United States, finding a cure for diabetes is a top priority for medical researches. As a member of Congress, this year I supported legislation that included funding for important diabetes research and clinical testing. This year the House voted to provide $1.6 billion for the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, which is $47.2 million above fiscal year 2003. In addition, $150 million in mandatory funds will be made available for juvenile diabetes research.

Through increased prevention and research we will overcome this disease and free millions of Americans from the threat of diabetes and related illnesses.

ANACOSTIA WATERSHED INITIATIVE ACT OF 2003

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 21, 2003

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing the Anacostia Watershed Initiative Act of 2003. I am very pleased to be joined on the bill by several of my colleagues from the Washington region—Mr. HOYER, Mr. WYNN, Mr. MORAN, and Mr. VAN HOLLEN.

Although the beautiful Potomac, a river we also love, gets most of the attention in this region, it is the Anacostia that flows closest to the Congress and to the neighborhoods of the city and region. The Anacostia flows just 2,000 yards from the majestic Capitol Dome. The wastewater from the Capitol complex flows into the river when the ancient D.C. sewer system—built over the last century and a half—overflows on rainy days. The polluted runoff from congressional and federal parking lots and the fertilizers and pesticides from our magnificent lawns and gardens go into the Anacostia on those days as well. Many Members of Congress maintain a home in the Anacostia watershed. It is a sad fact that more than 30 years after the passage of the Clean Water Act, the Anacostia, despite its proximity to the Congress, remains badly contaminated with fecal bacteria, toxic chemicals, heavy metals, and many other pollutants. Contact with the water of the Anacostia isn't safe for human beings, there are official warnings not to eat fish caught in the river, and according to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, more than half of the bottom-feeding brown bullheads in the river have cancerous tumors caused by chemicals.

We're simply not doing a good job of taking care of our home river. The Anacostia has no treatment plants and very few small industrial sites. Federal agencies are the biggest polluters of the river. Nearly all of its pollution enters the river from public streets, storm drains, and sewers. These public systems—particularly the District's combined sewer—are old and inadequate and should have been upgraded years ago.

One of the many challenges in cleaning up the Anacostia is that five-sixths of the land area that contributes polluted water to it is within the state of Maryland, about a sixth of the total is owned and managed by the federal government. The residents of the District of Columbia especially feel the effects of the pollution. The result of that geography is that neither the District of Columbia nor any other single jurisdiction can achieve the cleanup of the river by itself. If we are to envision the day that the Anacostia can be a real asset for the entire Washington region extraordinary cooperation among the federal, state, and local governments will be required.

This is the purpose of the Anacostia Watershed Initiative Act of 2003. The bill that my colleagues and I are introducing today would bring together federal, state, District of Columbia and other local governments in a joint approach to cleaning up the river. It would set up a mechanism to develop, fund, and implement a 10-year Comprehensive Action Plan for the Anacostia watershed that would address both the District's outdated and inadequate combined sewer system and the runoff from federal facilities and other properties in Maryland. It would involve all the major players in a truly unified approach to cleaning up the home river of Congress.

This legislation has broad support, not only among members of congress, but from state and local officials, environmentalists, and the business community. With regional colleagues as original co-sponsors, I will work hard for the passage of the Anacostia Watershed Initiative Act of 2003 and know that our colleagues in the other body will work for it there, too. I urge all members of the House to join me in creating a Congressional home river that we can be truly proud of.

THE EMPLOYEE FREE CHOICE ACT

HON. GEORGE MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 21, 2003

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, today I am joining with 81 of my colleagues to introduce the Employee Free Choice Act—legislation that will strengthen workers' rights in America.

Workers in America are demanding the same basic legal, labor and human rights by which we judge other nations around the world: the freedom of association and the right to collectively bargain.

These are the internationally-recognized standards our government says all workers deserve, whether in China or in Chattanooga, in Mexico or in Milwaukee, in South Africa or in South Carolina. We tell other nations that collective bargaining gives workers a voice in the workplace. It's time—in fact, it's way past time—for workers here in the United States to have the same rights and protections we demand of poorer, less developed and less democratic nations around the world.

Unfortunately, the basic labor law that Congress enacted in 1935 no longer works to protect the right of workers to form and join unions. Recent history is littered with the stories of companies that defeated their workers when they sought to exercise their legal right to organize for their mutual benefit.

Something is obviously very wrong with our nation's labor laws when one side in a dispute has so many weapons at its disposal to thwart the will of the majority.

We are all aware of the egregious record of Wal-Mart, whose vigorous anti-union activities include threats and firings to unlawful surveillance. In the last few years, Wal-Mart has been charged with well over 100 unfair labor practices and has faced at least 50 formal complaints from the NLRB. None of this has apparently deterred Wal-Mart. Current law simply does not discourage lawbreakers.

In August 2000, Human Rights Watch, which usually reviews conditions in developing nations, documented ''a systemic failure to ensure the most basic right of workers [in the United States]: their freedom to choose to come together to negotiate the terms of their employment with their employers.'' No impartial observer of our law could reach any other conclusion.

Is this the image of democracy that we choose to show to the rest of the world?

It is no mystery why workers want unions. The wages of union workers are 26% higher than for nonunion workers. Union workers have better pensions, better health benefits, and better shortterm disability coverage. Union workers have contracts that prevent arbitrary firings.

So why do unions win only 50% of the elections? Because the deck is stacked against employees who want to form a union.

We propose a new deck. Not just a new deal.

The Employee Free Choice Act restores integrity to our labor law by ensuring that our own citizens have the same basic freedom we demand for others. The right to organize must mean more than the right to be fired for daring to propose a union, and the right to bargain collectively must mean more than the right to endlessly negotiate once a union has been selected.

Throughout my congressional career, I have fought to improve the rights of workers. With many of my colleagues I've fought for a larger minimum wage, protection for migrant workers, better education, and greater retirement security and health coverage. This fight is to enable workers to fight for themselves. It is an historic fight that I resolve to continue until the rights of working Americans are fully protected.

For the benefit of my colleagues, a short summary of the Employee Free Choice Act follows:

SUMMARY OF EMPLOYEE FREE CHOICE ACT

1. CERTIFICATION ON THE BASIS OF SIGNED AUTHORIZATIONS

Provides for certification of a union as the bargaining representative if the National Labor Relations Board finds that a majority of employees in an appropriate unit has signed authorizations designating the union as its bargaining representative. Requires the Board to develop model authorization

language and procedures for establishing the authenticity of signed authorizations.

2. FIRST CONTRACT MEDIATION AND ARBITRATION

Provides that if an employer and a union are engaged in bargaining for their first contract and are unable to reach agreement within 90 days, either party may refer the dispute to the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (FMCS) for mediation. If the FMCS has been unable to bring the parties to agreement after 30 days of mediation the dispute will be referred to arbitration and the results of the arbitration shall be binding on the parties for two years. Time limits may be extended by mutual agreement of the parties.

3. STRONGER PENALTIES FOR VIOLATIONS WHILE EMPLOYEES ARE ATTEMPTING TO ORGANIZE OR OBTAIN A FIRST CONTRACT

Makes the following new provisions applicable to violations of the National Labor Relations Act committed by employers against employees during any period while employees are attempting to organize a union or negotiate a first contract with the employer:

a. Mandatory Applications for Injunctions: Provides that just as the NLRB is required to seek a federal court injunction against a union whenever there is reasonable cause to believe that the union has violated the secondary boycott prohibitions in the Act, the NLRB must seek a federal court injunction against an employer whenever there is reasonable cause to believe that the employer has discharged or discriminated against employees, threatened to discharge or discriminate against employees, or engaged in conduct that significantly interferes with employee rights during an organizing or first contract drive. Authorizes the courts to grant temporary restraining orders or other appropriate injunctive relief.

b. Treble Backpay: Increases the amount an employer is required to pay when an employee is discharged or discriminated against during an organizing campaign or first contract drive to three times back pay.

c. Civil Penalties: Provides for civil fines of up to $20,000 per violation against employers found to have willfully or repeatedly violated employees' rights during an organizing campaign or first contract drive.