

recover some degree of normalcy in their lives, even as they face daunting odds—roofs open to the sky, shattered windows, no air conditioning, their possessions scattered and broken.

Every June 1, the citizens in my State prepare for another hurricane season. Some have lived in Florida all their lives and are very well versed in hurricane procedures. Some are new residents and have never been through a large storm. Nothing, however, could have prepared Floridians for the recent series of devastating events which started with Tropical Storm Bonnie striking the panhandle in early August, followed by Hurricane Charley crashing into Florida's west coast on August 13, and continued with Hurricane Frances attacking the entire State this past weekend. Now we are tracking Hurricane Ivan, which is again headed in our direction.

It is remarkable that these massive storms, which impacted nearly all of the 67 counties in the State of Florida, have caused only 29 confirmed fatalities. Hurricane Charley, a category 4 storm with winds in excess of 135 miles per hour, and Hurricane Frances, a category 2 storm with winds near 100 miles per hour, could have been much deadlier. However, while human losses were mercifully low, Florida's infrastructure suffered greatly.

Now we must move forward and look toward cleaning up and rebuilding our homes and businesses. I applaud the Senate's quick approval of supplemental appropriations of \$2 billion in emergency assistance through both FEMA and the Small Business Administration. After responding to these major events in my State as well as the recent tropical storm in Virginia, FEMA is stretched extremely thin and needs an influx of funds to keep operations up and running and planning for the long-term recovery.

In the last three weeks alone, FEMA has issued over \$100 million in individual assistance funds to Florida residents. Over \$2.7 million of that has already been allocated for Hurricane Frances' victims, while the storm is still moving up the Eastern seaboard. The SBA has already approved over \$23 million in disaster loans from Charley and with a filing deadline for assistance extended until October 12, 2004, we expect that number to increase exponentially.

The supplemental appropriations bill passed yesterday is only the first installment of badly needed funds for recovery. We must get an accurate assessment of the damage and determine the appropriate amount of funding needed and the appropriate Federal agencies to assist specific sectors of the State in rebuilding.

The physical infrastructure needs must be determined. How much damage did the road network suffer? Early estimates from Charley alone total over \$65 million for the Federal-aid system. Several Florida airports sustained major damage, which totals nearly \$34

million. These are just a few quick estimates. Across the board, we need to determine the extent of damage to Florida's infrastructure from both Charley and Frances—the highway and transit network, airports, seaports and schools.

Additionally, our Florida growers have been devastated. Early estimates top \$225 million in citrus losses for Charley alone, with over 40 percent of the citrus crop lost. It is too early to tell, but losses from Frances could top \$800 million. The crop insurance program will not be able to cover losses of this magnitude. Congress must step in to help Florida farmers.

These examples are just a small snapshot of the needs of our State. As we determine the amount of damage in other areas, we will need to appropriate funds for other Federal agencies, such as Army Corps of Engineers, Housing and Urban Development, Health and Human Services, Department of Defense, NASA and others.

We must move quickly to put together an accurate assessment of the impact that these storms have had on the State of Florida and respond to this need with adequate Federal funding. I look forward to working with my colleagues in the coming days to achieve this goal.

THE BENIGNO FAMILY AND BRAIN INJURY RESEARCH

Mr. CORZINE. Madam President, I rise today to pay tribute to the Benigno family of Clifton, NJ, for their tireless efforts to advance the cause of brain injury research.

Nearly 20 years ago, Dennis and Rosalind Benigno's 15-year-old son, Dennis John, was struck by a car while walking home from a football physical. Dennis John suffered severe, long-term brain injuries in the accident. Now 34, Dennis John cannot walk or talk. He communicates with his eyes and laughter, and seems to understand when his parents talk to him. Dennis and Rosalind have made a life of caring for their injured son.

Their personal tragedy, however, is not the end of the story. Mr. Benigno has turned tragedy into action. He has been a passionate advocate on behalf of his son raising awareness and promoting research efforts that offer the prospect of a cure for traumatic brain injury. The Benignos founded the Coalition for Brain Injury Research, which has donated more than \$125,000 in the past 2 years to the study of brain cell repair. They raise funds through walkathons and a lectures series, and Mr. Benigno has traveled throughout the country for research dollars.

Mr. Benigno has also turned to his elected representatives in New Jersey and Washington, DC. His efforts have led to the creation of the Congressional Brain Injury Task Force, cochaired by my good friend Congressman BILL PASCRELL. For the last 6 years, Mr. Benigno has also lobbied local, State,

and Federal legislators to support legislation that would create a dedicated source of funding for medical research into traumatic brain injuries.

His work has begun to pay off. On January 2 of this year, Governor McGreevy signed the Brain Injury Research Act into law. With this legislation, New Jersey becomes the first State in the Nation to create a funding stream for researchers devising treatments and cures for brain injuries. The act is expected to raise more than \$3 million a year for brain injury research from a \$1 surcharge on motor vehicle penalties.

Dennis John is one of more than 5.3 million Americans who currently suffer disabilities from brain injury, according to the Centers for Disease Control, CDC. Every year, 200,000 people sustain brain injuries, a number that exceeds the incidence of HIV/AIDS and breast cancer. Right now, there is no cure. In fact, brain injuries are the only catastrophic illness for which scientists have yet to readily identify a cure as their research goal. The Brain Injury Research Act, finally, offers hope to the hundreds of thousands who suffer from brain injuries that an effective therapy may be in sight.

While religious authorities, ethics scholars, and we here in the halls of government continue to debate the implications of stem and fetal cell research, the Benignos remain focused on one thing—supporting the research efforts that may find a cure for their son and others like him. As we make decisions that have the power to spark or extinguish the hopes of millions that the cures they pray for may be found, we should keep the Benignos in mind.

One point is very clear—this new law and the hope it nurtures are a credit to Mr. Benigno's dedication, courage, and perseverance. He is an inspiration to all of us, and a testament to what one determined citizen can achieve in our democracy.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

HONORING THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE LOUISVILLE STUNNERS

• Mr. BUNNING. Madam President, I pay tribute and congratulate the Louisville Stunners 16-and-under fast pitch softball team. Their recent play has given Kentucky reason to be proud.

Led by coach Kevin Johnson, the Stunners qualified for their division's USSSA World Series in Columbus, IN, held from July 26 to August 1, 2004, being the only team to represent Kentucky. While there, they finished in fourth place out of 54 teams. Not only did they play well against the best teams in the country, but they also received the sportsmanship award.

I cannot think of a much better group of young people to represent Kentucky. As a former Major League

Baseball player, I appreciate their athletic excellence. As a United States Senator from Kentucky, I appreciate the dignity and decorum with which they played.

I am proud to read the names of these teammates into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD today. They are Whitney Atcher, Alicia Ewen, Jodi Pence, Jennifer Young, Jennifer Kisselbaugh, Tiffany Dean, Courtney Roller, Holly Goemmer, Jessica McGohon, Krystle Johnson, Kasey Graham, and Jennifer Johnson.

The citizens of Kentucky should be proud of these young ladies. Their example of dedication and hard work should be an inspiration to the entire Commonwealth. I wish them continued success both on and off the softball field.●

IN RECOGNITION OF SENATOR CARPER'S NATIONAL PARKS COMMITTEE

● Mr. CARPER. Madam President, today I give thanks to the members of my National Parks Committee in Delaware for all of their efforts, time, and dedication in attempting to establish a national park in Delaware.

Delaware is the only State that does not have a national park, national monument, national historic site or any other unit of the National Park Service. It is through the hard work of the members of this committee that we have narrowed down the search in recommending the first national park in the First State.

I began the process of trying to establish a national park in 2002. My staff and I took suggestions from the public via surveys, a web poll, and phone calls. We received hundreds of responses, and suggestions ranged from Fort DuPont to Cape Henlopen State Park to the Underground Railroad to the World War II Towers. After several months of hearing what the public recommended, I established the National Parks Committee in 2003.

The committee was comprised of 12 people, including Dr. James Soles, the head of the committee, Dr. Wilma Mishoe, Ms. Norma Lee Derrickson, the Honorable John Schroeder, Mr. O. Francis Biondi, Mr. Ernst Dannemann, Dr. Linda Johnson-Gilliam, Ms. Jane Richter, Ms. Maria Matos, Mr. Ruly Carpenter, Mr. Bill Powers and Mr. Edwin Mongan III. For several months, the members met and discussed extensively each of the suggestions offered by the public. They held workshops in each county whereby the public could attend, participate and offer suggestions. They took a tour of the proposed sites to determine which location would make the best national park.

After months of deliberation, the committee came to its final recommendation: the creation of "The Delaware National Coastal Heritage Park." This National Park would memorialize the rich and diverse history of Delaware's coastal areas, bringing

that history and related attractions into sharp focus for area residents and visitors alike.

This park would be unique among national parks in both its physical dimensions and its theme. Physically, the park would be comprised of a series of four interpretive centers. The centers would largely direct visitors to already existing attractions related to the theme of the park—that is that Delaware's coastal region is comprised of a series of historic, cultural and natural interwoven threads that hold great significance in the history of both Delaware and the United States.

The concept of the unit recognizes that Delaware's coastal region is a near perfect microcosm of America's coastal regions and that they have always played a key role in human activity. It recognizes that the fabric that makes up our Nation is in turn made up of many threads of human and natural activity and that most of those threads have their origins in coastal regions like Delaware's.

In the First State, these threads start with the development of the earliest human settlers in the area and run through to some of the most sophisticated human activities of modern times. Among the most significant are the history of the first European settlers in the Delaware Valley who built Fort Christina in 1638, the development of coastal defenses from the beaches of Cape Henlopen on the Atlantic Ocean to Pea Patch Island in the Delaware River and, the successful operation of the Underground Railroad, by which thousands of enslaved Africans found their way to freedom along Delaware's ocean, bay and river coastline. Other threads include: the history of the Native American tribes such as the Lenni Lenape in what is now Delaware, the arrival of the Finns and the Swedes at the Rocks in Wilmington, the increased influence of the English and Dutch as European immigration grew, the development of transportation and commerce along the same waterways starting with the earliest explorers and extending to today's ultra modern Port of Wilmington, the expansion of modern industry including the early gunpowder factories of Irene DuPont, the rise of the chemical industry and today's two modern auto assembly plants and the credit card giants that dominate Wilmington's skyline, Delaware's significant contributions to the development of our constitutional republic, including Delaware's historic vote at the Golden Fleece Tavern in Dover to ratify the Constitution of 1787, making it the first State to do so, and the beautiful and ecologically important natural areas along the coast that are already preserved as wildlife refuges.

These threads will be highlighted and showcased in a format unique to the National Park system. The park will be structured much like a series of four bicycle wheels, each with a hub and spokes. The hubs will be interpretive centers located strategically along the

coast line. The spokes will be the multitude of attractions and sites that relate to the various threads described above.

The "gateway" or "headquarters" hub will be located on the 7th Street Peninsula at the site of the original Fort Christina. Within a short walking distance of the existing Fort Christina State Park is the Old Swedes Church, the oldest Episcopal Church in America in continuous use; the Kalmar Nyckel, a replica of the ship that carried early Swedes to our shores; Tubman-Garrett Park, located at a point in Wilmington where escaping slaves swam across the Christina River as part of their journey on the Underground Railroad, and other attractions. As a hub, it would provide information, recommendations and directions about other sites in the Wilmington area that relate to the threads of the coastal region.

A second hub would be located in the City of New Castle. It would provide information on attractions in the city's renowned historic district as well as related attractions in New Castle County such as Fort Delaware State Park on Pea Patch Island and Old St. Anne's Episcopal Church in Middletown, originally founded in 1705.

A third would be located in Kent County, along the coast of the Delaware River. It would provide information on the existing preserved natural areas such as Bombay Hook and on the myriad other attractions in Kent County that are integral parts of the threads highlighted by the park. These would include the John Dickinson Mansion, Dover's historic Green and others.

The fourth and final hub would be located in the Lewes area and would provide information on the numerous historic sites and natural areas that have made Sussex County's coastal region so pivotal to Delaware. These would include the Zwaanendael Museum, the Fenwick Lighthouse, and the Georgetown County Courthouse.

Together, these four interpretive centers would direct visitors to the many existing attractions that help us understand and appreciate the entire fabric of our society, a fabric woven from the many threads of Delaware's coastal region.

It is through the dedication and hard work of these sixteen members that this park is even a possibility. Each of the members took time out of their busy lives to help with this important project marking Delaware's history. I thank them, along with several members of my staff, for all their hard work and congratulate them on a job well done.●

IN RECOGNITION OF THE VOICES OF DETROIT INITIATIVE

● Mr. LEVIN. Madam President, I would like to take a moment to recognize the Voices of Detroit Initiative, VODI. VODI provides an opportunity for people living in Detroit and Wayne