

H.R. 3673—SECOND EMERGENCY SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT TO MEET IMMEDIATE NEEDS ARISING FROM THE CONSEQUENCES OF HURRICANE KATRINA, 2005

HON. ADAM SMITH

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 13, 2005

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my disappointment for the Federal government's delayed response to Hurricane Katrina. I am extremely concerned about the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) director Michael Brown and call for his resignation.

Brown and his senior leadership team have demonstrated a stunning level of ineptitude that made the disaster of Katrina and the loss of life and property much worse than it had to be. This tragic event has made clear that the FEMA team is not up to the job of protecting Americans from either natural disasters or from any possible terrorist attack. Security is a paramount concern to me and Americans deserve a competent and able emergency management agency. Now that it is proven that this team is incapable, we can't afford to wait to replace Director Brown.

I also strongly disagree with the suggestion—made by many in the Administration and the majority—that Americans shouldn't “point fingers” or play the “blame game” as the relief effort continues. Thousands of lives are at stake right now. We are also spending billions of public dollars on the recovery and those resources must be spent effectively and efficiently. We need an experienced team now to implement the government's plan for repairing the southeast region, not after a lengthy review process. While I support that broader review, one thing is immediately clear: The director of FEMA is plainly not up to the important job at hand.

Consider the following critically important facts.

Despite days of warning, FEMA did virtually nothing to prepare for the impact of Katrina. Director Brown reportedly waited 5 hours after Katrina struck before he proposed to Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Secretary Michael Chertoff that he send 1,000 Homeland Security workers into the region to support rescuers. Even then, his letter gave personnel 2 full days to arrive on the scene to begin offering assistance. It was 5 agonizing days before FEMA and DHS showed up in any significant numbers with adequate supplies to help the tens of thousands of people in New Orleans.

Equally disturbing are the efforts of FEMA and others in the Administration to explain away these inexcusable actions. Claims have been made that local leaders in Louisiana did not ask for help and that the Federal government could not have foreseen that the levees around New Orleans would be breached in the event of a significant hurricane.

The utter absurdity of these claims makes it even clearer that we need new leadership at FEMA if Americans are to have any confidence that the agency will wisely and effectively deal with the continuing crisis in the Gulf Coast, much less prepare for future natural disasters or terrorist attacks.

First, locals did ask for help before the storm hit and FEMA assumed responsibility for dealing with the fallout from Katrina. Louisiana's Governor Kathleen Blanco declared a State of emergency for Louisiana on August 26th and on August 27th, she requested Federal support. On that same day, and acting on your authorization, Director Brown responded to Blanco's request for assistance and declared that FEMA would “mobilize equipment and resources necessary to protect public health and safety by assisting law enforcement with evacuations, establishing shelters, supporting emergency medical needs, meeting immediate lifesaving and life-sustaining human needs and protecting property, in addition to other emergency protective measures.”

Second, the coming disaster was clear. Max Mayfield, the Director of the National Hurricane Center has confirmed that both Director Brown and Secretary Chertoff listened to his agency's briefing on Katrina's likely impact. Mayfield made repeated warnings about the hurricane and was quoted by the New Orleans Times-Picayune as saying, “We were briefing them (FEMA and DHS) way before landfall. It's not like this was a surprise. We had in the advisories that the levee could be topped.” It is alarming that, given this knowledge, FEMA thought it was appropriate to sit back and wait instead of aggressively preparing for the disaster.

Third, the vulnerability of the levees was well established. Last year, FEMA conducted a simulation involving the potential evacuation of New Orleans as a result of a Hurricane. For my years experts had been predicting that the levees could be breached by a hurricane and that the results would be disastrous, costing thousands of lives and billions of dollars. In 2001, the Army Corps of Engineers conducted a study and found that the levees in the region needed to be updated, raised, and the pumping systems modernized. In the event of a category 4 or 5 hurricane, like Hurricane Katrina, the levees would fail and the cities within the levees would be at risk of flooding.

Perhaps most troubling, Federal officials knew from news reports and from Mayor Ray Nagin's comments that tens of thousands of New Orleans residents would not be able to respond to the call to evacuate. Despite this understanding, no action was taken to accommodate those who could not evacuate their city.

I am deeply troubled by what this failure of leadership could portend for another disaster or attack. Some of FEMA's top positions have been staffed with individuals who have ample political and campaign experience, but virtually no understanding of how to prepare for and respond to a disaster of any magnitude. We expect State and local responders to be well trained and qualified. The same must be true of FEMA's leaders. There is no doubt that a new and better skilled leadership team at FEMA is required in order to best protect our Nation.

The tragic events caused by Hurricane Katrina have left hundreds of thousands of Americans with shattered homes and families and without food and water. I am committed to joining together to provide relief and to save as many lives as possible.

I have seen the compassion of Americans as volunteers, donations and financial assistance has flowed into the southeast region. We must now do our part to repair the damaged

region and assist in rebuilding the lives of many of our citizens. I look forward to working with the Administration and my colleagues in Congress to help the people in this devastated region.

IN HONOR OF UNITED STATES CONGRESSMAN BARNEY FRANK

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 13, 2005

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in tribute and recognition of Congressman BARNEY FRANK, as he is honored by the Cleveland Stonewall Democrats for his significant service on behalf of the citizens of the 4th Congressional District of Massachusetts.

Since being elected to the United States Congress in 1981, Congressman FRANK has blazed a courageous road fortified by civil rights and human rights for every American, regardless of their differences. His candor, compassion and convictions have consistently given a voice to the oppressed and vulnerable of our society and his work continues to raise the level of grace and dignity for all Americans by casting the pall of ignorance and discrimination into the light of truth and justice.

A highly regarded and respected attorney, activist and public servant, Congressman FRANK's constituency in Massachusetts has demonstrated their overwhelming faith and admiration for him by voting him back in office twelve times. He is the Senior Democrat on the Financial Services Committee and has worked tirelessly on behalf of vital issues that affect the well being of our society, including gay rights, health care, education, preservation of the arts and the steadfast protection of our civil liberties.

Mr. Speaker and colleagues, please join me in honor and recognition of my friend and colleague, Congressman BARNEY FRANK, for his immeasurable service and courageous leadership on behalf of the citizens of our country. Congressman FRANK's steadfast advocacy and unwavering focus on human rights is framed by excellence, heart, integrity and personal wisdom. Congressman FRANK continues to raise our society into the light of tolerance and truth, thereby elevating the lives of countless Americans into the realm of hope for a better tomorrow, and peace and justice for all, in the 4th District of Massachusetts and across our Nation.

CELEBRATING JOHN D. LEE

HON. JOHN J. DUNCAN, JR.

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 13, 2005

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, on September 15, John D. Lee, the President of the Boys & Girls Club of the Tennessee Valley, will be honored for 35 years of service. He is only the second President in the organization's 60-year history.

John went to work for the Boys & Girls Club of the Tennessee Valley as a Facility Director on September 16, 1970. He was later promoted to Assistant Executive Director and then to President and CEO.

The Boys & Girls Club of the Tennessee Valley has experienced amazing growth under his leadership. When John became President 26 years ago, it was operating only two Boys Clubs. Since then, he has led the organization through a merger with the Girls Club in 1990 and has overseen an expansion that now provides care and supervises activities for 7,845 members annually in 19 Club facilities in five East Tennessee counties (Knox, Blount, Scott, Loudon, and Fentress). The Boys & Girls Club of the Tennessee Valley employs a staff of 275 people and provides over 460,000 hot meals annually.

John's excellent leadership and service has not gone unnoticed either. In 1985, he received the Robert M. Sykes Award for Professional Excellence. In 1994, the U.S. Department of Justice presented him with the Directors Community Leadership Award.

The parent organization of the Boys & Girls Club is also very appreciative of John's work. On May 23, 2000, he received the Boys & Girls Clubs of America Service to Youth Award and Service Bar for 30 years of service to the Boys & Girls Club Movement, and in 2002, he received the Boys & Girls Clubs of America National Professional Service Award for Service to the National Movement.

John was born in Charleston, South Carolina, and is a graduate of Samford University. He has been a fine husband to his wife, Phyllis, and a great father to his three children, Amanda, Maria and Phillip.

The Boys & Girls Club of the Tennessee Valley is a leader in youth development and has touched the lives of countless young people throughout John's tenure. I have come to know John Lee well over the years, and I can assure you that he is a fine human being who has made East Tennessee a much better place to live.

Mr. Speaker, this great Nation owes a debt of gratitude to John D. Lee for his outstanding service as President of the Boys & Girls Club of the Tennessee Valley.

IN HONOR OF CHORBISHOP
BERNARD C. KHACHAN

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH
OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, September 13, 2005

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor and recognition of Chorbishop Bernard C. Khachan, upon the occasion of his retirement that follows 45 years of service, faith, ministry and leadership within the Maronite Catholic Church.

Chorbishop Khachan was ordained a Maronite Catholic Priest in Lebanon in 1960. In 1965, he journeyed to South America to serve for one year. After his ministry there was complete, he returned to Lebanon. During that time, leadership in Rome had established the first Maronite Diocese in the United States. Chorbishop Khachan was soon asked to serve as Pastor of a Maronite parish in a region of Pennsylvania where his relatives lived. With grace, dignity and an open heart, Chorbishop Khachan accepted the challenge of his new country. While always holding Lebanon alive in his life and close to his heart, Chorbishop Khachan also proudly embraced his new home in America. In 1972, Chorbishop

Khachan became a citizen of the United States. In 1987, he was appointed Pastor of St. Maron Church of Cleveland, Ohio, where he served with kindness, guidance, support and compassion for the past eighteen years.

Chorbishop Khachan's vision, concern for others and focus on uplifting our community has had a significant effect on countless members of the parish and on residents who live in the surrounding neighborhoods. His focus on restoring Maronite traditions and culture have succeeded, along with his successful restoration of the church building, social hall, parking lot and surrounding grounds. Chorbishop Khachan's insight and focus have served to increase the number of parishioners from 500 families to 1,300 families—a remarkable achievement.

Mr. Speaker and Colleagues, please join me in honor and recognition of Chorbishop Bernard C. Khachan, upon his retirement that highlights 45 years in faithful service to others. Though he will be greatly missed, his gifts of faith, leadership, guidance and compassion will forever illuminate hope and faith within St. Maron parish community of Cleveland. We wish him an abundance of health, happiness and peace as his journey guides him back to Lebanon.

CONGRATULATIONS TO SYSTEMS
AND ELECTRONICS, INC.

HON. JO ANN EMERSON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 13, 2005

Mrs. EMERSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate the Systems & Electronics, Inc. (SEI) Family of Medium Tactical Vehicles (FMTV) Paint Optimization Team as the recipients of the 2005 Missouri Team Quality Award (MTQA). SEI's West Plains, Missouri unit is a leader in defense systems and technology. The FMTV Paint Optimization Team is based at SEI's manufacturing facility in my Congressional District, and this team was instrumental in the development of protective armor placed on vehicles for the protection of Army personnel in Iraq.

The MTQA is awarded annually to teams which address and meet six standards: selecting the opportunity for a team, establishing and developing the team, measuring and analyzing the current situation, developing improvements, implementing improvements, and monitoring progress. The FMTV Paint Optimization Team successfully met each standard set forth and excelled in their production of protective armor.

The MTQA Recipient Awards Banquet and Presentation will occur at the Excellence in Missouri Conference in November, at which time the team will be officially recognized for their excellence in teamwork. Again, I send my warmest congratulations to SEI and the FMTV Paint Optimization Team, and I wish them continued success as they work to provide proven armor solutions to our men and women in uniform, both at home and abroad.

IN HONOR AND REMEMBRANCE OF
ELSIE FRANK

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 13, 2005

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor and remembrance of Elsie Frank, loving mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, dedicated public servant, community activist, and dear friend and mentor to many. Her passing marks a great loss for her family and friends, and also for the people of Boston, whom she served and inspired with the highest level of commitment, concern, integrity and honor.

The great care and love that Mrs. Frank showered on her family extended throughout Boston where she carried the torch of advocacy on behalf of many social justice issues, including issues affecting gay teens and gay adults, and concerns faced by the elderly of our society. An inspirational and well-known leader in Boston's Back Bay neighborhood, Mrs. Frank dedicated her time and talents in bolstering the strength of several gay advocacy groups, and senior advocacy groups as well. She worked with PFLAG (Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays), tirelessly lobbying state legislators to reinstate funding in support of PFLAG's Safe Schools program—a critical program that serves to educate, support and protect the well-being of gay teens in schools. In 2003, Mrs. Frank was honored with PFLAG's Voice of Truth Award.

Mr. Speaker and Colleagues, please join me in honor and remembrance of Elsie Frank, whose boundless joy for life served as a source of inspiration, protection and hope for Boston citizens of all ages. I extend my deepest condolences to her children, Barney, Ann, Doris and David; to her six grandchildren and ten great-grandchildren; and also to her extended family and many friends. Mrs. Frank's immeasurable heart and focus on human rights has forever touched the lives of countless individuals, young and old, gay and straight, and her unbridled spirit and vital work will soar forever in the hearts of those who knew and loved her well, especially her family, friends and the people of Boston's Back Bay.

A TRIBUTE TO KRISTIN YOUNG

HON. ERIC CANTOR

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 13, 2005

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Kristin Young. After more than a decade of service to the House of Representatives, she is moving home to Connecticut. She spent the last four and a half years working in my office, currently serving as my Director of Administration.

I am very appreciative of all of Kristin's hard work over the years. I have been fortunate to have one of the most talented, committed and effective staffers on Capitol Hill handling my schedule and greeting constituents with a smile each working day.

Kristin's strong work ethic was invaluable in making sure I was able to get the people's work done and meet and greet as many constituents as possible. Kristin's demonstrated ability