

We have rightfully focused on rescuing, reuniting and rebuilding, but we must also make sure to take care of our strained military families. The first and best definition of patriotism is keeping faith with those who wear our uniform. That means giving our troops the resources they need to keep safe while they are keeping us safe. And it means supporting our troops at home as well as abroad.

The Senate passed Hurricane Katrina tax relief legislation which looked out for our military reservists. More than 40 percent of military reservists and National Guard members suffer a pay cut when they are called to defend our nation, including those serving in the gulf coast today. These citizens serve nobly. They are much more than weekend warriors. Currently, there are over 140,000 reservists called up for active duty in the war against terrorism and over ten thousand of these reservists and guardsman are from Louisiana, Alabama, and Mississippi. Over 50,000 National Guard members have been called up to assist with Hurricane Katrina.

Many of these reservists are being hit with a double-whammy. After recent service in Iraq or Afghanistan, they are coming home to an area that has been devastated. The all-volunteer army depends on these reservists. They have been serving our country with distinction and pride for many years, and should not be penalized financially for their honorable service.

The Senate passed bill included an employee retention credit which provides a 40 percent tax credit for wages paid up to \$6,000 after August 28, 2005 and before December 31, 2005. This credit would help employers in the gulf coast who pay employees that are not able to work because the business was either damaged or destroyed and pay reservists and guardsmen that worked for them right up to the time before they were deployed.

Giving employers' incentives to pay reservist employees is the right thing to do. We have read about the Louisiana reservists who have come home from Iraq and found that they have lost everything. According to the Washington Post, nearly 550 of the Louisiana brigade's troops lost homes or loved ones or were otherwise affected by Katrina. The brigade is coming to the end of its rotation in Baghdad. This is exactly why we must provide a tax incentive that helps employers pay wages to these reservists. Businesses on the gulf coast want to do the right thing for their employees. But in the wake of this disaster, most just cannot afford it.

During negotiations between the House and the Senate on a final Hurricane Katrina tax package, the employee retention credit was scaled back. Wages paid to reservists are no longer eligible for the credit. This is the wrong message to be sending to our reservists who put their lives on the line defending our country.

Due to Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan, the military has placed greater training and participation demands on reservists, taking them away from their families and jobs. We should be doing all we can to help these reservists, and this includes providing tax incentives to their employers who provide extended pay coverage.

Providing tax incentives to help employers in the gulf coast impacted by Hurricane Katrina was a step in the right direction in helping reservists. For the last couple of years, Senator LANDRIEU and I have worked on legislation to provide assistance to businesses that employ reservists who have been called up to active duty. That legislation would provide tax credits to employers who pay reservists wages that are above their military pay and to help with the costs of hiring replacement workers. This provision passed the Senate twice last year, unfortunately, it was not enacted into law.

This past Monday, I chaired a field hearing of the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship entitled "Military Reservists and Small Business: Supporting our Military Families and their Patriotic Small Business Employers." The hearing focused on the financial difficulties reservists who work for small businesses and their families face when they are called up to active duty.

Lieutenant Colonel Sam Poulten told his compelling story. He was a partner in a real estate firm and he received a three-day notice that he was being called-up to serve as a medical Army reservist in Iraq. Lieutenant Colonel Poulten spent 13 months away from his business, which saw a loss in sales due to his absence. His wife had to resort to using credit cards to pay for basic necessities. Lieutenant Colonel Poulten is one of the many examples of a reservist whose family and business faced financial struggles due to long mobilization.

Captain Marshall Hanson, USNR (Ret), Legislative Director of the Reserve Officers Association, discussed the consequences of mobilization and demobilization on military families and employers. He stated:

Families and employers play a large role in a citizen-warrior's decision on whether or not to enlist and to remain in the military. Employer pressure is cited as one of the top reasons why reservists quit military service.

We left military reservists who were personally impacted by Katrina out of this tax bill and this is wrong. After Monday's field hearing, I am convinced more than ever that we need to provide tax credits to small employers who pay reservists above their military wages and to help with the cost of a temporary replacement employee.

I thank Chairman GRASSLEY and Ranking Member BAUCUS for working with me to include wages paid to eligible reservists and guardsman as part of the employee retention tax credit. Unfortunately, we were not able to have

this provision included in the final package.

I will continue to work on providing tax incentives for small business employers who have military reservists as employees. We must pass these tax incentives. If we do not make it easier for small businesses to employ military reservists, we will see a substantial decline in our reserve forces. According to published reports, the Army National Guard has missed its recruiting targets every month this year and appears certain to miss its third straight annual recruiting goal. Our military depends on these civilian-warriors. We need to recognize that the needs of our reserve forces are different than the needs of the career military. Our reservists did not sign-up for active duty, and they have been faced with long-term call ups and multiple call ups.

I do not understand why we cannot pass legislation which provides tax incentive to help employer's of civilian-warriors when we continue to pass tax cuts that just benefit the wealthy.

We need to do all that we can to help our reservists and the businesses that employ them to ensure that our great tradition of citizen soldiers does not fade or end because of the effect service can have on work and family in this time of crisis.

Mr. BENNETT. I ask unanimous consent the Senate concur in the House amendment to the Senate amendment and that the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

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#### UNITED STATES COAST GUARD RESPONSE TO HURRICANE KATRINA

Mr. BENNETT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 246, which was submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 246) to express the sense of the Senate regarding the missions and performance of the United States Coast Guard in responding to Hurricane Katrina.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. BENNETT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 246) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 246

Whereas the United States Coast Guard has been charged by Congress with missions central to protecting the lives and well-being

of individuals and communities in the United States, including protecting homeland security, conducting search and rescue of lives in danger, protecting marine environments from pollution, maintaining maritime safety and aids to navigation, enforcing Federal fishing laws, and intercepting illegal drugs and migrants before they reach our shores;

Whereas the Coast Guard anticipated the potential for significant loss of life and property as Hurricane Katrina approached Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama and made landfall on August 29, 2005 and, in advance of the storm, relocated its personnel, vessels, and aircraft out of harm's way;

Whereas Hurricane Katrina made landfall as a Category 4 hurricane with winds reaching 175 miles per hour and massive storm surges, the combination of which left a trail of devastation unprecedented on United States soil, as it leveled countless homes, businesses, and other structures, displaced millions of people from their communities, and otherwise made coastal urban and rural areas unliveable;

Whereas the Coast Guard immediately deployed nearly 1,000 personnel, including captains, crew, pilots, rescue swimmers, pollution response teams, and other specialists and reservists, from stations all over the country, to coastal areas affected by the hurricane, for a total regional force size of approximately 3,619 personnel;

Whereas Coast Guard personnel who had never personally worked together before began to work as teams to conduct and coordinate search and rescue operations while Hurricane Katrina continued to bear down on the central Gulf of Mexico shoreline;

Whereas the Coast Guard rescued or evacuated 33,544 individuals as of September 21, 2005, a number that represents eight times the number of lives saved by the Coast Guard in an average year;

Whereas three Coast Guard pollution response Strike Teams responded to 1,129 pollution incidents as of September 20, 2005, which include total discharges of more than 7 million gallons of oil, unknown amounts of sewage, and unknown quantities of other toxic chemicals, and the Coast Guard has contained or otherwise closed 426 of these cases;

Whereas Coast Guard buoy tenders have responded to 964 discrepancies in buoys and other aids to navigation and have restored 39 of 48 critical aids to navigation as of September 21, 2005;

Whereas the costs of responding to Hurricane Katrina have depleted the Coast Guard's operations and maintenance budget for fiscal year 2005 and are rapidly depleting its budget for fiscal year 2006, and the Coast Guard's costs associated with this hurricane are anticipated to exceed \$500 million;

Whereas the Coast Guard performed its hurricane response missions largely with outdated legacy assets, increasing the wear and tear on these assets while foregoing regularly scheduled maintenance activities in the interest of sustaining its surge in life-saving operations;

Whereas the Coast Guard already conducts its missions with the 40th oldest fleet of the 42 nations with Coast Guard or naval fleets;

Whereas the Coast Guard's program, known as Deepwater, for modernizing its fleet of vessels and aircraft, is vital for increasing the capabilities in performing its missions in the face of ever-increasing natural and human threats;

Whereas the Deepwater program requires sustained Federal funding commitments in order for the citizens of the United States to realize the benefits of the Coast Guard having state-of-the-art vessels, aircraft, technologies, and interoperable communication equipment;

Whereas in addition to covering operation and maintenance costs of a rapidly aging fleet, the Coast Guard needs to rebuild several Coast Guard facilities in Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama, including Station Gulfport which was completely destroyed and where personnel are now working in trailers amidst the ruins of that station;

Whereas the Coast Guard needs a strong Federal funding commitment to ensure that all of its unexpected expenditures during its response to Katrina are reimbursed;

Whereas more than 700 Coast Guard personnel stationed in the Gulf region lost their homes and all personal property and are now living on overcrowded Coast Guard vessels and in makeshift shelters;

Whereas before, during, and after the landfall of Hurricane Katrina, Coast Guard personnel exhibited determination and a full commitment to their missions, and the Coast Guard has proven to be one of the most resourceful and capable services in the United States government;

Whereas before, during, and after the landfall of Hurricane Katrina, Coast Guard personnel performed their missions with the highest level of bravery and self-sacrifice, and their effectiveness in performing their missions is unparalleled in the United States government;

Whereas the Coast Guard has an operational and command structure that allowed it to quickly take a leadership role in saving lives, without waiting for instruction or permission to act;

Whereas the Coast Guard's operational and command structure continues to serve as a model for other agencies that need to respond quickly to large-scale natural and man-made disasters;

Whereas the Coast Guard's effective leadership in responding to the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, and the appointment of Vice Admiral Thad Allen as the primary Federal officer in charge of this response, is helping to restore the public's confidence in the Federal response effort: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved, by the Senate That it is the sense of the Senate that—*

(1) the United States Coast Guard should receive Congress's highest commendation for its tremendous and highly effective response to the events surrounding Hurricane Katrina;

(2) the United States Congress should commit to providing the Coast Guard with the resources it needs to modernize and maintain its fleet of vessels and aircraft; and

(3) the Administration should ensure that the Coast Guard receives sufficient funding to cover its unexpected operational and capital costs associated with Hurricane Katrina.

#### MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME—S. 1745 AND S. 1748

Mr. BENNETT. Mr. President, I understand there are two bills at the desk, and I ask for their first reading en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the titles of the bills.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1745) to expand the availability of resources under the Community Services Block Grant Act for individuals affected by Hurricane Katrina.

A bill (S. 1748) to establish a congressional commission to examine the Federal, State, and local response to the devastation wrought by Hurricane Katrina in the Gulf Region of the United States especially in the States of Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and other areas impacted in the aftermath and make immediate corrective measures to improve such responses in the future.

Mr. BENNETT. Mr. President, I now ask for their second reading and, in order to place the bills on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I object to my own request, all en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

#### ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2005

Mr. BENNETT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 9:30 a.m. on Thursday, September 22. I further ask consent that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved, and the Senate then resume consideration of H.R. 2744, the Agriculture appropriations bill; provided further that the Senate proceed to a vote in relation to the Dayton amendment No. 1844, to be followed by a vote in relation to the Jeffords amendment No. 1796, with no amendments in order to the amendments prior to the vote. I further ask consent that following those votes, the bill be read a third time and the Senate proceed to a vote on passage of the bill, with no intervening action or debate. I also ask consent that following the vote, the Senate insist on its amendment, request a conference with the House, and the Chair then be authorized to appoint conferees on the part of the Senate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### PROGRAM

Mr. BENNETT. Mr. President, tomorrow, the Senate will return to the consideration of the Agriculture appropriations bill. Under a previous order, we will start voting shortly after 9:30, with the final vote on passage. There could be as many as three votes in the morning. Following those votes, the majority leader has indicated that we will proceed to the Military Construction bill. Additional votes will occur on Thursday as we try to finish that appropriations bill as well. Again, Senators are to be reminded that a series of rollcall votes will begin tomorrow morning shortly after 9:30 a.m.

#### ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9:30 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. BENNETT. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand in adjournment under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 8:36 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, September 22, 2005, at 9:30 a.m.