

thoughts and prayers. I hope all the people of Northwest Florida and our Nation do the same.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ANDER CRENSHAW

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 16, 2007

Mr. CRENSHAW. Madam Speaker, on Monday, May 14, 2007, I was unable to cast several votes because I was meeting with Forest Service and fire fighting personnel to assess the hazardous situation and current evacuation of several areas in the Fourth Congressional District threatened by wildfires.

Had I been present, I would have voted "no" on rollcall 342, the D.C. Tuition Assistance Grant Program Reauthorization; "yea" on rollcall 343, Supporting National Day of Remembrance for Murder Victims; and "yea" on rollcall 344, Recognizing National AmeriCorps Week.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ELTON GALLEGLY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 16, 2007

Mr. GALLEGLY. Madam Speaker, I was unable to make the following rollcall votes on May 14, 2007:

H.R. 1124, To extend the District of Columbia College Access Act of 1999, On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass, I would have voted "nay."

H. Res. 223, Supporting the goals and ideals of a National Day of Remembrance for Murder Victims, On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Agree, I would have voted "aye."

H. Res. 385, Recognizing National AmeriCorps Week, On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Agree, I would have voted "aye."

INTRODUCING THE NATIONAL AMUSEMENT PARK RIDE SAFETY ACT OF 2007

HON. EDWARD J. MARKEY

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 16, 2007

Mr. MARKEY. Madam Speaker, Memorial Day is the beginning of the season when American families take their children to our amusement parks for a day of fun and sun. Unfortunately, it is also the case that over 75 percent of the serious injuries suffered on these rides occur between the months of May and September. Most of America thinks that the rides at these parks are subject to oversight by the Nation's top consumer safety watchdog—the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC). But this is not true. The industry was subject to federal safety regulation, but in 1981 it succeeded in carving out a special-interest political exemption in the law—the so-called Roller Coaster Loophole.

It is time to put the safety of our children first—it is time to close the Roller Coaster

Loophole. Today I am introducing the National Amusement Park Ride Act to restore safety oversight to a largely unregulated industry. I am pleased to be joined in this effort by Representatives JAN SCHAKOWSKY (D-IL), CHARLIE RANGEL (D-NY), JIM MCGOVERN (D-MA), EL-EANOR HOLMES NORTON (D-DC), CAROLYN MALONEY (D-NY) and ANNA ESHOO (D-CA).

"Fixed" or "fixed-site" rides are found predominantly in destination theme parks. When an accident occurs on such rides, the law actually prevents the CPSC from even setting foot in the park to find out what happened. In some States, an investigation may occur, but in many, there is literally no regulatory oversight at all. And no matter how diligent a particular state might be, there is no substitute for Federal oversight of an industry where park visitors often come from out-of-state; a single manufacturer will sell versions of the same ride to park operators in many different States; and no state has the jurisdiction, resources or mission to ensure that the safety lessons learned within its borders are shared systematically with every other State.

Although the overall risk of death on an amusement park ride is very small, it is not zero. Sixty-four deaths have occurred on amusement park rides since 1987, and over two-thirds occur on "fixed-site" rides in our theme parks. In August 1999, 4 deaths occurred on roller coasters in just one week, "one of the most calamitous weeks in the history of America's amusement parks," according to U.S. News and World Report:

Every one of these is an unspeakable horror for the families, and every one of them deserves to be investigated by a Federal safety expert with the knowledge and the power to ensure that what happened at the accident site does not get repeated in other states.

It is simply inexcusable that when a loved one dies or is seriously injured on these rides, there is no system in place to ensure that the ride is investigated, the causes determined, and the flaws fixed, not just on that ride, but on every similar ride in every other State. The reason this system does not exist is the Roller Coaster Loophole.

The industry attempts to justify its special-interest exemption by pretending that there is no risk in riding machines that carry human beings 70, 80 or 90 miles an hour. The rides are very short, and most people are not injured. But in fact, the number of fatalities per passenger mile on roller coasters is higher than on passenger trains, passenger buses, and passenger planes. The National Safety Council uses a standard method of comparing risk of injury per distance traveled. Riding on a roller coaster is generally safer than driving a car, but is not generally safer than riding a passenger bus, train or airplane:

Fatalities are just the tip of problem, however. Broken bones, gashes, and other serious injuries have been rising much faster than attendance. The CPSC is prohibited from requiring the submission of injury data directly from ride operators, so it is forced to fall back on an indirect method, the National Electronic Injury Surveillance System (NEISS), which gathers information from a statistical sample of hospital emergency rooms and then estimates national numbers. Nevertheless, NEISS has been gathering these statistics systematically over many years, so that trends become clear over time.

Beginning in 1996, a sharp upward trend can be seen in hospital emergency room visits

by passengers on unregulated "fixed" rides—the category of rides exempt from CPSC regulation under the Roller Coaster Loophole. These injuries soared 96 percent over the next 5 years. Meanwhile, such emergency room visits were falling for passengers on rides that the CPSC still regulates.

The theme park industry likes to tell the public that its rides are safer than the mobile rides because they are overseen by a permanent park staff, but according to this independent government safety agency report, the mobile parks have less of an injury problem than the theme parks.

For the most part, these rides are designed, operated and ridden safely. But clearly, the margin for error is much narrower for a child on a ride traveling at 100 mph than on a ride traveling 50 mph. Children often do foolish things, and the operators themselves are often teenagers. People make mistakes. The design of these rides must anticipate that their patrons will act like children, because they often are children.

The bill we are introducing today will close the loophole that prevents effective Federal safety oversight of amusement park rides. It would, therefore, restore to the CPSC the standard safety jurisdiction over "fixed-site" amusement park rides that it used to have before the Roller Coaster Loophole was adopted. There would no longer be an artificial and unjustifiable split between unregulated "fixed-site" rides and regulated "mobile" rides. When a family traveled to a park anywhere in the United States, a mother or father would know that their children were being placed on a ride that was subject to basic safety regulation by the CPSC.

It would restore CPSC's authority to investigate accidents; develop and enforce action plans to correct defects, and act as a national clearinghouse for accident and defect data.

The bill would also authorize appropriations of \$500,000 annually to enable the CPSC to carry out the purposes of the Act.

The bill I am introducing today is supported by the Nation's leading consumer-protection advocates, including Saferparks.org, the Consumer Federation of America, the U.S. Public Interest Research Group, the National SAFE KIDS Campaign, and Kids in Danger.

I urge my colleagues to join us in this effort to make this the safest summer ever in our theme parks. Let's pass the National Amusement Park Ride Safety Act.

CONGRATULATING THE DAYTON NAACP YOUTH COUNCIL

HON. MICHAEL R. TURNER

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 16, 2007

Mr. TURNER. Madam Speaker, it is my pleasure to recognize and congratulate the members of the Dayton, OH branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, NAACP, for its positive accomplishments on behalf of our young people.

On Saturday, April 14, 2007, the Dayton NAACP Youth Council, under the guidance of Youth Advisor Barbara Mack, hosted its first annual Youth Leadership Summit 100 at Sinclair Community College. The NAACP Youth Council is an organization involving some

67,000 youth nationwide, whose mission is to educate, motivate, and inspire civic-minded young people to become effective community leaders. The Dayton chapter is the first NAACP Youth Council in the State of Ohio to host an annual youth leadership summit. The theme of this year's event is: "In It To Win It." The summit consisted of a series of panel discussions to inform and educate the community on timely topics ranging from violence and drug activity in the community, to health, political action and finances, faith and the community, and youth with disabilities.

Under the leadership of Barbara Mack, the Dayton NAACP Youth Council has earned recognition from the national organization for its recent accomplishments. The Dayton chapter ranked first among NAACP Youth Councils in the seven-State Midwestern region for signing up the most new members. The recruitment of 122 new members increased the total membership to over 600—strong, giving the council more clout at the national level. As a reward for their efforts, 15 members of the Youth Council attended the 38th annual NAACP Image Awards held at the Shrine Auditorium on March 2, 2007 in Los Angeles, which was broadcast live on FOX.

I am proud to acknowledge the Dayton NAACP Youth Council on the success of its inaugural Leadership Summit, and congratulate Barbara Mack for her leadership on behalf of the young people of Ohio's Third Congressional District.

HONORING THE MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION IN PASSAIC COUNTY AND THE DISTINGUISHED HONOREES OF ITS 4TH ANNUAL VISION AND ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS DINNER

HON. SCOTT GARRETT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 16, 2007

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend the Mental Health Association in Passaic County for its outstanding dedication to the well-being of the people of Passaic. For two decades, the committed staff and volunteers of this organization have provided County residents with the services and support that they need to take care of themselves. From a listening ear to prescription drugs and therapy to education and public awareness efforts, the Mental Health Association serves Passaic residents from childhood to retirement, often without payment for all they provide.

At their Fourth Annual Vision and Achievement Awards Dinner tonight, the Mental Health Association in Passaic County will honor seven tremendous citizens whose individual efforts also work to support the well-being of Passaic residents. Each, in his or her own way, helps to make the quality of life in this North Jersey community top-notch, and I wish to recognize them all for their outstanding accomplishments:

Mohamed El Filali, Outreach Director at the Islamic Center of Passaic County and the Muslim Chaplain at the Passaic County Jail.

Sister Gloria Perez, Executive Director of Eva's Kitchen and Sheltering Programs.

Dr. Steven D. Rose, President of Passaic County Community College.

Dr. Sybil C. Schreiber, Executive Director of the Passaic County Mental Clinic.

Jerry Speziale, Passaic County Sheriff.

Jack McElligott, a licensed clinical social worker and member of the Board of Directors of the Mental Health Association in Passaic County.

Linda Shapiro, a loving wife and mother and volunteer for the Mental Health Association in Passaic County.

It is an honor to recognize the public service of these seven individuals and all the men and women who make the Mental Health Association in Passaic County such an important part of the Passaic community.

INTRODUCTION OF THE GLOBAL WARMING WILDLIFE SURVIVAL ACT

HON. NORMAN D. DICKS

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 16, 2007

Mr. DICKS. Madam Speaker, as the chairman of the Interior Appropriations Subcommittee, I am very much aware of the need to take action to address global warming, and I recently held a hearing to examine the impact of climate change on many of the agencies and resources under my subcommittee's jurisdiction. At the beginning of that hearing, I stated my belief that climate change may be the emerging issue of our time. Climate change may alter the face of our planet in ways we cannot yet comprehend, and I believe it is our responsibility not only to do as much as possible to halt or slow it, but also to do everything in our power to protect the earth's resources from its impacts so that future generations will be able to benefit from them as we and past generations have done.

Our Nation's wildlife is one critically important resource that is particularly vulnerable to climate change and is also a resource that is a fundamental part of America's history and character. Conservation of wildlife and wildlife habitat is a core value shared by all Americans.

America's wildlife is vital to our Nation for many reasons. Wildlife conservation provides economic, social, educational, recreational, emotional, and spiritual benefits. The economic value of hunting, fishing, and wildlife-associated recreation alone is estimated to contribute \$100 billion annually to the U.S. economy. Wildlife habitat, including forests, grasslands, riparian lands, wetlands, rivers and other water bodies, is an essential component of the American landscape, and is protected and valued by Federal, State, and local governments, tribes, private landowners, and conservation organizations.

Unfortunately, it is becoming increasingly apparent that the effect of climate change on wildlife will be profound. The recently released reports from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change IPCC have made clear that global warming is occurring, that it is exacerbated by human activity, and that it will have devastating impacts on wildlife and wildlife habitat. Wildlife is already suffering from massive changes in habitat, particularly in the arctic, and shifts in ranges and timing of migration and breeding cycles. Continued global warming could lead to large-scale species

extinctions. These impacts add to and compound the adverse effects wildlife and its habitat already suffer from land development, energy development, road construction, and other human activities, and from other threats such as invasive species and disease.

According to the IPCC, global warming and associated sea level rise will continue for centuries due to the timescales associated with climate processes and feedbacks, even if greenhouse gas concentrations are stabilized now or in the very near future. I believe that, as a nation, we must craft responses and mechanisms now to help wildlife navigate the threats caused by global warming.

To conserve wildlife in the face of the far-reaching effects of global warming, there is a need for a coordinated, national strategy based on sound scientific information to ensure that impacts on wildlife that span government jurisdictions are effectively addressed and to ensure that Federal funds are prudently committed. Ensuring strategic and efficient allocation of funding is something of particular interest to me as an appropriator.

Today I am introducing the "Global Warming Wildlife Survival Act" as a first step in ensuring our Nation is using all possible means to help America's wildlife survive the impacts of global warming.

The "Global Warming Wildlife Survival Act" has four elements:

First, it includes a congressional declaration of national policy recognizing that global warming is having profound impacts on wildlife and its habitat and committing the Federal Government, in cooperation with State, tribal and local governments and other concerned organizations, to use all practicable means to assist wildlife in adapting to and surviving the effects of global warming.

Second, the bill requires development of a national strategy for assisting wildlife impacted by global warming developed by the Secretary of the Interior, in consultation with the Secretaries of Agriculture and Commerce, States, tribes, local governments, conservation organizations and scientists, and coordinated with State wildlife action plans, the national fish habitat action plan, and other relevant wildlife conservation plans. A committee of scientists is established to advise the Secretary in development of the national strategy. The Secretaries of the Interior, Agriculture and Commerce are charged with implementing the national strategy on Federal lands and in conservation programs they administer.

Third, the bill will support improved science capacity for Federal agencies to respond to global warming, including establishment of a National Global Warming and Wildlife Science Center in the United States Geological Survey, and enhanced science capacity in Federal land management and wildlife agencies.

Finally, the bill directs strategic allocation of funding for implementation of the national strategy and State and tribal actions to enhance wildlife resilience to global warming. The Act allocates Federal funding to implement the National Strategy 45 percent to Federal land management agencies, 25 percent to federally funded and implemented fish and wildlife programs, and 30 percent to States. I am very pleased to say that the State and tribal funding allocated in the bill is made available through the State and Tribal Wildlife Grants Program. The bill also authorizes the State and Tribal Wildlife Grants Program