

by Congress in December 2005, the NMDP has been entrusted to operate the C.W. Bill Young Cell Transplantation Program. The size of the registry will increase, the science of transplantation will advance, and we will continue to develop more services to support patients and families as they cope with a life-threatening disease.

Madam Speaker, I would urge my colleagues to join me in thanking Pat for her dedication to the program and the patients we serve. She has made a difference in the lives of thousands of patients and families and for that, they and we will be forever grateful. In closing let me wish Pat all the best as she closes one very long and important chapter in her life and embarks upon a new and yet uncharted journey.

THE MOODY TROJANS

HON. SOLOMON P. ORTIZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 14, 2007

Mr. ORTIZ. Madam Speaker, I rise today to boast about the tremendous accomplishment of the Moody High School Trojans, winner of the 2007 Texas High School Class 4A Baseball Championship, just this past weekend.

Since 2000, the Trojans have reached the State Championship 3 times and are now walking away with the second of 2 State trophies in just 4 years.

Heading into the playoffs ranked No. 1 in the State, the Moody players lived up to their reputation of maximizing their offense, with the help of exceptional pitching from MVP Championship Pitcher Miguel Gonzalez. The Trojans controlled the championship game with 3 homeruns and crushed their opponents 9–1.

Having learned humility from past defeats, the young men of Moody continue to illustrate the South Texas baseball family tradition—they remain a brotherhood of young athletes. With inspiration, hard work, and faith, these players exemplify the “Moody magic” that has brought the Trojans to State victory once again, ending the season with a record of 39–3–1.

Having earned national recognition, this 4A baseball team from Corpus Christi has been ranked seventh in the Nation by Collegiate Baseball’s high school poll. Producing both extraordinary athletes and spectacular leaders, seven of the Moody players have been chosen to fill the 10 available spots on the all-State tournament team.

Recognized for their great accomplishments by the community after they tasted victory, the Trojan players were received by crowds of roaring fans as they arrived home, led by their head coach, Corky Gallegos, who paraded their championship trophy to their high school for display.

What is more remarkable than their success in the State championship again is the invaluable lessons that high school sports teach these young men. They learned that winning is one thing, but winners on the field are made from teamwork and faith; winners in life are those who master the fundamentals, never lose their faith, and put their whole effort into all they do.

I ask the House of Representatives to join me today in commending the following play-

ers: Joey Mendoza, Christian Gallegos, Rudy Flores, Rudy Grande, Andrew Perez, Leeroy Hinojosa, Marc A. Gomez, Miguel Gonzalez, Thomas Tovar, Jeff Rousseau, Raul Galvan, Andrew Cantu, James T. Ramirez, Gabriel Morales, Adrian J. Longoria, Justin Meza, Ryan Villarreal, Elias Rodriguez, Josiah Rodriguez, Orlando Perales, Ronnie Flores, Dan Flores, Jacob Perales, Marcus Montez, Arnold J. Franco, Justin Gabrillo, Michael Montez, Randy Rodriguez, Abraham Figueroa, and Kalvin Roberts. These special young athletes were led by Head Coach Corky Gallegos, Assistant Coach Richard Diaz, and Assistant Coach Mike Leal.

This outstanding group of young champions representing the “Moody magic” have learned—and lived—the most important lessons of competition, faith and dignity. Madam Speaker, these young people have inspired us and made us exceptionally proud.

IN RECOGNITION OF CAROLYN LOTT

HON. DENNIS A. CARDOZA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 14, 2007

Mr. CARDOZA. Madam Speaker, it is with the greatest pleasure that I rise today to honor a shepherd of California’s Central Valley, Carolyn Lott. I can think of no one person who has worked harder for their community and on a wider range of issues than Carolyn. As she prepares to retire from years of dedicated service, I’d like to share a little about my good friend.

Carolyn Lott has been a guiding light on the valley’s path of social and economic growth. A champion of the Highway 99 Corridor, Carolyn has ensured much needed State capital be directed to this main transportation artery through the Central Valley. Her latest position as Senior Program Manager for the Great Valley Center in Modesto, California has allowed her to continue promoting this agenda, as well as incorporate it into a blueprint plan for the region. In addition to her responsibilities with this position, she also manages the project work within New Valley Connexions, a program that focuses on helping to strengthen and diversify the regional economy of the Central Valley by advancing the use of new technologies and positioning the region to be more competitive in the 21st century.

Prior to Carolyn’s current position, she was affiliated with the Great Valley Center as a consultant coordinating a nine-county regional effort to organize sectors of the San Joaquin Valley around development of voluntary measures to help improve air quality. She successfully guided the development of 14 sectors, corresponding working groups, a draft air quality improvement plan, and an inaugural summit with more than 400 attendees. Additionally, through both local efforts and a trip to Washington, DC, congressional assistance for the effort was obtained both through endorsement of the project and actual funding commitments.

Through the Great Valley Center, Carolyn continued her affiliation with the Center for Collaborative Policy in Sacramento, California. CCP is a joint program of California State University, Sacramento and McGeorge School of

Law and offers facilitation for public policy development. Carolyn has completed the sixth year of contract services providing facilitation to the Department of Water Resources for San Joaquin County. During her tenure, the county and a joint powers authority have moved from a stalemate position to recipients of State funding for water supply projects and are currently developing an integrated regional water management plan to assure water reliability and to help restore the significantly depleted underground aquifer. Also with CCP, Carolyn was both project manager and facilitator for the Smart Growth Local Elected Officials Roundtables, a joint project of the Governor’s Office of Planning and Research, the California State Association of Counties, the Local Government Commission, and the League of California Cities.

Prior to her work as a facilitator and program manager, Carolyn (Ratto) Lott was a councilmember in Turlock, California. During this time she was actively involved in numerous policy development activities through both the League of California Cities and the National League of Cities. She played a leadership role as president of the LCC, board of directors member for both organizations, and chair of numerous committees and special projects, including chairing the National League of Cities Leadership Training Council. She has also chaired the California Cities, Counties, and Schools State Partnership and still serves on their board of directors, and served as a Governor’s appointee on the Commission for Local Governance in the 21st Century. She has completed a decade of service on the Turlock Chamber of Commerce Leadership Steering Committee and has spent more than half a decade as an advisory board member for California State University, Stanislaus. She also completed three terms as a board member for Emanuel Medical Center in Turlock. Currently she serves as an advisory committee member of the Collaborative Governance Initiative, part of the League of California Cities’ Institute for Local Government, as a board member for the California Budget Project, and on the Advisory Committee for the College of Business Administration, California State University, Stanislaus.

Carolyn’s efforts on behalf of the Central Valley have left an indelible mark. There is no doubt that future generations will benefit greatly because of Carolyn’s foresight and commonsense plans of action. As she prepares to make more time for herself and her husband, Donald, I trust she will continue to be a great example to all aspiring stewards of our community.

INTRODUCTION OF THE ALARM CUSTOMER VOIP NOTIFICATION ACT

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 14, 2007

Mr. ENGEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to encourage my colleagues’ strong support for the Alarm Customer VoIP Notification Act, which I am introducing today. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank my friend and colleague on the Telecommunications and the Internet Subcommittee, Congressman CLIFF

STEARNS, who joins me as an original cosponsor of this bill.

Currently, burglar and fire alarm signals are transmitted from the home or business to a central monitoring station over the traditional phone line system. In many cases, Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) phone systems will become a substitute for the current land line systems. When a VoIP (broadband) phone system is improperly installed, by either a consumer or a cable provider, there is a significant risk that existing alarm panels will be bypassed, and will no longer be able to send an alert to the alarm monitoring station.

Unless the consumer is notified and the system is properly tested, they will be unaware they no longer have alarm services they are relying on to protect their life, health, safety, and property. Approximately half of the 26 million alarm consumers will learn that their systems are no longer operable when a monthly automatic test is run on their system. However, even those with self-testing systems will be without alarm monitoring services for up to a month. The other half of Americans who have older legacy systems, which cannot be automatically tested by a central monitoring station, will only learn they no longer have alarm services during an emergency. To make matters worse, seniors with home health alert systems, Personal Emergency Response Systems—PERS, will be unaware that they have lost their health lifeline.

Consumers who utilize alarm systems have invested significantly to ensure that they have the security that burglar, health, safety, and fire alarm monitored systems provide. They should be given the information needed to ensure continued alarm monitoring services.

That is why I have introduced the Alarm Customer VoIP Notification Act. This bill requires that before a VoIP system is activated, the customer be notified that their alarm system needs to be tested and that they need to notify the alarm monitoring company. Again, I urge my colleagues' support and cosponsorship of this important consumer protection bill.

THE INTRODUCTION OF THE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE SYSTEM OPERATIONS ENHANCEMENT ACT

HON. DON YOUNG

OF ALASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 14, 2007

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Madam Speaker, ten years ago, the Congress enacted a landmark law known as the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act. This measure created for the first time an organic statute and a mission for the National Wildlife Refuge System. I was proud to have sponsored that legislation and pleased that President Bill Clinton signed into law October 9, 1997.

National wildlife refuges are undeniably unique. They are the only Federal land system established explicitly to conserve wildlife and their habitat. They also provide protection for 260 endangered and threatened species.

A great deal has happened to the refuge system during the past decade. For instance, the size of this unique system of Federal lands has increased from 93 million to 96 million acres and the number of individual refuge

units has grown from 511 to 547. In fact, there is now a National Wildlife Refuge within all 50 States and the U.S. territories and they are within an hour's drive of most major cities.

Four years ago, the National Wildlife Refuge System celebrated the 100th anniversary of the establishment of the first refuge at Pelican Island, FL, by President Theodore R. Roosevelt. The fundamental purpose of that designation was to protect native wildlife and that goal has not changed for the past 104 years. The unambiguous mission of the system: "Is to administer a national network of lands and waters for the conservation, management, and where appropriate, restoration of the fish, wildlife and plant resources and their habitats within the United States for the benefit of present and future generations of Americans."

In preparation for the bicentennial, Congress appropriated an historic figure of nearly \$300 million dollars in FY03 and FY04 for refuge operations. This was \$50 million more than had ever been allocated for this essential function.

Sadly, this level was not sustained and refuge operations funding was restored to pre-bicentennial figures soon after the birthday candles were extinguished and the commemorative banners were placed in storage. This appropriation level has remained stagnant for the past 4 years.

While this year's budget contains added revenues for the National Park Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's request was grossly inadequate. By way of comparison, my colleagues should know that the National Park Service has 20,000 full-time employees, it manages 390 park units and the system is comprised of 85 million acres of which 52.9 million are located in my State of Alaska. By contrast, the Fish and Wildlife Service has 3,687 full-time refuge employees, it manages 547 refuges and the system is comprised of 96 million acres. In FY08, the Fish and Wildlife Service requested \$394.8 million for the Refuge System, while the Park Service requested nearly five times as much, or \$1.9 billion.

While funding for the National Wildlife Refuge System has remained flat, uncontrollable expenses including employee costs and benefits, GSA-rental office space, fuel and energy continue to rapidly grow. In fact, the Fish and Wildlife Service estimates that these costs are about \$40 million each year. It, therefore, does not take a certified public accountant to understand that no entity can continue to operate year-after-year without at least offsetting cost-of-living expenses.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is no exception to this rule. As a result of these declining resources, the director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service instructed each of the service's regional directors to implement cost savings or "workforce plans." These plans have now been prepared, submitted, and approved. The net result is that unless an additional \$15 million in new funding is provided each year, the service will lose 439 full-time refuge positions by September 30, 2008. While these reductions represent 20 percent of their total refuge workforce, these vacancies are not uniform throughout the system. For example, the service will lose 28 percent of its refuge staff in Washington State, 29 percent in Idaho and Kansas, 38 percent in Indiana and a staggering 56 percent in Wyoming.

Without these human resources, the 40 million people who visit at least one refuge each

year will find many refuges overgrown, rapidly spreading invasive species, understaffed refuge headquarters, an absence of law enforcement personnel, abolished environmental education programs, and significantly less opportunities to enjoy wildlife dependent recreation which includes hunting, fishing, wildlife observation and photography.

Those who visit a wildlife refuge enjoy the experience because they are a haven from our fast paced lives. These wildlands inspire us and keep us connected to the natural world. The American people deserve the finest refuge system in the world and not one that is being stretched beyond its capacity. In addition to not filling vacancies, the public will find that 88 refuges are closed and an increasing number of 188 refuges throughout the country are understaffed. In short, visitors will travel hundreds of miles to see a refuge and will find much to their frustration that the front gate is locked and no one is there to describe to them the wonders of each of unique place.

Refuges are also important economic engines. According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in 2004, refuge visitors generated nearly \$1.4 billion for regional economies, they support 24,000 private sector jobs and \$454 million in employment income was generated.

According to the Cooperative Alliance for Refuge Enhancement, CARE, "the National Wildlife Refuge System faces a crippling conservation deficit." The best illustration of this shortfall was described by the northeast regional director who noted that: "In three years, 74 percent of the national wildlife refuges would be operating either 'in the red' or at crisis levels: In five years, 89 percent; and in seven years, 93 percent."

Within that region, you have the Mason Neck National Wildlife Refuge in northern Virginia. according to a recent article, "A dwindling budget, staff cuts, invasive weeds and crime are bearing down on the refuge, leaving some advocates wondering how visitor services or the health of the land the species depend on will survive". There is no question that the refuge system is in crisis and unless additional revenues are forthcoming this problem will be exacerbated in the near future.

In an effort to provide those additional revenues, I joined with some of my colleagues in urging the House Appropriations Committee to allocate \$451.5 million for refuge operations and maintenance. While this is a step in the right direction, it will not solve the service's long-term funding shortfalls.

We must enact legislation that addressed these funding needs and that is the fundamental goal of the measure I am proposing today. The National Wildlife Refuge System Operations Enhancement Act of 2007 has three major components. The first revenue enhancing measure is to gradually increase the price of a Federal duck stamp from its current rate of \$15 to \$25.

On March 16, 1934, the Migratory Bird Hunting Stamp Act was enacted. Under this law, every hunter over the age of 16 is required to purchase a duck stamp each year if they intend to hunt migratory waterfowl. The price of this stamp has been increased by Congress on seven specific occasions over the past 73 years from an initial cost of \$1 in 1934 to its current level of \$15 in 1991. In fact, this is now the longest period in the history of the program without an increase.