

The major causes of flooding in the Houston basin are due to Houston's highly developed area; the intensity and duration of Texas rainfall; and flat topography with little storage. These conditions led to Houston suffering heavily at the hands of flooding—most recently, the \$5 billion price tag after the inundations accompanying Tropical Storm Allison. The flooding heavily damaged the urban infrastructure and, because of the release of human waste from sewers and medical waste from hospitals, posed a severe public health risk.

Improving the security of our nation's drinking water and wastewater infrastructures has become a top priority since the events of 9/11. This legislation takes significant actions in assessing and reducing vulnerabilities relating to the toxic contamination of our water system. The quality of water should be of the utmost importance when it comes to the health and well-being of the people in this country but the effects of storm water compromises this quality. Individuals who swim in front of flowing storm drains are susceptible to earaches, sinus problems, diarrhea, fever, and rashes; these individuals are 50 percent more likely to develop a variety of symptoms than those who swim 400 yards away from the same drains.

In a ranking of environmental risks posed to the metropolitan Houston area, an Environmental Foresight Committee has identified water pollution as having a relatively high risk. Houston needs to address the trash and odor problems in our waterways which significantly affect quality of life, and economic tourism, development.

Maintaining the biological soundness of the state's rivers, lakes, bays, and estuaries is of great importance to the public's economic health and general well-being. The fact that greater pressures and demands are being placed on the federal government pertaining to security of our water resources makes H.R. 2643 paramount to reexamine the process for ensuring that these important priorities effectively address the maintenance of a proper ecological environment of the bays and estuaries of the nation and the health of related living marine resources.

It is time that we as Americans start becoming more aware and better activists in keeping the air we breathe clean. Air pollution can damage trees, crops, other plants, lakes, and animals. Breathing polluted air can make your eyes and nose burn. It can irritate your throat and make breathing difficult. Each day, air pollution causes thousands of illnesses leading to lost days at work and school. Air pollution also reduces agricultural crop and commercial forest yields by billions of dollars each year.

There are 900,000 children in Harris County alone who are at risk of the health effects from the pollutants in the air. Children are more vulnerable to air pollution than adults because they spend more time outdoors than adults, are usually outdoors most in the summer when air pollution levels are highest, and have immature immune systems.

It is time to put a stop to global pollution, it is time to build a better and healthier earth and we can do so by supporting H.R. 2643.

For these reasons I strongly urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

IN TRIBUTE TO BILLY E. SHIELDS
ON THE OCCASION OF HIS RETIREMENT

HON. HARRY E. MITCHELL

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 28, 2007

Mr. MITCHELL. Madam Speaker, this past week the nation commemorated the bravery and heroism of firefighters who risk their lives every day to protect the lives and safety of others. I would like to turn my colleagues' attention to the accomplishments of Phoenix firefighter Captain Billy Shields, who is leaving the ranks of his brother and sister firefighters this Friday, June 30, to start a new phase of his life.

When Captain Shields retires from the Phoenix Fire Department and the United Phoenix Firefighters Association Local 493, where he served as president, he will do so with a long record of accomplishments. He has been a stalwart advocate for his fellow firefighters, and as president of United Phoenix Firefighters Association, advanced improvements in fire health and safety standards for firefighters, ambulance and emergency response personnel in Arizona.

Since 1997, Captain Shields has led the way in negotiating contracts for the United Phoenix Firefighters Association that protected the job rights of firefighters and the security of their families. He worked with management; city officials and other community stakeholders and reached a consensus to enhance fire and emergency response capabilities. Because of his work, Central Arizona's fire services are state of the art.

It is important to recognize that Captain Shields is unique among union leaders in his commitment to working closely with the business community to improve the local economy. He was appointed to the Greater Phoenix Economic Council where he serves on its Executive Committee. He has labored to advance an economy for a new generation. He was one of the visionaries who helped advance the biotechnology industry in Arizona with the establishment of the Translational Genomics Research Institute, which is known to Arizonans simply as T-Gen. He partnered with others to improve education at all levels—preschool, primary, secondary and higher education. To help accommodate the explosive growth we are facing in Central Arizona, he has played an instrumental role in the development of our transportation infrastructure and the expansion of transportation options.

All Arizonans who have had a chance to work with Captain Shields are indebted to him for his commitment to make our communities a better place to live, work and raise a family. I've seen this commitment first hand. I worked closely with him as Mayor of Tempe and as an Arizona State Senator, and came to rely on him as a friend and counselor. It has been a pleasure to work with him and I look forward to the chance to collaborate with him as he undertakes new challenges.

Captain Shields, I am proud of your service. Arizona is proud of your service, and forever indebted to you for making our communities stronger, safer and more secure. Marianne joins me in wishing you and your family the very best in this new chapter of your life.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED
AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS
ACT, 2008

SPEECH OF

HON. MARIO DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 26, 2007

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2643) making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, Environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2008, with Mr. WATT (Acting Chairman) in the chair:

Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I rise today to thank the Chairman, Ranking Member, and staff of the Interior and Environment Appropriations Subcommittee for their continued support of the Florida Everglades in the FY08 Interior and Environment Appropriations bill.

This legislation includes funding for implementation of the Modified Waters Deliveries Project. This project is critical to Everglades Restoration, and will ensure natural water flows continue through Everglades National Park.

The Florida Everglades is a unique and precious ecosystem that must be preserved for future generations. Everglades Restoration is a long-term investment that will ensure the Everglades is restored and protected.

I am pleased that the Chairman included \$72 million for Everglades Restoration, which is so critical to ensuring continuation of this vital project. The Interior share of funding combined with the appropriations made to the Army Corps of Engineers in the Energy and Water Appropriations bill will help to ensure restoration moves forward. This funding is a step in the right direction, showing the continued support of the Committee for Restoration. As the FY08 Appropriations cycle moves forward, I will work to ensure that Everglades Restoration remains a top priority.

I thank my colleagues from Florida for their continued support of the Florida Everglades and Restoration funding. Additionally, I would like to thank the President for his steadfast support as well as the Governor of Florida. Floridians understand the great benefit the Everglades provide not just to our ecological diversity, but also to our economy, which is so dependent upon tourism and ecotourism.

On behalf of the residents of Southern Florida I am so proud to represent, I thank the Chairman, Ranking Member, and their hard-working staff for their support of this funding.

HONORING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BOYS AND GIRLS CLUBS OF SOUTH ALABAMA

HON. JO BONNER

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 28, 2007

Mr. BONNER. Madam Speaker, today I rise to pay tribute to the Boys and Girls Clubs of South Alabama on the occasion of their 50th anniversary.

For five decades, the Boys and Girls Clubs of South Alabama have provided safe, positive places for children and adolescents. B.R. "Babe" Wilson Jr., Arthur Tonsmeire, and Jack Harris formed the area's first Boys Club of Mobile on McDuffie Island with 20 boys as members. Today, the Boys and Girls Clubs of South Alabama have 11 clubs and a 150-acre day camp.

The clubs are open year-round and offer members help with homework, classes on computers, organized athletics, arts and crafts, and life-skill programs such as the Job Ready Program. In 2006, there were over 17,000 registered members, and youth served in Mobile and Baldwin counties through the Boys and Girls Clubs' community outreach.

The Boys and Girls Clubs of America began in Hartford, Connecticut, in 1860. At a time when parents labored 12 hours a day, six days a week, many of their children were left unsupervised. Elizabeth Hamersley, along with sisters Mary and Alice Godwin, encouraged others to invite these boys into their homes for refreshments—an effort which eventually grew into the Dashaway Club. In 1906, 53 of the organizations united in Boston to form the Federated Boys' Clubs, now known as the Boys & Girls Clubs of America.

It is my sincere hope that the Boys and Girls Clubs of South Alabama will continue its vital service to the children of south Alabama for another 50 years. I ask my colleagues to join me today in recognizing the Boys and Girls Clubs of South Alabama, along with executive director Mary Zoghby, the staff and many volunteers for their dedication and hard work as well as for being a positive influence on the lives of so many young men and women throughout south Alabama.

IN HONOR OF SERGEANT BRUCE
HORNER, UNITED STATES ARMY

HON. KAY GRANGER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 28, 2007

Ms. GRANGER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the courage of one of the bravest and most dedicated heroes of our Nation.

Sergeant Bruce Horner was part of the search and recovery operations for American soldiers captured by Al Qaeda terrorists in southern Baghdad when he was killed by an enemy sniper on June 1, 2007.

An 18-year veteran of the Army, Bruce Horner was a proud non-commissioned officer, mentor and leader to younger soldiers.

He came from a family with a long tradition of military service and did not take his responsibilities to lead younger soldiers lightly.

Sergeant Horner is survived by his wife, parents and the soldiers he left behind, who are continuing the hard work of protecting our Nation's freedoms in Iraq.

SGT. Bruce Horner is gone, but he will never be forgotten.

His memory lives on through the family he left behind and in the soldiers that he so ably led.

Our community and Nation honor Sergeant Horner's memory and we are grateful for his 18 years of faithful and distinguished service to America.

COURTNEY AMAYA CROWDER
MAKES HER MARK ON THE WORLD

HON. BOB ETHERIDGE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 28, 2007

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Courtney Crowder, formerly of my staff, and his wife Byinna on the birth of their first child, Courtney Amaya Crowder. Courtney was born on June 17, 2007 and weighed 8 pounds. Faye joins me in wishing Courtney and Byinna great happiness during this very special time in their lives. A Raleigh native, Courtney served on my district staff in several capacities with distinction and will always remain a member of team Etheridge.

As a father and grandfather myself, I know the joy, pride, and excitement that parents experience upon the entrance of their child into the world. Representing hope, goodness, and innocence, a newborn allows those around her to see the world through her eyes as a new, fresh place with unending possibilities for the future. Through a child, one is able to recognize and appreciate the full potential of the human race. I know Courtney and Byinna look forward to the changes and challenges that their new daughter will bring to their lives while taking pleasure in the many rewards they are sure to receive as they watch her grow.

I welcome young Courtney into the world and wish Courtney and Byinna all the best as they raise her.

HONORING BRODIE CLARK

HON. RON LEWIS

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 28, 2007

Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky. Madam speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Brodie Clark, a student at Greenwood High School in Kentucky's Warren County School District. Brodie is the recipient of the spring 2007 Outstanding Student Award from Carnegie Learning, a publisher of research-based math curricula for middle school and high school students. Brodie received this award for his success in math, and also for his ability to appreciate the practical applications of math concepts—not just memorized formulas—in his everyday life.

Brodie is a 10th grade Algebra II student, and enjoys using the Carnegie Learning curricula in Ms. Lee's Algebra II class. Brodie has excelled beyond Ms. Lee's expectations and has challenged himself to complete every Algebra II unit before the end of the school year; a task which is nearly complete. He has emerged as a leader in his Algebra II class, helping other students understand the material and stay on task.

In his spare time, Brodie enjoys playing disc golf, a sport in which he constantly uses math. "Whether I am trying to figure out the distance to the basket, or my score, addition and subtraction are constantly being performed. I have to think about the angle I am going to throw the disc, and what speed I want to throw it," said Brodie. "Thanks to math, I am able to do all of this in my head with ease. Playing disc

golf and doing math allows me to combine my two favorite things."

Brodie received the Outstanding Student Award from Carnegie Learning, a developer of math programs for middle school, high school, and postsecondary students. Carnegie Learning is helping students across the Commonwealth of Kentucky increase their achievement in math, and in a recent evaluation by the Kentucky Committee for Mathematics Achievement, was the only one of nine curricula to receive the top ranking in every category in the committee's assessment of intermediate and middle grades math intervention programs.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in recognizing Brodie's achievement in math education, and in encouraging more students to appreciate the importance of math and science education. In the global economy of the 21st century, knowledge of math is absolutely critical. While our Nation is concerned by reports that our students are falling behind in basic math skills, Brodie Clark is proving that our students can succeed if they have access to quality resources, and the support of dedicated family and teachers. I would also like to thank Carnegie Learning for recognizing his exceptional efforts.

HONORING LINCOLN FALLS AND
MILLVIEW WESLEYAN CHURCH

HON. CHRISTOPHER P. CARNEY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 28, 2007

Mr. CARNEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Lincoln Falls and Millview Wesleyan Church and their commitment to serving the Sullivan County area for well over 100 years.

The Millview Church was established in 1843 and Lincoln Falls was established in 1877. They celebrated their first annual Camp Meeting in 1907. On July 15, they will celebrate that 100th anniversary.

Dr. Harry F. Wood, the district superintendent, will speak at the celebration service. An old-fashioned picnic will follow.

In closing, Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the Lincoln Falls and Millview Wesleyan Churches for their 100 years of joint camp meetings and for over 100 years of distinguished service to Sullivan County, PA, and the United States of America.

NATIONAL HERITAGE FELLOW
HAZEL DICKENS

HON. NICK J. RAHALL II

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 28, 2007

Mr. RAHALL. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the 25th anniversary of the National Heritage Fellowships.

The National Heritage Fellowships are a proud tradition that honors our Nation's diverse cultural heritage and West Virginia has been truly blessed by the music of Heritage Fellow Hazel Dickens, who was awarded this lifetime achievement recognition in 2001.

As we celebrated West Virginia's birthday last week, the words of Hazel Dickens were