

Mr. Speaker, I did not vote to authorize this war, I did not vote for the troop surge and I have voted for a time line to bring our troops home. The vast majority of the American people see that the President's dream for Iraq is not going to happen. They want him to wake up and face reality. This bill provides a plan on how to do that. I support the approach in this bill, and I urge my colleagues to join me in voting for it.

TRIBUTE TO THE “FLIGHT 93 AMBASSADORS”

HON. BILL SHUSTER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 13, 2007

Mr. SHUSTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the “Flight 93 Ambassadors,” a community organization that has dedicated countless hours to the Flight 93 memorial site in Shanksville, Pennsylvania. This organization, created by members of the Somerset community after the tragic events of September 11th, serves both the country and the memory of those aboard Flight 93 by protecting the site and recounting the heroic story of the passengers’ brave intervention against the terrorists to the memorial’s visitors.

The Flight 93 Ambassadors will be honored for their service on July 26th at the Somerset County Chamber of Commerce’s Third Annual Summer Barbeque. Somerset County has been trademarked “America’s County” after two major national events took place there. For the past three years the Chamber of Commerce has used this distinction to recognize American heroes. Previously the Chamber paid tribute to the nine miners who were rescued from the Quecreek Mine accident. This year’s recognition of the Flight 93 Ambassadors by “America’s County” is fitting and appropriate as these volunteers are responsible for maintaining one of the most distinguished symbols of American courage and unity.

The Flight 93 Ambassadors contribute much of their time to the preservation of the Flight 93 memorial and serve as a link to the families of the Flight 93 victims. These selfless volunteers plan events and work tirelessly to maintain the integrity of this important site and in doing so, ensure that the heroism of the passengers of Flight 93 is never forgotten. The ambassadors are the epitome of American unity and strength in the wake of tragedy, and their initiative and persistent work with the Flight 93 site is greatly appreciated by the community.

I am sure that every American, in addition to the members of the Shanksville community, would join me in thanking the Flight 93 Ambassadors for their selfless dedication and leadership in immortalizing the memory of September 11th and all of the heroes of Flight 93.

INTRODUCTION OF THE AGROFUEL RURAL ENERGY EMPOWERMENT ACT

HON. JOHN M. McHUGH

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 13, 2007

Mr. McHUGH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Agrofuel Rural Energy Empowerment Act, which is designed to help American farmers better meet the economic and environmental challenges inherent in the handling and disposal of manure. The bill is also intended to spur investments in another source of much-needed renewable energy.

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), American concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs) and animal feeding operations (AFOs) generate over 335 million tons of dry matter annually. While animal manure provides important nutrients for crop production and organic matter that enhances soil properties, its improper management can pose a threat to soil, water, and air quality. Moreover, manure can negatively impact human and animal health and associated odors can decrease quality of life.

Anaerobic digestion technologies can help improve the manner in which American farms manage manure, reducing water pollution, odors, and the emissions of greenhouse gases while producing energy. As our nation is seeking ways to reduce its dependence on carbon-based fuels and particularly foreign oil, we should encourage the development of anaerobic digestion technologies.

The Agrofuel Rural Energy Empowerment Act would further the development of these important technologies. First, the bill would make anaerobic digestion business ventures eligible for guaranteed loans. Secondly, it would make anaerobic digestion projects eligible for monies available through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). The bill would be particularly beneficial to the handling of manure on the 72,500 dairy farms in the United States, nearly 2,000 of which are in my Central and Northern New York Congressional District.

Accordingly, I ask my colleagues to join with me to enact the Agrofuel Rural Energy Empowerment Act.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. STEPHANIE HERSETH SANDLIN

OF SOUTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 13, 2007

Ms. HERSETH SANDLIN. Madam Speaker, I regret that I was unable to participate in votes on the floor of the House of Representatives on July 11, 2007. I was absent to attend a military funeral and to be present for a major announcement from the National Science Foundation in South Dakota. I submit this statement today to establish for the record how I would have voted had I been present for these votes.

On the morning of July 11, 2007, the House of Representatives held four votes for which I was absent.

The first vote was a motion on Ordering the Previous Question on the Rule. Had I been

present, I would have voted ‘yea’ on that question.

The second vote was on the H. Res. 531, a Rule Providing for the Consideration of the College Cost Reduction Act of 2007. Had I been present, I would have voted ‘yea’ on that question.

The third vote was on a motion to suspend the rules and agree to the H. Res. 526, supporting home ownership and responsible lending. Had I been present, I would have voted ‘yea’ on that question.

The fourth vote was on a motion to suspend the rules and agree to the S. 1701, a bill to provide for the extension of transitional medical assistance (TMA) and the abstinence education program through the end of fiscal year 2007, and for other purposes. Had I been present, I would have voted ‘yea’ on that question.

RECOGNIZING 2007 AS THE YEAR OF THE RIGHTS OF INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS IN COLOMBIA

SPEECH OF

HON. RAÚL M. GRIJALVA

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 11, 2007

Mr. GRIJALVA. Madam Speaker, I am glad to rise in support of House Resolution 426, recognizing 2007 as the Year of the Rights of Internally Displaced Persons in Colombia.

Internal displacement is a massive problem in Colombia. As noted in this resolution, the number of displaced over the past 20 years is roughly equivalent to eight percent of the Colombian population. If we applied this ratio to the population of the United States, this would equal twenty-four million displaced persons roughly the population of the State of Texas.

Unfortunately, this tragically large number continues to grow by about 200,000 every year.

The civil conflict, of course, is at the root of the problem, but this explanation is worth a closer look. There is a guerrilla war being waged by the group calling itself the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, or FARC, in conflict with the Colombian government and their paramilitary allies and surrogates, and combat has displaced many Colombians. Also, resorting to violence as a means of resolving conflicts over land and other resources has become commonplace and exacerbates the problem.

Afro-Colombians, whose rights to communal land holdings were not properly recognized until 1991, have been hit particularly hard by deliberate displacement aimed at securing valuable or strategic land areas, principally by paramilitaries and the Colombian state. The FARC has also been known to engage in this reprehensible practice. Often the land at issue is stolen from its residents because it is favorable to agriculture, has sub-surface resources, or is needed for the completion of large construction projects.

Due to economically motivated displacement and other factors, including their general political marginalization in Colombian society, Afro-Colombians are disproportionately over-represented in the displaced population, as noted in the resolution.

Because of their marginal position, Afro-Colombians, therefore, find it even more difficult than other Colombians to access the resources and assistance they need to rebuild their lives. In this dismal context, a return to their land, to their proper home, may be a deeply held hope, but it is difficult to imagine.

The plight of the displaced deserves our immediate attention. Not only have we involved

ourselves in the Colombian civil conflict and armed the Colombian state—a government which our own State Department has stated cooperates with the paramilitaries, but this nation's appetite for cocaine has inflamed the situation by generating income for all sides in the conflict.

I wholeheartedly support this resolution and hope for an overwhelming vote in favor of its

adoption. I call on my colleagues to support this resolution and to pay sustained attention to the plight of the displaced throughout this year and beyond, as we work to redirect our policies toward building a just peace for the people of Colombia.