

the Supplemental Disaster Assistance Program and oppose any efforts during floor consideration of the 2007 Farm Bill to redirect funds away from the disaster program.

According to the Congressional Research Service, 34 ad hoc disaster packages have been approved since fiscal year (FY) 1989, totaling \$59 billion. Each approved measure requires the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to recreate an implementation plan that often results in new guidelines and sign up requirements. A standing disaster program will ensure a consistent and reliable implementation strategy is in place for any future weather-related disaster. Furthermore, the program works in concert with current risk management programs, such as crop insurance and the Non Insured Assistance Program, by requiring producers to purchase coverage and providing an incentive to purchase higher levels of coverage.

Many of our organizations have expressed strong support of ad hoc disaster assistance in the past, but have witnessed the increasing difficulty in securing help. Earlier this year, Congress approved emergency ad hoc disaster assistance for losses that occurred in 2005, 2006 or 2007. Unfortunately, the assistance is just now reaching producers for losses sustained in 2005, which is a long time to wait.

Again, we urge you to support the Supplemental Disaster Assistance Program and oppose any efforts to redirect resources to other farm bill programs.

Sincerely,

Agriculture Committee of the Midwestern Legislative Conference of CSG.

American Agriculture Movement.
American Association of Crop Insurers.
American Beekeeping Federation.
American Corn Growers Association.
American Farm Bureau Federation.
American Sheep Industry Association.
American Soybean Association.
American Sugar Alliance.
California Dairy Campaign.
California Farmers Union.
Cape Cod Cranberry Growers Association.
Colorado Wool Growers Association.
Idaho Wool Growers Association.
Independent Community Bankers of America.

Iowa Farmers Union.
Kansas Farmers Union.
Maryland Sheep Breeders Association.
Michigan Farmers Union.
Montana Farmers Union.
National Association of Farmer Elected Committees.

National Association of State Departments of Agriculture.

National Barley Growers Association.
National Bison Association.
National Cotton Council.
National Family Farm Coalition.
National Farmers Organization.
National Farmers Organization-Wisconsin.
National Farmers Union.
National Grape Cooperative Association.
National Sunflower Association.
North Dakota Farmers Union.
Northeast States Association for Agricultural Stewardship.

Ohio Farmers Union.
Oregon Cattlemen's Association.
Pennsylvania Farmers Union.
R-CALF United Stockgrowers of America.
Ricebelt Warehouses.
Rocky Mountain Farmers Union.
South Dakota Farmers Union.
Southern Peanut Farmers Federation.
Texas Sheep & Goat Raisers Association.
United Dairymen of Arizona.
United States Cattlemen's Association.
U.S. Canola Association.
U.S.A. Dry Pea & Lentil Council.
Washington State Sheep Producers.

Welch's.

Western Peanut Growers Association.

Wisconsin Farmers Union.

Women Involved in Farm Economics.

Wyoming Wool Growers Association.

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

WATER RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT ACT

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I wish to rise and speak on the Water Resources Development Act, and I wish to, first of all, thank Chairman BOXER and Ranking Member INHOFE of the EPW Committee for all the work they have done on the WRDA—Water Resources Development Act—and I wish to particularly thank my colleague, MAX BAUCUS, as he is chairman, and I am the ranking member of the subcommittee overseeing the Corps of Engineers and the Water Resources Development Act. I voted for it on the floor, and today, when the vote comes to override the veto of the President, I am going to vote to override the veto. I wish to enter into the record today, specifically and candidly and briefly, exactly the reasons why.

No. 1, the Water Resources Development Act is an authorization, not appropriations. To characterize it as overspending is not correct because it is the appropriations bill where we do that.

No. 2, authorizations set priorities, priorities upon which the Appropriations Committee makes decisions based on the money it has and on where best to spend the resources we have.

No. 3, as for the size of the authorization, everyone should know that up until the year 2000, this Senate, and the House on the other end of this building, biannually passed Water Resources Development Act reauthorizations. We have gone 7 years without prioritizing the Corps of Engineers and the water resources of this country.

Think about what has happened in those 7 years—Rita and Katrina in particular; from my standpoint, in my State of Georgia, a category 4, 100-year drought threatening the drinking water of millions and millions of Georgians, North Carolinians, Tennesseans, and Alabamans. In this bill is money for the North Metro Planning District of Georgia, a consolidation of all the governments in the region, to coordinate water resource development so we can better deal with retention, saving water as it flows downstream so we can have drinking water assurances and we can have backup that allows us to as-

sure our citizens when another 100-year drought, category 4 drought comes, that we will have done the planning necessary to deal with it, which right now has not been done. For this bill to be vetoed is to say no to an imminent priority in my State and for tens of millions of people in the Southeast.

So while I have complete respect for the President of the United States, and I commend him on so many things and don't like to vote against him, he is wrong to veto this bill. I will be proud to vote to override that veto because I wish to prioritize infrastructure for our country on a timely basis; I wish to give the appropriators the indications of what we, as a Congress, think are the most needed programs to be appropriated; I wish to deal with the ramifications and the disaster of Katrina and Rita, to see that it doesn't happen again; I want the Everglades project to go forward; and I want my State and my people to have the drinking water and the water resources necessary.

For us to delay or for us to deny would be wrong. We will have fights on the appropriations bills over how much money to spend. We should never have a fight on our responsibility to prioritize the needs of our States or the needs of our citizens. I commend Chairman BOXER, I commend Senator INHOFE and Senator BAUCUS for their hard work, and I will join with them in voting to override the veto and set the priorities for the citizens of my State and for the United States in the years to come on their water resources.

I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MENENDEZ). Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Florida is recognized.

NOMINATION OF JUDGE MUKASEY

Mr. MARTINEZ. Mr. President, I rise during a period of morning business to talk about two very important topics. For the last 40-some days we have been discussing the nomination by President Bush of Judge Mukasey to be the next Attorney General. It is a nominee to the President's Cabinet.

First, I believe the President ought to be accorded great deference. The President gets to pick the team to work with him. This is a Member of the Cabinet. It is an appointment that at this juncture, realistically, may not last much more than a year or so. It is not a lifetime appointment to the court, it is to serve on the President's Cabinet, but it is to the very important job of Attorney General. It is a job in which, in this particular time in history, it is terribly important that we

have someone of measured judgment, someone of impeccable credentials, and someone with a fine-tuned ear to following the rule of law.

In Judge Mukasey, when his name first surfaced, we had a consensus nominee. He was referred to as someone who would get swift confirmation. He was further referred to as someone who had not only the judicial experience but also had significant experience in dealing with cases relating specifically to issues of terrorism. He has 15 years of experience as a Federal judge in the Southern District of New York. During that time he presided over several national security cases, in which cases he demonstrated his ability to faithfully adjudicate difficult issues of law and fact.

It seems to me somewhat unfair to require the nominee for Attorney General to now jump through hoops that even the Senate itself has not been willing to tackle head on, on the issue of waterboarding. I believe that is a bit of a red herring. I think at the end of the day, when it is all said and done, it is time we move forward on the confirmation of this good man, a good man who now has had the vote of confidence from the Judiciary Committee; that his nomination be brought to the floor so we can give the United States an Attorney General, someone at the head of the Justice Department, someone we desperately need at this point in history.

There is no question that I believe it is time, after 48 days of his nomination being pending as of today, that the Senate take up this nominee and move it swiftly forward. Judge Mukasey has answered all the questions that have been presented to him. He has answered them to the best of his ability. He has not been able to answer questions that are in the nature of hypotheticals. He has not been able to answer questions that are in the nature of things that may be a part of classified programs that are not available to him at this point in time and that might, in fact, not be the kinds of questions any other nominee to be Attorney General could answer in the course of his nomination.

In writing to members of the Judiciary Committee, Judge Mukasey wrote:

Some of you told me that you hoped and expected that I would exercise my independent judgment when providing advice to the President, regardless of whether that advice was what the President wanted to hear. I told you that it would be irresponsible for me to do anything less.

He went on to say that if he was confirmed, he would review any course of interrogation techniques currently used by the U.S. Government and determine whether any technique would be unlawful and advise the President accordingly. He committed that to the President, to the Congress, and to the American people.

I take him at his word. This is a respected man. This is a respected judge. He has a track record. This is not a

Johnny-come-lately. His nomination should be confirmed. I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of the nomination of Judge Mukasey to fill the vacancy of Attorney General which has been open for much too long and this good man may begin his service to our country at this very important post at this very important juncture.

OVERRIDING THE WRDA VETO

Mr. MARTINEZ. Mr. President, I want to touch on another subject that is terribly important to the State of Florida. It has to do with the Water Resources Development Act which for a long time has been pending before the Congress, and which is so long overdue. When this matter comes to a vote, I will vote to override the President's veto, primarily because in this bill there is nearly \$2 billion for the long overdue and critically important work of restoring Florida's Everglades. This is a bipartisan project. This is a project of unique cooperation between the State and Federal Government.

The history of Florida's Everglades is fascinating. About 100 years ago it was decided that man could conquer all and, in fact, the Army Corps of Engineers should endeavor, through many projects, to drain the Everglades so they could be utilized for farming and that the water would be moved out. So a series of canals was dug and all sorts of efforts were put in place to drain the swamp, to drain the Everglades.

Now we find ourselves a century later understanding that these well-intended Floridians of those days were terribly misguided. The Everglades is a jewel to the State of Florida; it is a jewel to the Nation. It is an environmental masterpiece, the wildlife, between the plants and animal life, but also it is an essential water resource for the people of Florida.

Some years ago, under the leadership of my predecessor in office, Senator GRAHAM, who had been Governor of Florida, and many other Floridians, working in partnership with Governor Bush and later when Senator NELSON came to the Senate, along with Florida's Governor, they crafted this Everglades Restoration Program. For 5 years this bill has been delayed. It has meant delaying substantial Federal involvement in a multitude of necessary projects, including the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan. It is the funding that has been missing. The State has done its part. The Federal Government has, so far, been absent.

I agree with the President and the distinguished Senator from New Hampshire that this bill lacks fiscal discipline. It seeks to spend too much on programs that have little need or reason for Federal support. But I also have to recognize that the longer we wait for the Federal Government to meet its Everglades commitment, the more expensive the cost and the more damage that will be irreversible to this fantastic ecosystem. In the past 5 years

the cost of the Indian River Lagoon project alone has increased by more than \$100 million. Seven years ago, the State of Florida and the Federal Government entered into an agreement:

to restore, preserve and protect the South Florida ecosystem while providing for other water-related needs of the region. . . .

Since that time, the State of Florida has invested more than \$3 billion in this effort; but the Federal Government, originally intended to be an equal partner in the restoration, has yet to meet its obligations—spending only a fraction of Florida's investments on preplanning efforts.

The Everglades belong to Florida, but they are a national treasure. The Federal Government has committed to restore the Everglades and it is high time they follow through on this commitment. What exists today is more than 2 million protected acres of what was once deemed worthless swampland slated for development. Indeed, development did occur and road construction has almost irreversibly impeded the natural cleansing flows of the Everglades. But because of the work of the State of Florida and numerous environmental organizations, we are reversing the damage of development. Once on a path to destruction, the Everglades now teems with wildlife, endangered and rare species, and contributes greatly to south Florida's environmental health. But the work is far from complete. A substantial portion of the work lies ahead.

No single bill Congress approves will have as much positive impact on Florida's environment as this one. It is, in fact, more than an environmental project. It is also a water project. Over the last several weeks, we have been hearing reports about the scarcity of water around Atlanta, where several million Americans reside. It has come to the point that Florida, Georgia, and Alabama had to have a serious conversation with the Department of Interior about water flows from the river that flows from Georgia all the way into Alabama and Florida. In Florida it is the Chattahoochee River.

The serious nature of that problem can also be reconciled with the serious problem we would see in south Florida if our water supply were impeded. This is not only an environmental project, it is also a water resources project. It is about the water that is necessary to sustain life and to sustain the people, the several million people who live in south Florida.

I believe it would be a very important moment for us to override the veto, to move forward with the Everglades Restoration, the Indian River Lagoon, the Picayune Strand—these are very important projects—and a score of other projects around the State of Florida, all related to our environment that is such an important part of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration. But more than that, it is part of Florida's future and part of the legacy we leave our children.