

A native of Rutland, VT, Senator Stafford was born in 1913. Before representing Vermont in Washington, Bob Stafford spent years serving the people of our State, including as Attorney General. In 1960 he began service as Vermont's single voice in the U.S. House of Representatives, where he remained until 1971, when he became a Member of this hallowed body. During his 17 years in the United States Senate, Senator Stafford was known for his commitment to bipartisanship and congeniality.

Senator Stafford left his mark on our country in more ways than can be mentioned here today. He had an unwavering dedication to making education within reach of all our country's citizens and today, countless Americans—maybe even some of the younger members in this Chamber—have benefited from the Stafford Student Loan program. Additionally, his commitment to the environment and public health was unshakable. Bob Stafford, from his position as Chairman of the Environment and Public Works Committee from 1981 until 1986, worked tirelessly to address both air and water quality issues, even when it meant doing so against the wishes of his own leadership, at the highest levels. His courage on all of these issues, and so many others, will never be forgotten.

Leaving the Senate did not stop Robert Stafford from contributing to the common good. In fact, he remained active at the state level and continued to fight for protection of the environment. I can only hope that I will be as engaged for as long as he was.

To honor Senator Stafford, Senator LEAHY and I, along with Representative WELCH, introduced a bill today to re-designate the White Rocks National Recreation Area in our fine state as the "Robert T. Stafford White Rocks National Recreation Area." This is a small, but fitting, tribute to his memory.

Bob Stafford was a true public servant. I am humbled to be serving the State of Vermont in the seat he once held. He dedicated his life to serving others and to creating a better world. My thoughts are with his family as they mourn his passing. And may the example he set during his many years be emulated for many to come. ●

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask consent that the bill be read the third time, passed, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and any statements related to the bill be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (S. 159) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 159

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. ROBERT T. STAFFORD WHITE ROCKS NATIONAL RECREATION AREA.

(a) REDESIGNATION.—The White Rocks National Recreation Area in the State of

Vermont, as established by section 202 of the Vermont Wilderness Act of 1984 (16 U.S.C. 460nn-1), is redesignated as the "Robert T. Stafford White Rocks National Recreation Area".

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the recreation area referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the Robert T. Stafford White Rocks National Recreation Area.

ORDERS FOR MONDAY, JANUARY 8, 2007

Mr. REID. Madam President, it is my understanding that there are a couple of Senators who wish to speak. We will take care of that in a minute.

I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand adjourned until 11:30 a.m., on Monday, January 8; that following the prayer and the pledge, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in that day, and that the time until 12 noon be equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees; that at noon, the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 19, a resolution celebrating the life of the late President Gerald R. Ford; that once the resolution is reported, the Senate then vote, without intervening objection or debate, on adoption of that resolution; that upon the adoption of the resolution, the preamble be agreed to and the motion to reconsider be laid on the table.

I further ask consent that notwithstanding the adjournment of the Senate on Friday, January 5, S. 1 be considered to have received its second reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PROGRAM

Mr. REID. Today was a good day in the Senate. The spirit of bipartisanship is in the air. I look forward to working with the Republican leaders and Members of Congress as we move ahead and forward in this Congress, the 110th Congress.

For the information of Members, the first vote next week is Monday, January 8, at 12 noon. Therefore, Members should be prepared to be here and ready to vote. Time will show what we will do, but votes will be a lot quicker than they used to be. We will not wait around for long times. Most of the votes are not very close, and it is not fair to keep Members from their constituents and other work in their office. If some people are not here, they will not be recorded within a reasonable period of time after the vote is called.

We hoped to proceed to S. 1. We do not have consent to move forward on that yet, but we are confident we will.

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. REID. If there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent the Senate stand adjourned under the previous order, following the remarks of Senator LANDRIEU for 10 minutes and Senator COBURN for 15 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

AUTHORIZATION OF MORGANZA TO THE GULF OF MEXICO HURRICANE PROTECTION PROJECT

Ms. LANDRIEU. Madam President, I come to the floor briefly to speak about a bill I introduced today on the first day of this 110th Congress to signify its importance to our State and to speak about that for a moment.

But before I do, I want to give my public congratulations to the new leadership of this Chamber, to thank the Senator from Nevada and the Senator from Kentucky, the majority leader and the minority leader, for their gathering together of the Senators today, as the Presiding Officer also attended—a quite historic meeting of almost 100 of us in the Old Senate Chamber—and their commitment to us and to the Nation, although it was a private meeting, to work in a more collegial, cooperative way as this Congress begins and to try to forge the bipartisan solutions I think our country called for as a reflection of the outcome of the last elections.

I, for one, publicly want to commit myself to that endeavor and to work toward that end, as I continue to work across the aisle with many in the other party, and even Members such as the Presiding Officer in our own party, in the Democratic Party, to get the job done for our States.

In that regard, I introduced this bill today to authorize a project and to ask for special consideration for this very important levee and hurricane protection project in the State of Louisiana called Morganza to the Gulf. As today we look forward into what we are going to do with this new hope and new spring and new era of cooperation, that is terrific. But we also need to think about looking a little bit backward as to what we did not get done in the last Congress or the Congresses before so we can pick up that work and move forward.

This initiative, Morganza to the Gulf, would fall into that category of a project that was actually approved not only by the last Congress, the 109th Congress, but the 108th and the 107th, and started back actually decades ago. And because of just a few technical glitches resulting in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' failure to timely complete its report, the contingent authorization of the Morganza project expired. Eventually, the Corps submitted its report more than a year late and

recommended authorization of the project.

Madam President, this project when completed will protect 120,000 people in south Louisiana, many of whom were devastated by two of the worst storms and subsequent flooding in the history of our country only 2 years ago, in 2005. However, these people are left vulnerable without this project being completed. It was part of a major WRDA bill, the Water Resources Development Act, of which this Congress worked together in quite an extraordinary bipartisan effort, as the Presiding Officer knows. You have been a part of that effort.

It comes out of the EPW Committee, the Environment and Public Works Committee. Democrats on that committee and Republicans worked very hard, into the late hours of the night, trying to get that bill through. But for a number of reasons, this massive bill, with billions of dollars of projects, could not pass in the final hours.

But this one project, of all of the projects in the Nation, I believe deserves special attention, not because it is in Louisiana, not because Senator VITTER and I represent this, and not only because our State received devastation from Katrina and Rita but because this is the one hurricane protection project that actually had been approved in the last WRDA bill. But because of untimeliness on the part of the Corps of Engineers, we could not get it authorized in the last bill, and it should be first to be approved now.

I do not know what is going to happen with our WRDA bill. I am certain the Senator from California, who has pledged her support, and the ranking member of that committee, Senator INHOFE from Oklahoma, who is familiar with this, understand the special nature of this issue. Whether we can move this independently, I do not know. But I am going to ask. Until we are told no, we are going to try. Senator VITTER is not here to speak for himself, but I know he feels very strongly about this, as indicated by his own actions and strong words he has put in the RECORD. Our House Members, both Republicans and Democrats, could make the same arguments on the House side.

I know people may be tired of seeing the Senators from Louisiana and Mississippi come down and talk about the gulf coast. But it is America's energy coast. It is a working coast. There are working people who live in real communities, large and small, whose homes have been devastated, whose churches have been destroyed, whose schools have been destroyed, and who still look to us to help them, to not waste their money or others' money in the relief but to spend it wisely and well and to provide at least the Federal partnership for these hurricane protection levees. And that is what this is.

The communities of Lafourche and Terrebonne Parishes, located in southeast Louisiana, which are the heart of

America's energy coast, are willing and able to do their engineering, to put up their own money, to make sure that the projects are done in an expedited fashion. But they cannot begin without this Federal authorization.

So I have introduced as stand-alone legislation, the Morganza to the Gulf of Mexico Hurricane Protection Project, as my first bill, to indicate the continued need throughout south Louisiana and the gulf coast for more protection from hurricanes and smart engineering, to say we are not going to stop asking for the things we think are most certainly meritorious of this Congress's attention and to continue to say that with all the challenges of housing, health care, education, small business recovery, et cetera, that hurricane protection for levees and coastal restoration remains a constant need for the gulf coast and, I would predict, for other coasts around the country that need to wake up to the dangers of rising tides, surges from whatever, tsunamis on the west coast, hurricanes on the east coast, as a potential, and get serious about the business of stronger infrastructure and better planning about where and where not to build close to the coast.

But again, these are working communities that are there—not sunbathing, not condos—running ports, laying pipelines, and giving the Nation the energy infrastructure it needs. These people, just like in the big cities of New Orleans and Baton Rouge and Lafayette and Lake Charles—these small communities of Houma and Lafourche and Cocherie and Golden Meadow and places that no one in Washington has ever heard of, but we visit all the time, deserve the protection of their Federal Government based on what they contribute to the Nation.

So I thank the Presiding Officer for letting me speak for the RECORD on this issue. I thank the leadership for giving me this time and commend it for the Senate to consider. Hopefully, we can pass it within the first weeks of this Congress.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. LANDRIEU). The Senator from Oklahoma.

STEWARDSHIP OF THE TAXPAYERS' MONEY

Mr. COBURN. Madam President, I want to spend a few minutes today to kind of summarize some of the events of the past year and kind of also to put the Senate on notice that what this election was about is us being good stewards with the taxpayers' money.

I appreciate the distinguished Senator from Louisiana. I happen to be the Senator who held that bill up in the wee hours of the morning. There were some real good reasons why I did that. It is a great example of the habits that we have to change. There is no question that levee system needs to be authorized, and it will be authorized this

year. There is no question. But there was a drudging component that was added to that bill. Nobody knew what it was going to cost, at least \$100 million. That portion had not cleared the committee, and it was important that we not have habits such as that, to authorize programs that we do not have any idea what they cost.

We have heard a lot of talk about bipartisanship. We can all be partisan for America. If you go to the Federal Government's Web site and go to the Comptroller General, David Walker, and you read what is there—I would encourage every American and every Senator to go read it—what you will find is we are on an absolute unsustainable course. And the problems are bad now. Madam President, we have a \$260 billion deficit this year with “Enron” accounting statistics, about a \$360 billion accounting deficit by real accounting statistics. That is what we are adding to the Nation's debt. That is what our kids get to pay back through a decreased standard of living. But I would encourage you to go read it. We cannot continue to do what Congresses over the last 5 years have done; that is, we cannot spend new money because there is no new money. So that means if we are going to authorize a new program, we need to make sure a couple things happen. One is we need to make sure it does not duplicate something that is already there. And if it does, we need to eliminate what it duplicates if, in fact, it is better because there is an opportunity cost of funding two programs that do the same thing. One of them does it better, so every dollar you spend on the one that does it less well costs us money in terms of the value for our children.

Let me give you a couple other examples, things where our rules kind of mess us up. Because of the budgetary rules, Federal buildings in this country are no longer owned by the Federal Government—new ones. Why is that? For any other business, any individual would, if they are going to lease a building, try to lease purchase it. Because of our accounting rules, we lease them. Because if we lease purchase, then the agency has to show the entire cost of the building in their budget that year.

Well, it does not make accounting sense. I happen to have a degree in accounting. It is crazy accounting. But what it does is force us to make bad financial choices on fixed assets for the Federal Government. We cannot get rid of the buildings that we don't want now. We spend \$6 billion—that is billion with a “b”—a year maintaining buildings the Federal Government does not want. That is \$6 billion. The Pentagon spends \$3 billion. That is a total of \$9 billion.

So if we had the \$9 billion, if we could get rid of the buildings we wanted to by streamlining that process, we could save \$9 billion a year. Madam President, \$9 billion would do a whole lot for the people of Louisiana as far as this levee system repair.