

INTRODUCTION OF THE "WHAT- EVER IT TAKES TO REBUILD ACT OF 2008"

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 31, 2008

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Madam Speaker, today I am reintroducing the "Whatever It Takes to Rebuild Act of 2008".

A disaster can leave the tax base of an affected community eroded, necessitating Federal assistance to pay for essential services. These essential services, including police, fire, and school personnel, are even more critical in the wake of a disaster. To aid communities, Congress created the Community Disaster Loan Program. While this program has worked with great success, there are two significant issues that need to be fixed. The first issue is that this assistance is delivered in the form of a loan and the second is that any loan is limited to \$5 million. Providing this aid as a loan can further delay the recovery of a local community and the \$5 million cap does not allow for adequate assistance for medium or large communities.

The "Whatever It Takes to Rebuild Act" would repeal the requirement that disaster affected communities repay the assistance they receive under the Community Disaster Loan Program. This legislation would permanently repeal the \$5 million cap on these loans, would make states eligible for this assistance, repeal the cap that limits loans to 25 percent of a municipality's operating expenses, and would provide this assistance as grants when a disaster has been declared an "Incident of National Significance" under the National Response plan. All of these provisions are aimed at giving the federal government the tools and flexibility we need to fully respond following a disaster.

This program was used most recently immediately following Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans. While it was able to provide significant benefits, repayment requirements have raised significant hurdles for many recipient communities. In the wake of a disaster, the government should give American communities the financial assistance they need to get back on their feet with no strings attached. That is why I am reintroducing the "Whatever It Takes to Rebuild Act."

INTRODUCTION OF TARGET PRACTICE AND MARKSMANSHIP TRAINING SUPPORT ACT

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 31, 2008

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Madam Speaker, today I am introducing a bill to facilitate the establishment of additional or expanded training ranges in certain States.

The bill, entitled the "Target Practice and Marksmanship Training Support Act," addresses a problem faced by many sportsmen and sportswomen and others in Colorado and some other States where population growth—and resulting public-safety concerns—has forced the Forest Service and other Federal

land-managing agencies to bar target shooting on some parts of their lands where that activity was previously allowed.

The result has been a serious reduction in the number of appropriate places for target shooting that are readily accessible, which unfortunately means that in some cases such shooting occurs in places that are not suitable for that purpose and where that activity can endanger public safety.

My new bill would respond to this problem by revising the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act—often called the Pittman-Robertson Act—to give certain States temporary authority to use more of the Federal funds provided under that law for the establishment of new public target ranges or the enlargement or improvement of existing public target ranges. This authority would continue for ten fiscal years.

It would also make some other changes to that same law in order to help qualifying States work toward that goal.

The bill would apply to States where there has been at least a 2 percent growth in population since the most recent decennial census and where there has been a reduction in the acreage of Federal lands open to use for target practice and marksmanship training.

Also, to allay concerns by Federal land managers about potential liability related to allowing Federal land areas to be used for target practice and marksmanship training, the bill includes provisions to make clear that—(1) such a decision will be considered a discretionary function for purposes of the Federal Torts Claim Act; and (2) any potential liability of the United States for damages related to any activity at a public target range wholly or partially funded by the Federal government will be subject to the limits specified in the Federal Torts Claim Act.

And, finally, the bill includes a section expressing the sense of Congress that the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management should cooperate with State and local authorities and other entities to carry out environmental remediation or other actions needed to allow target practice and marksmanship training to continue on lands managed by those Federal agencies.

Madam Speaker, this bill will not increase Federal spending and it does not require any State to use any of the funds it receives under the Pittman-Robertson funds for any new purpose. But it would provide eligible States additional flexibility regarding the use of those funds if they decide to use more of those funds for establishment of new public target ranges or improvement or expansion of existing ranges. For the benefit of our colleagues, here is an outline of the bill's provisions:

OUTLINE OF TARGET PRACTICE AND MARKSMANSHIP TRAINING SUPPORT ACT

This proposed bill would address both the funding and liability issues to make it easier for State wildlife departments to work with Federal land agencies on establishing and improving safe and convenient target practice and marksmanship training facilities.

WHAT THE PROPOSED BILL WOULD DO

Provides additional funding flexibility to states: The bill would amend the Pittman-Robertson Act to allow eligible States to increase the extent to which eligible States could use Federal funds they receive under that law to establish new, expanded, or improved shooting ranges (including acquisition of lands for that purpose).

—Eligible States would be those that have experienced at least 2 percent population growth since 2000 and have seen a reduction of the extent to which target practice and marksmanship training can take place on Federal lands within their borders.

—Eligible States could apply for up to 90 percent of the cost of acquiring land for and/or construction of new, expanded, or improved facilities (current law caps Federal share at 75 percent) and could retain the funds until expended (current law requires funds unused in the year received to be refunded to the Federal government).

—In addition, the bill would temporarily allow eligible States to use up to 10 percent of the Pittman-Robertson funds provided for wildlife management and conservation for acquiring land for and/or construction of new, expanded, or improved shooting ranges and to assist in cleanup or other steps needed to allow Federal lands to be used for target practice or marksmanship training. This provision would expire after 10 fiscal years.

Addresses liability concerns: The bill makes it clear that shooting ranges on Federal lands do not expose the Federal land agency to liability for injuries that may occur at these facilities.

Encourages Cooperation: The bill states sense of Congress that Federal land managers should cooperate with States, local government, and other entities in doing what's needed to permit Federal lands to remain available for public target practice and marksmanship training.

WHAT THE PROPOSED BILL WOULD NOT DO

Impose a mandate on States: The bill would provide an opportunity for eligible States to receive additional funds for specific purposes, but does not require any funds to be spent for those purposes.

Raise any Taxes: The bill would broaden the uses for Pittman-Robertson funds can be used, but does not increase the excise taxes from which such funds are derived.

MILITARY BATTLES WITH HIGH ENERGY PRICES

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 31, 2008

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, as Americans struggle with high gas prices our military is also facing skyrocketing energy costs. The vehicles needed to transport our military and take the fight to our enemies require extraordinary amounts of fuel.

This is a startling example of how rising energy prices directly affect our national security. It is another example of why Democrats must not adjourn for their five-week vacation without addressing this issue.

Between 1997 and 2007, ten years, military fuel costs grew from \$3 billion to \$11.4 billion, which is a 380 percent increase. Meanwhile, consumption of fuel by the military grew only 26 percent.

We need, and the American people are demanding, a comprehensive strategy that creates more American-made energy by drilling for oil and natural gas, building new refineries, investing in renewable energy, and promoting conservation. House Democrats should take a

bipartisan approach and bring the House Republican all-of-the-above energy bill to the floor for a vote. Let the American people's voices be heard.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September 11th.

HONORING MR. SAMUEL SNOW

HON. JIM McDERMOTT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 31, 2008

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Mr. Samuel Snow from Leesburg, Florida. Mr. Snow is a hero and a role model for every American, and especially African-Americans. At a time when most people would have rightly succumbed to anger and bitterness, Samuel Snow stood taller than us all.

Sixty-four years ago, Samuel and other African-American soldiers were accused and convicted of a crime they did not commit at Fort Lawton, in Seattle, one of the communities I represent. Last weekend, Assistant Secretary of the Army Ronald James came to Seattle to deliver an eloquent and heartfelt apology on behalf of the Army, and to honor the soldiers, including Samuel Snow, with honorable discharge plaques.

Mr. Snow's son, Ray, stood in for his father when Samuel was hospitalized unexpectedly. After the ceremony in which I was honored to participate, Ray Snow took the honorable discharge plaque to a Seattle hospital, where he showed it to his father and read Samuel the inscription. According to Ray, his father smiled broadly as he held the plaque. A few hours later, Samuel Snow died with his family at his side. His son Ray would say: "My dad has been standing in formation all these years waiting to have his name cleared. With the Army's honorable discharge he was at ease. He now has his discharge papers and he went home."

I am very proud to have had the honor and privilege of meeting and getting to know Samuel Snow, his family, and the families of the other soldiers whose fathers and grandfathers were falsely accused and convicted, and needlessly paid a heavy price for this racial injustice throughout their lives.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., said: "An injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. Samuel Snow lived to lead the fight against a racial injustice that is a stain on our nation's history."

Samuel Snow was a man full of courage and optimism who had a wonderful sense of humor and a deep well of courage and conviction. He knew what was right and just, and he died knowing that he had finally defeated the racial injustice that had tried, and failed, to strike him down.

Samuel Snow raised a wonderful family and he lived a quiet, humble life working as a janitor, not once complaining about what might have been in life had he not been unfairly deprived of his GI benefits.

Samuel Snow's life will inspire others to fight for what is right and just, and to never give up on the country he loved so much. I was privileged to stand in the company of a giant of a man and I am certain that Samuel Snow, an American hero, will not be forgotten.

TRIBUTE TO THE 345TH TACTICAL
PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATING
COMPANY (AIRBORNE)

HON. SAM JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 31, 2008

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, as the 345th Tactical Psychological Operations Company (Airborne) prepares to deploy to Afghanistan, I ask the Congress to join me in commending the distinguished military company. To the brave men and women off to serve on the front lines, thank you. God bless you and I salute you.

245th PSYOP Co. was constituted into the regular Army on December 20, 1965. The unit deployed to Vietnam in February, 1966. The 245th was assigned to the 6th BN, 7th PSYOP Group. 245th elements supported the 1 CAV DIV, 101st ABN DIV, and was awarded a Meritorious Unit Citation and Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm Device.

Deactivated in January 1968. The 245th was reconstituted on October 30, 1975 in the Army Reserve under the 90th ARCOM, 5th U.S. Army.

In 1980, the 245th supported the Cuban Refugee Resettlement Project at Ft. McCoy, WI. The 245th was placed under USACAPOC and U.S. Army Special Operations Command in 1990. December 27, 1990, 18 soldiers mobilized to support Operation Desert Shield.

Tactical PSYOP Teams conducted combat operations with elements of the 1st, 2nd Marine Divisions and the 5th Special Forces Group during Operation Desert Storm. 245th teams distinguished themselves at the Battle of Khafji, the liberation of Kuwait City, and with deception and surrender appeals in the Kuwaiti desert. Members earned Marine Combat Action Ribbons, Navy Meritorious Unit Commendations, and four Bronze Stars. The 245th also earned the Army Meritorious Unit Commendation.

September 16, 1994, a Tactical Detachment deployed to Haiti in support of Operation Uphold Democracy. Two soldiers supported a team of the 3rd Special Forces Group and the rest were with the 10th Mountain DIV. TPTs conducted civilian non-interference, civil information campaigns, and QRF operations.

In 1996, the 245th was redesignated the 345th Tactical PSYOP Co. (Airborne), 16th BN, 2nd PSYOP GRP. The unit conducted numerous training exercises at JRTC, NTC, and CMTC in Germany.

In 1997, the 345th was given the warning order to deploy to the Balkans for Operation Joint Guard. In 1998, the unit operated in war-torn Bosnia. The unit was primarily in the Multi-National Division North supporting the 3/2 Armored Cavalry Regiment. Other soldiers were in Sarajevo and Banja Luka. Teams conducted presence patrols in the Zone of Separation between the Serbs, Muslims, and Croats, civilian non-interference, civil information campaign, mine awareness, and passive intelligence gathering.

In 2000, a Tactical Detachment deployed to Kosovo to conduct missions, in support of Operation Joint Guardian. KFOR Teams ran similar missions as in Bosnia, with their 310th PSYOP Co. counterparts and the 82nd ABN DIV.

In the late 1990s through the early 2000s, the OPTEMPO of the unit steadily increased

with missions to Germany, Jordan, Oman, and Egypt. However, on September 11, 2001, the 345th prepared to defend freedom with the onset of the Global War on Terror.

In 2002, three Tactical Detachments and a Headquarters/PDD deployed with the 3rd Special Forces Group's 1st BN to Afghanistan for Operation Enduring Freedom. 345th Teams were spread throughout the country to work with 3rd, 19th, 20th, and 7th SF GRP ODAs, other government agencies, Afghan militias, and conventional soldiers to hunt hostile Taliban and Al Qaeda terrorists, conduct civilian non-interference, tactical deception, surrender appeals, special recon, mine awareness, sensitive site exploitation, and direct action in support of unconventional warfare. 345th soldiers were recognized with numerous awards. The unit has had soldiers continuously deployed to OEF since, where they continue to set the standard for special operations in austere environments.

With less than a year home, the 345th was given a warning order to prepare to deploy in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. From February to October 2004, the 345th was assigned responsibility for tactical PSYOP in Baghdad, Iraq supporting elements of the 1st Armored Division, 1st Cavalry Division, 10th Mountain Division, and numerous other special operations, foreign, and host nation forces. Teams conducted the full spectrum of military operations in urban terrain. From direct action raids, cordon and searches, and sonic deception to humanitarian assistance, 345th teams were involved in direct combat operations against anti-coalition forces, foreign terrorists, Al Sad's Mahdi Army militia, former Baathists, and other hostile forces. Six Purple Hearts were awarded and a multitude of other awards to individual soldiers and the unit. The 345th remains actively engaged in this theater, as well.

In 2006, reserve component PSYOP units were reassigned to the U.S. Army Reserve Command, though continue to train through the U.S. Army's JFK Special Warfare Center and School.

345th Soldiers have sent soldiers on every rotation in support of the Global War on Terror since 9-11. 345th soldiers have also been called to serve in small teams or as individuals in Romania, Korea, Japan, Ecuador, Germany, Italy, and Egypt with no sign of letting up. 345th soldiers continue to attend professional schools, training rotations, and prepare for future combat deployments.

RECOGNIZING THE OAKLAND COMPOSITE SQUADRON COLOR GUARD TEAM

HON. JOE KNOLLENBERG

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 31, 2008

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Madam Speaker, I want to recognize the Oakland Composite Squadron Color Guard Team for their excellent performance at the National Cadet Competition last month. The members of the team have and continue to represent the Civil Air Patrol with honor, distinction, and professionalism.

The Civil Air Patrol, CAP, was established on December 1, 1947, as the all volunteer