

Partnership Act of 1996 (P.L. 104–304), which required the Secretary of Transportation to assess the effectiveness of remotely operated valves and to prescribe standards, within two years of enactment, for installation of the valves based on that assessment. The regulations were not issued until 2001—too late for the victims of the 1999 hazardous liquid pipeline explosion in Bellingham, Washington.

The June 10, 1999, explosion caused the release of about 237,000 gallons of gasoline into a creek that flowed through Whatcom Falls Park in Bellingham, Washington. The gasoline ignited, sending a fireball about 1.5 miles down the creek, which took the lives of two 10-year-old boys, Stephen Tsiorvas and Wade King, and an 18-year-old young man, Liam Wood. Eight additional inhalation injuries occurred, a single-family residence and the city of Bellingham's water treatment plant were severely damaged, and the wildlife in Whatcom Creek was completely destroyed.

Investigators found, among other things, that Olympic Pipe Line had no remote-operated shut off valves on the line, which could have prevented the release of hundreds of thousands of gasoline and the loss of three young lives. Following the Bellingham accident, RSPA ordered the pipeline company to install an automatic check valve just downstream of the rupture location so that the volume of product released would be limited in the event of a future pipeline rupture in that area. Again, a case of too little, too late.

Pipeline accidents, such as the ones in Mounds View and Bellingham, are not isolated incidents. According to the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA), which now oversees the safety of our nation's pipeline infrastructure, 2,888 significant pipeline incidents occurred between 1999–2008, resulting in 173 fatalities, 632 injuries, and \$2.7 billion in property damage.

In response to these incidents, Congress passed the Pipeline Safety Improvement Act of 2002 (P.L. 107–355), which increased penalties for violations of safety standards; developed qualification programs for employees who perform sensitive tasks; strengthened pipeline testing requirements; required government mapping of the pipeline system; established a public education program for communities that live around pipelines; and enhanced whistleblower protections.

In 2006, Congress furthered these pipeline safety efforts by passing the Pipeline Inspection, Protection, Enforcement, and Safety Act (P.L. 109–468), which required development of an integrity management program for distribution pipelines; implemented long-standing NTSB safety recommendations on the installation of excess flow valves, development of hours-of-service standards for pipeline employees, and adoption of safety standards for Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) systems; and increased pipeline inspection and enforcement personnel.

Despite these significant measures, much work remains to be done. PHMSA has not implemented many of the mandates from the 2006 Act. Over the next several months, as we look to reauthorization of the pipeline safety program in fiscal year 2011, we will work with PHMSA to ensure full implementation of the Act.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H. Res. 484.

Mr. LARSEN of Washington. I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Washington (Mr. LARSEN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 484.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RECOGNIZING NATIONAL HOMEOWNERSHIP MONTH

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 502) recognizing National Homeownership Month and the importance of homeownership in the United States.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 502

Whereas the month of June is recognized as National Homeownership Month;

Whereas the people of the United States are one of the best-housed populations in the world;

Whereas owning a home is a fundamental part of the American dream and is the largest personal investment many families will ever make;

Whereas homeownership provides economic security for homeowners by aiding them in building wealth over time and strengthens communities through a greater stake among homeowners in local schools, civic organizations, and churches;

Whereas creating affordable homeownership opportunities requires the commitment and cooperation of the private, public, and nonprofit sectors, including the Federal Government and State and local governments;

Whereas homeownership can be sustained through appropriate homeownership education and informed borrowers; and

Whereas affordable homeownership will play a vital role in resolving the crisis in the United States housing market: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) fully supports the goals and ideals of National Homeownership Month;

(2) recognizes the importance of homeownership in building strong communities and families; and

(3) reaffirms the importance of homeownership in the Nation's economy and its central role in our national economic recovery.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATERS) and the gentleman from California (Mr. GARY G. MILLER) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on this legislation and to insert extraneous material thereon.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from California?

There was no objection.

Ms. WATERS. Madam Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

I am proud to be a cosponsor of this legislation which recognizes June as National Homeownership Month. As Chair of the Subcommittee on Housing and Community Opportunity, I am indeed committed to good public policy that will assist citizens to realize the American dream of homeownership. I would like to thank Representative GARY MILLER for his continued leadership on ensuring that this resolution comes to the floor every year. This is the seventh time that he has introduced this resolution, and I appreciate his commitment to America's homeowners. Preserving homeownership is more important today than ever before, with foreclosures reaching record levels and millions more Americans struggling to stay in their homes. Homeownership has historically been the single most important wealth-building tool available to families in this country. However, homeownership, as we know it, is at risk. The foreclosure crisis has all but erased the gains we have made in increasing homeownership rates, especially for minorities; and the gains those families thought they had achieved through increases in home equity have also diminished as now 20 percent of homeowners owe more on their homes than they are worth.

The combination of unemployment, unsustainable and predatory mortgages, and uncooperative mortgage servicers has created a perfect storm of record rates, of loan defaults and foreclosures. According to the Mortgage Bankers Association, a record 12 percent of mortgages are either in default or in foreclosure. According to the Center For Responsible Lending, 6,500 foreclosures occur each day in the United States. By the end of 2009, there will be 2.4 million families in foreclosure. We must keep families in their homes, and this Congress and the administration have developed programs to do just that. For example, the Making Home Affordable program, announced by President Barack Obama in March, builds on legislation I introduced at the beginning of this Congress to end this unending avalanche of foreclosures.

Despite the commitment from the administration and Congress to reduce foreclosures, mortgage servicers have been reluctant to modify troubled loans. In fact, NeighborWorks recently found in its survey of housing counseling agencies that servicers are generally uncooperative. They take up to 60 days to respond to requests and frequently lose important documents. In order to be true to the spirit of National Homeownership Month, I call on all mortgage servicers to fully participate in the Making Home Affordable program and to work with families to maintain their ownership.

Vulnerable homeowners are also threatened by scam artists who offer to

rescue or help struggling homeowners stay in their homes for an exorbitant fee that must be paid up front. They often deliver either nothing or a higher payment than the homeowner was paying before contacting these companies. The Federal Trade Commission has begun to crack down on these scammers, and I support these efforts.

Prospective homeowners are also caught up in this economic crisis. Because they have no other home to sell, first-time homebuyers have the ability to help stabilize housing prices and neighborhoods. Housing experts are saying that now is the time to buy, but many first-time homebuyers are finding themselves locked out of the housing market. Many families who would otherwise be buying homes now lack the required down payment. Fortunately, the recently enacted \$8,000 tax credit for first-time homebuyers is now being monetized so that these homeowners can use it to pay closing costs or to assist with their down payment.

America's homeowners face many challenges this month and will face many more this year. This resolution demonstrates this Congress' commitment to assisting them and first-time homebuyers in achieving the American dream of homeownership.

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I urge all of my colleagues to support this important resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GARY G. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the month of June is recognized as National Homeownership Month. On June 3, 2009, I introduced this bipartisan resolution with 12 of my colleagues, including the ranking member, and I would like to thank MAXINE WATERS. As I recall, you have been here every time on the floor speaking with me. You are an ardent supporter of housing. You understand the benefit of that to communities and how it really helps people who need homes.

We are in a tough time, but we need to acknowledge the importance of homeownership in building strong communities and families. Owning a home is a fundamental part of the American Dream and is the largest personal investment most families will ever make.

For millions of American families, homeownership provides an entry into the middle class, and is a key to building wealth. Moreover, in addition to providing financial benefits to individuals, homeownership also helps strengthen communities. Homeowners have a greater stake in the success of their local schools, civic organizations and churches.

We have recently experienced significant upheaval in the U.S. housing market which has affected the entire economy. My home State of California in particular has been heavily impacted by the mortgage crisis, with thousands

of families losing their homes. Despite all of this occurring in the current housing market, we need to remember that homeownership has historically been the single largest creator of wealth for most Americans.

As someone who has been involved in the housing industry for more than 35 years, I have seen my fair share of housing downturns. From these experiences, I have learned that at a time of stress, it is important to ensure that liquidity continues to flow to the housing market in order to keep the markets functioning.

The loan limit increases for FHA and GSEs included in enacted law are finally providing affordable, safe mortgages for homeowners who were previously forced to resort to risky loans that impaired their ability to keep their home.

Additionally, I have also cosponsored the Homebuyer Tax Credit Act, which was introduced by my fellow Southern Californian, KEN CALVERT, to bring stability to the housing market and encourage responsible homeownership. Congressman KEN CALVERT's bill would expand the homebuyer tax credit provisions included in the enacted stimulus bills. During these economically challenging times, it is more important than ever to provide tax relief to hard-working families.

In the first quarter of 2009, the homeownership rate was 67.3 percent. It has become more difficult for many people to retain homeownership today. Many families are trying very hard just to be able to make their house payment each and every month.

In the past we have seen downturns in the seventies, eighties and nineties. This is probably the most significant one I have ever seen. At this point in time we need to acknowledge that supporting homeownership is a worthy goal of this Congress, and I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this resolution by voting "yes."

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to request of my colleague that we join in a little colloquy prior to going to our closing.

Representative MILLER, I know that you have been involved with real estate and housing and development and you understand a lot about the housing markets. And while we have identified that there certainly are problems we have been going through, a crisis with foreclosures and a kind of a meltdown, I am extremely hopeful that we are going to be able to stabilize this housing market and that we can continue to encourage our families to seek homeownership opportunities.

I think we see some indications of the banks getting stronger and being able to pay back money that the United States citizens have invested in the banks in order to stabilize this housing market. But I would like to have your opinion: Based on your expertise and your involvement for so

many years, do you think that we are beginning to have a turnaround?

Mr. GARY G. MILLER of California. Well, you have worked very closely with me over the years on dealing with conforming loan limits in high-cost areas for Freddie and Fannie, and in California we almost felt like stepchildren for years. The limits were so low that people in California could not be able to use them to buy a home, and they were forced into riskier loans that many times you and I fought hard to change.

We have raised the GSEs and the FHA loan limit in California and are helping a tremendous amount of people refinance their homes, or people who need to sell a home and people buying a home be able to get into the marketplace at probably at least 100 basis points cheaper than they would be able to get into a jumbo loan.

I don't know if it is over, Maxine. I really wish I could say it was. I remember back in the early eighties when the prime went to 21.5 percent. You remember that. As a developer, I was paying a 24.5 percent interest rate for construction projects I had, and if anybody could even get a loan for 12 percent, they would buy a house at that point in time. But you couldn't get it.

I hope we are doing what is right, providing liquidity in the marketplace to encourage people to take advantage of the deals that are out there today. But you see more and more lenders having to foreclose on homes, and they are putting them on the marketplace. In fact, I have a bill right now that Chairman FRANK is going to be bringing up before the committee that allows banks, instead of forcing those homes on the marketplace, they can lease those homes for up to 5 years, and that way you get a lot of these distress sales off the marketplace.

Hopefully we can find a reasonable bottom at that point in time and the market will start to come back. But you have such a glut of foreclosed properties on the market today that it keeps driving values down further and further, and that makes it more difficult for people to be able to stay in their home, because many times they owe more than it is worth.

So hopefully we can get together, and we have done many of these things in a bipartisan fashion, and create a structure that will create a bottom and get us out of this. I am looking forward to that.

But I am really thankful to you for your help and your cooperation and your support for the housing market. You have a passion for that, as I do, and I know SPENCER BACHUS does and Chairman FRANK does also, and hopefully working together in a bipartisan fashion we can find a bottom and move the American people in a positive fashion forward.

Ms. WATERS. Thank you very much. I do appreciate your comments, and I value them because of your experience.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, it is with great enthusiasm that I support H. Res 502, recognizing June as National Homeownership Month and the importance of homeownership in the United States.

Since the founding of this great nation, homeownership has been fundamentally tied to the American Dream. However, the right to own land or a home has not always been an inclusive one—for many generations homeownership was denied to communities of color and women. While we have taken great strides to rectify past injustices, much remains to be done, which reflects the importance of this resolution.

Owning a home represents much more than a roof and walls to protect one's family from the elements, or a space to raise a family. A home is the single most valuable asset one can own, and the wealth it can generate over time is crucially important for rising out of poverty. This reason alone, reflects the irrevocable damage that the foreclosure crisis is inflicting on our communities.

The bursting of the housing bubble and the economic crisis have resulted in the loss of countless American homes; countless dreams have been disrupted, and countless Americans are now struggling to deal with the ramifications of the actions of greedy, dishonest businesspeople more focused on personal gain than on truly honoring the dream of homeownership.

We now find ourselves at a critical point in American history. The housing and financial markets are undergoing fundamental changes; and while the Administration and this legislative body continue to work to implement programs to sustain homeownership, we must not forget those of us who are still working to realize the dream of owning their own home.

I firmly believe that homeownership should be a dream realized by every responsible American, and believe that we should continue to work to provide opportunities to make those realizations possible.

Mr. GARY G. MILLER of California. I have no further speakers, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATERS) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 502.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1886, PAKISTAN ENDURING ASSISTANCE AND COOPERATION ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2009, AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2410, FOREIGN RELATIONS AUTHORIZATION ACT, FISCAL YEARS 2010 AND 2011

Mr. PERLMUTTER, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 111-143) on the resolution (H. Res. 522) providing for

consideration of the bill (H.R. 1886) to authorize democratic, economic, and social development assistance for Pakistan, to authorize security assistance for Pakistan, and for other purposes, and providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2410) to authorize appropriations for the Department of State and the Peace Corps for fiscal years 2010 and 2011, to modernize the Foreign Service, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF
MILLARD FULLER

Mr. CLEAVER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 385) celebrating the life of Millard Fuller, a life which provides all of the evidence one needs to believe in the power of the human spirit to inspire hope and lift the burdens of poverty and despair from the shoulders of one's fellow man.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 385

Whereas Mr. Millard Fuller, as the founder of Habitat for Humanity and as a dedicated citizen, displayed extraordinary commitment, selflessness, and benevolence throughout a lifetime of philanthropy and goodwill;

Whereas Mr. Fuller, despite achieving financial success by which he could live out the rest of his life in well-earned comfort, instead chose to devote himself to a cause greater than himself, abandoning his fortune for a life of service;

Whereas this commitment was most profoundly manifested in the establishment of Habitat for Humanity in Americus, Georgia, an organization whose core principle was, in Millard Fuller's own words, "To make it socially, morally, politically and religiously unacceptable to have substandard housing and homelessness";

Whereas Habitat for Humanity has, since its founding in 1976, and with the help of countless volunteers, constructed over 300,000 homes for 1,500,000 of the world's less fortunate, providing hope that would otherwise be lost and promise that would otherwise lay unrealized;

Whereas Habitat for Humanity's success has left an enduring mark of progress on the world, an achievement facilitated by Millard Fuller's leadership and commitment to a higher ideal, to a more empathetic and noble world, and to a vision of what can be achieved when a united people extend their hands in selfless service;

Whereas Mr. Fuller's life has been previously and deservedly honored by President William Jefferson Clinton, who awarded him the Nation's highest civilian honor, the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1996; and

Whereas Millard Fuller passed away on February 3, 2009, leaving behind a loving wife, Linda Fuller, a proud family, and a world filled with inexhaustible gratitude: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) celebrates the life of Millard Fuller, a life which provides all the evidence one needs to believe in the power of the human spirit to inspire hope and lift the burdens of poverty and despair from the shoulders of one's fellow man;

(2) honors Millard Fuller for three decades of leadership and service through Habitat for Humanity, and the millions he and his organization have inspired to embrace a passion for the good and the just; and

(3) urges the people of the United States to recognize and pay tribute to Millard Fuller's life and legacy of service by carrying on his vision for a kinder, gentler world, following the example he so emphatically set.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLEAVER) and the gentleman from California (Mr. GARY G. MILLER) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Missouri.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CLEAVER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on this legislation and to insert extraneous materials thereon.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Missouri?

There was no objection.

Mr. CLEAVER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening to recognize and celebrate the life of Mr. Millard Fuller, the founder and strength behind one of our Nation's most well-known and beloved nonprofit institutions.

Mr. Fuller led Habitat for Humanity from its founding in 1976 until 2005. He was an amazing man who was able to turn a simple idea into a global housing juggernaut serving over 100 countries. Through his leadership, Habitat for Humanity has created affordable homes for more than 300,000 families and 1 million people, families that otherwise would have remained in substandard housing.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think that it is appropriate for this body to pass this resolution for a gentleman who certainly is worthy of having this recognition.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GARY G. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of House Resolution 502, celebrating the life of Millard Fuller, founder of Habitat for Humanity. Millard Fuller, along with his wife, Linda, founded Habitat for Humanity in 1976.

Habitat for Humanity operates as a nonprofit Christian housing ministry. Working together with local affiliates, Habitat provides safe, decent and affordable housing for people of all backgrounds. Since its founding, Habitat for Humanity has built more than 300,000 homes worldwide in 3,000 communities and provided housing for more than 1.5 million people.

Habitat for Humanity provides needy families with an opportunity for homeownership. The average cost of a Habitat home in the U.S. is \$60,000. Habitat for Humanity sells homes at no profit to Habitat homeowners. In order to purchase a home, a Habitat homeowner