

lead on a broad portfolio of highway-related issues. His expertise, his attention to detail, his discretion, and his counsel have served me and the Subcommittee well.

Jackie Schmitz, Professional Staff with the Subcommittee on Highways and Transit, has served on my Committee staff for five and a half years. Her dedication to public service and commitment to sound transportation policy have made her an asset to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

Jackie's work has focused on promoting bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, improving highway safety, and advancing transportation research and technology. She has assisted the Members of this body in addressing the needs of their communities and has made significant contributions to the Committee's improved standards of ethics and transparency.

I am particularly proud of the work Jackie has done to advance the Safe Routes to School program, which is leaving a legacy of safety and wellness for the next generation. Her hard work is driven by her recognition that all Americans deserve transportation choices that are safe, reliable, and accessible, and I am grateful for her service to the Committee.

Peter Gould, Legislative Assistant for the Subcommittee on Highways and Transit, has served the Committee for the past four years with a high level of professionalism, dedication to serving the public, and a good-natured sense of humor.

For the past two years Peter has helped me craft the Committee's message through speeches, op-eds, and floor statements, making the case for greater investment in the nation's surface transportation infrastructure as part of the transformational Surface Transportation Authorization Act. As my colleagues and I pressed for this transformational legislation, I was always confident of Peter's messaging and political acumen on presenting this issue to the American public.

Jennifer Esposito has been a key staff member of the Committee since June 2004. As Staff Director of the Subcommittee on Railroads, Pipelines, and Hazardous Materials, Jennifer led the Committee's efforts to enact historic legislation to reauthorize Amtrak and the Federal Railroad Administration's rail safety program, and to develop legislation to address rail security concerns in the wake of the September 11, 2001 attacks. She also led the Committee's efforts to enact the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008, which created new grant programs for development of high-speed and intercity passenger rail in the United States.

Jennifer also has developed legislation to reauthorize the Department of Transportation's pipeline and hazardous materials safety programs, and conducted extensive oversight investigations of the programs which led to major changes within the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration. Most recently, she conducted an oversight investigation of an Enbridge pipeline rupture in Marshall, Michigan, which unveiled major safety deficiencies.

Rachel Carr has been a staff member on the Committee on Transportation twice over the past ten years. She first served as Staff Assistant for the Subcommittees on Aviation and Railroads from March 2000 to May 2002, while earning her law degree at night. After graduating with honors from the American University Washington College of Law, Ms. Carr

continued her legal career in transportation, then rejoined the Committee in March, 2009, as Counsel on the Subcommittee on Railroads, Pipelines and Hazardous Materials.

In her current role, Ms. Carr has been involved with drafting legislation to reauthorize the Department of Transportation's hazardous materials safety program and has been an integral part in oversight of the DOT's implementation of the high-speed and intercity passenger rail and pipeline safety programs.

Joseph E. Connelly is another member of my staff serving with the Subcommittee on Railroads, Pipelines and Hazardous Materials. Though Joe has been with the staff a very short time, having served a little less than two years as Professional Staff and a Fellow from the Federal Railroad Administration, he has helped instill a culture of safety into all of the federal agencies and entities under the jurisdiction of the Committee.

Joe has contributed to the Committee by painstakingly conducting concise, thorough investigations, analyzing complex data and reducing that data into easily definable terms. The results of these investigations helped transform the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration into a science-based, data-driven Agency. For over 30 years, Joe Connelly has proudly served the American people as a member of the legislative and executive branch. He has made safety his life's work and has contributed immeasurably to the safe transportation of hazardous materials throughout the United States.

I would like to recognize Ryan C. Seiger for his 12 years of service to the Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment, the last 4 of which he served as Staff Director and Senior Counsel. Ryan has been a thoughtful and dedicated advocate for improving the overall environmental health of the nation for future generations and for taking the steps necessary to achieve the Clean Water Act's goals of "fishable and swimmable" waters. He has a deep understanding of the challenges that remain in protecting the Nation's waters, and has served this country well in exploring innovative ways to overcome these challenges.

I also want to express my gratitude for his encyclopedic knowledge of water resource law, which served us so well in his role as lead House negotiator on the Water Resources Development Act of 2007. Thanks to his work and the work of the rest of the Subcommittee staff, Congress was able to achieve what was only the 107th successful override of a Presidential veto in the history of the nation.

Finally, Madam Speaker, I want to thank Navis Bermudez for her service as Professional Staff to the Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment. Despite the fact that she has only been with the Subcommittee for the past year, her service to the Committee and to the Congress has been exemplary. During this year, Navis helped the Committee develop and move legislation (H.R. 3534) to address many of the legal shortcomings of the Oil Pollution Act and the Clean Water Act that were exposed by the Deepwater Horizon oil spill disaster. Navis has also been integral in Congressional efforts to reauthorize and strengthen several of the Environmental Protection Agency's targeted watershed programs, including House passage of legislation to reauthorize the National Estuaries Program

(H.R. 4715), and efforts to reauthorize EPA's Long Island Sound and Chesapeake Bay program offices.

Navis has proven to be a strong advocate for protecting the nation's water-related environment, and has performed her job with professionalism and competence.

Madam Speaker, the people I have mentioned here are part of the Committee's professional staff. There are many others who perform administrative duties that are equally important to the work done by the Committee. I intend to recognize their contribution in a subsequent statement.

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HONORING PRIVATE FIRST CLASS  
AUSTIN G. STAGGS

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HON. LYNN A. WESTMORELAND

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, December 16, 2010*

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Madam Speaker, it is with great sadness that I come before the U.S. House of Representatives tonight to celebrate the life of Private First Class Austin G. Staggs. PFC Staggs answered his nation's call of duty in 2009 after graduating from North Hills Private School in Millsap, Texas near his hometown of Weatherford, Texas. On November 29, 2010 Austin made the ultimate sacrifice while serving his country and fellow servicemen in the Nangarhar Province of Afghanistan.

Private First Class Staggs was deployed to Afghanistan as part of 101st Airborne Division based in Fort Campbell, Kentucky. He left behind his mother and father, two brothers, two sisters, his wife Sheena Staggs and his son Kallen Staggs. His father Byram Staggs of Senoia, Georgia recalls how adamant he had been about joining the U.S. Army. It had always been his dream he says.

His family also recalled a loving young man who was adored by his siblings. His father said, "He was the most big-hearted kid you've ever met." His stepmother Kelly smiles when she talks about his Skype video calls to their house from Afghanistan. She said he was adored by his nieces and nephews so much that they would push each other out of the way to see him when he called. PFC Staggs' mother, Kaye missed his last call during the Thanksgiving holidays, but his grandmother said she saved his last voicemail so that she can listen to him say "I love you" any time she wants.

Like any soldier PFC Staggs received great satisfaction from the job that he and all fellow U.S. servicemen were doing in Afghanistan. He served his country bravely and took pride in the fact that the work he was doing every day was touching millions of lives both at home and abroad.

It pains me that fine young men such as PFC Staggs have been killed protecting the freedom of this great country. I know that no words can lessen the sorrow that Austin's family feels, but I am proud to salute such a fine son, brother, husband and father.

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. JO BONNER**

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, December 16, 2010*

Mr. BONNER. Madam Speaker, on Wednesday, December 15, 2010, I was unavoidably detained and unable to cast my vote on H. Res. 1761, a resolution congratulating Auburn University quarterback Cameron Newton on winning the 2010 Heisman Trophy as the most outstanding college football player in the United States.

As an original cosponsor of this legislation, had I been present, I would have voted "aye" on H. Res. 1761.

**SENATOR PAUL SIMON WATER  
FOR THE WORLD ACT OF 2009**

**HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, December 16, 2010*

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, I rise tonight, as I have the previous two nights, in order to prod this body to act to save lives before it is too late. It is simply unconscionable that 4,100 children die every day from diarrheal diseases spread through poor sanitation and hygiene. The mortality rate for children killed by waterborne diseases is six times as large as the number of children killed by HIV/AIDS and four times as many as killed by malaria.

Melanie Nakagawa of the National Resources Defense Council has called the inter-

national water and sanitation crisis "the most poorly addressed environmental problem of our day." Indeed, nearly one billion people lack safe drinking water. According to the World Health Organization, two and a half billion people lack sufficient water sanitation facilities.

Many of us have seen the impacts of this ongoing tragedy first-hand—from the United States, to Africa, to Haiti, where people are dying every day from cholera because of a lack of access to clean water and sanitation facilities.

The gap between access to safe drinking water and proper sanitation is widening between those living in poverty and the wealthy. The former South African president, Nelson Mandela, challenged global leaders to make access to clean water a basic human right and to put water and sanitation much higher up on the political, economic and social agendas. "The absence of access to clean water" he stated "is most stark in the widespread impoverishment of the natural environment."

The U.N. agreed with Mandela at the Earth Summit, noting that water is the greatest obstacle to sustainable development and the most visible symbol of the growing gap between the rich and the poor. As the Archbishop Desmond Tutu said, "No issue has ever been more neglected than water and sanitation. And it is neglected because it is of concern mainly to the poor and powerless."

Kofi Annan, former United Nations Secretary General, stated that "access to safe drinking water and sanitation is a fundamental human need and therefore, a basic human right."

We have legislation before Congress that will address these inequities and demonstrate our government's commitment to the fundamental human right of safe and clean water.

H.R. 2030, the Senator Paul Simon Water for the World Act of 2009, would give the U.S. government the tools to provide 100 million people with first-time access to clean water and sanitation.

The Senate, which has been repeatedly criticized for not addressing the hundreds of bills passed by this body during the 111th Congress, has already approved the companion to H.R. 2030. And the Senate passed that legislation on September 20, 2010 by unanimous consent.

Despite the occasional partisan differences here in Washington DC, this critical issue has support on both sides of the aisle. There are ten Republican cosponsors of the House bill and eight Republican cosponsors of the Senate bill.

Water for the World is also supported by a broad spectrum of advocates, including Water Advocates, the Natural Resources Defense Council, ONE, Mercy Corps, International Housing Coalition, CARE, and Population Services International, Millennium Water Alliance, Living Water International and Religious Water Working Group.

We are down to the wire and the time to act is now. If the 111th Congress expires without a vote on the House floor, millions of people will have to unnecessarily wait for clean water. And many lives will be unnecessarily lost. While many Americans take water for granted, one-sixth of the world's population, almost a billion people, do not have access to safe drinking water. The Water for the World Act is an important start to addressing this problem. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation before it is too late.