

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 25, 2010

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I was unable to be present for votes on May 24, 2010. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye" on each of rollcall Nos. 291, 292, and 293.

MONIQUE GALLEGOS

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 25, 2010

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Monique Gallegos who has received the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Monique Gallegos is a 12th grader at Jefferson High School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Monique Gallegos is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations once again to Monique Gallegos for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character to all her future accomplishments.

VISA SECURITY IS NATIONAL SECURITY

HON. LAMAR SMITH

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 25, 2010

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Madam Speaker, this week, the Senate Intelligence Committee released a bipartisan report that identified the State Department's failure to revoke Abdulmutallab's visa as one of 14 security failures leading to the attempted Christmas Day terror attack.

This attack is not the first time terrorists have obtained U.S. visas. Several of the 9/11 hijackers did so as well.

After 9/11, Congress created the Visa Security Program to increase the security of the visa process at U.S. embassies and consulates.

My bill, the Secure Visas Act, mandates that the administration expand the Visa Security Program to the highest risk consular posts. And it requires that in the event a visa is revoked after it has been issued, consular, law enforcement, and terrorist screening databases are updated immediately.

REDUCTION IN USE OF COAL AT CAPITOL POWER PLANT

HON. ED WHITFIELD

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 25, 2010

Mr. WHITFIELD. Madam Speaker, on February 26, 2009, the Office of Architect of the Capitol (AOC) received a letter signed by the Speaker of the House and the Senate Majority Leader directing a reduction in the use of coal at the Capitol Power Plant, in favor of natural gas. In response, I wrote a letter to the AOC inquiring about the impacts of this proposal and the costs associated with it. The text of that letter and the Architect's response follow.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, March 4, 2009.

Mr. STEPHEN AYERS,
Acting Architect of the Capitol,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. AYERS: There have been several articles written about the Capitol Power Plant in recent weeks and I have had several groups in my office lobbying to stop using coal at the plant. I would appreciate your providing me some basic facts about the plant.

1. When was it constructed, what was its initial cost, and when did it begin operations?

2. What was/is the rated electrical capacity of the plant?

3. How much coal was burned at the plant during its peak years of operation?

4. When was natural gas first used as a fuel in the plant, and what was the cost to convert the plant so that natural gas could be used?

5. What is the mix of fuel used today at the plant, in percentages?

6. What has been the additional cost or cost-saving associated with the use of a mix of natural gas and coal, instead of coal only?

7. What is the timeline for converting the plant to natural gas only, and what will be the cost of the conversion?

8. What is the projected additional cost or cost-saving over the next five years, by converting the plant to operate only on natural gas?

9. What type of coal is presently burned at the plant, and where is it produced?

10. Does the plant produce electricity, or only steam and cooled water for the Capitol complex?

11. If electricity is produced, what amount of income does the sale of the electricity produce annually?

12. If electricity is not produced, why not?

13. If electricity is not produced, what would it cost to convert the plant so that electricity could be produced and sold, and what would be the projected annual income from those sales?

14. What emissions controls are in place at the plant, when were they added, and at what cost?

15. Is the plant presently in compliance with federal Clean Air Act regulations?

16. If the plant is not in compliance with emissions limitations, what additional controls might be needed to continue to use coal or a mix of coal and natural gas, and what are the estimated capital costs of those additional controls?

Thank you very much for your attention to this request. I will look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

ED WHITFIELD,
Member of Congress.

THE ARCHITECT OF THE CAPITOL,
Washington, DC, March 20, 2009.

Hon. ED WHITFIELD
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN WHITFIELD: Thank you for your interest in the U.S. Capitol Power Plant. As a matter of background, Congress authorized \$1,545,975.65 for the design and construction of the Capitol Power Plant on April 28, 1904, and it was completed and began operations in 1910. Originally, the plant was constructed to produce electricity. However, since 1951 it has not produced electricity and only generates steam and chilled water for the Capitol Complex.

The Capitol Power Plant is currently capable of using three fuels; coal, natural gas, and fuel oil. In a series of projects starting in 1989, individual boilers within the plant have been modified to be capable of burning natural gas. In Fiscal Year 2008, the fuel consumed by the plant was 65% natural gas and 35% coal. The largest amount of coal burned during the last 20 years was in 1993, when the plant used 47,393 short tons. The plant currently burns low sulfur bituminous coal which is purchased through the General Services Administration and the Defense Energy Support Center. The following table provides details on the fuel usage and costs for Fiscal Year 2008:

Utility type	Energy (MMBTU)	Cost (\$)
Natural Gas	975,046	\$12,653,649
Oil	120	\$2,291
Coal	528,489	\$2,444,511
Heating Energy Total	1,503,655	\$15,100,451

The Capitol Power Plant operates in full compliance with current Federal Clean Air Act regulations. The plant utilizes two reverse air bag houses, installed in the early 1980's, to control particulate emissions. Emissions are further controlled via fuel specifications and combustion controls.

On February 26, 2009, the Office of Architect of the Capitol (AOC) received a letter signed by the Speaker of the House and the Senate Majority Leader directing a reduction in the use of coal at the plant, in favor of natural gas. Our preliminary estimates indicate that operating the plant using 100% natural gas will cost an additional \$5-\$7 million annually in fuel costs and will require a one-time capital investment needed to equip the plant. We are currently preparing preliminary designs with cost estimates for the capital investment requirement.

The AOC has undertaken a comprehensive strategic planning process for the Capitol Power Plant. Leveraging the skills of expert consultants and in-house staff, the AOC is analyzing a number of options for the plant, including several scenarios which utilize cogeneration systems to generate electricity. Those options are also being reviewed by the National Academy of Sciences and later will be reviewed by the Department of Energy. We expect to publish a final report in Summer 2009.

Should you have further questions about the Capitol Power Plant or any of AOC's activities, please do not hesitate to contact me at 228-1793.

Sincerely,

STEPHEN T. AYERS, AIA,
Acting Architect of the Capitol.
CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, March 25, 2009.

Mr. STEPHEN AYERS,
Acting Architect of the Capitol,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. AYERS: Thank you for your prompt and very helpful response to my letter to you of March 4, 2009, regarding the

Capitol Power Plant. I would appreciate your further response to these two additional questions:

1. You indicated that "in a series of projects starting in 1989, individual boilers within the plant have been modified to be capable of burning natural gas." What was the total capital cost (or your best estimate) of those modifications?

2. In my previous letter I asked where the coal is produced that is burned in the plant, and you responded that the coal is purchased through GSA and the Defense Energy Support Center. Can you tell me which state(s) the coal comes from?

I appreciate your attention to this request, and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

ED WHITFIELD,
Member of Congress.

THE ARCHITECT OF THE CAPITOL,
Washington, DC, April 2, 2009.

Hon. ED WHITFIELD,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN WHITFIELD: Thank you for your letter of March 25, 2009 regarding the Capitol Power Plant. I appreciate your continued leadership on energy issues and your support of the Office of the Architect of the Capitol (AOC). Your letter contained two questions addressed below.

You asked for an estimate of the total capital investment made in recent years for modifying boilers at the Capitol Power Plant to burn natural gas. We have completed several projects stretching over the past twelve years to convert individual boilers to burn natural gas. The capital investment for these projects was approximately \$1.5 million.

You also asked which state supplies coal used at the Capitol Power Plant. The AOC purchases coal through the Government Services Agency (GSA) and the Defense Energy Support Center. These entities are responsible for determining the source of coal supplied under their contract. It is our understanding, based on information from the GSA, that the most recent supplier of coal for the plant is located in West Virginia.

Should you have further questions about the Capitol Power Plant, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

STEPHEN T. AYERS, AIA,
Acting Architect of the Capitol.

MILANA ATENCIO

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 25, 2010

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Milana Atencio who has received the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Milana Atencio is a 12th grader at Arvada High School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Milana Atencio is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations once again to Milana Atencio for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the

same dedication and character to all her future accomplishments.

CAREGIVERS AND VETERANS OMNIBUS HEALTH SERVICES ACT

HON. C.A. DUTCH RUPPERSBERGER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 25, 2010

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of S. 1963, the "Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act." I voted for components of this bill and would have voted in favor of this bill if not home recovering from surgery. This important legislation will help us to meet the needs of the men and women who have courageously sacrificed for our country and those that now care for them.

This bill ensures that veterans and their families get the care and support they need after they have put their lives on the line defending our great country. We in Congress made a promise not to leave our veterans behind and this bill renews that promise. This bill addresses the unique needs of the families and caregivers of our wounded warriors, of returning women soldiers and those veterans who are catastrophically disabled.

This bill provides support services to family and other caregivers of veterans, including education on how to give better care, counseling and mental health services, and respite care for family and other caregivers of all veterans. It also provides health care and a stipend for caregivers living with severely wounded veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan, many of whom have had to leave a job to care for their veteran full-time.

This bill improves health services for nearly 2 million female veterans. The VA will be able to provide care for female veterans' newborns for up to seven days for the first time in history and improve treatment for sexual trauma victims. It requires the VA to conduct a study of barriers to female veterans seeking health care and implement a reintegration pilot program.

This law ensures the VA can better treat veterans suffering from mental health issues and provides the VA with resources to learn more about the tragically high suicide rate among veterans. This bill also prohibits copayments for veterans who are catastrophically disabled and creates a pilot program to provide certain dental services to veterans, survivors and their dependents. It also expands grants that fund critical organizations offering transitional housing and other support for homeless veterans.

I believe this legislation offers comprehensive solutions to major, high-priority challenges facing veterans and their families. It brings hope to the men and women in uniform who have dedicated their lives to our country, and their families who have in turn dedicated their lives to caring for their wounded warriors at home.

TRIBUTE AND CONGRATULATIONS
TO MRS. EMMA ALLEN ON THE
OCCASION OF HER 100TH BIRTH-
DAY

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 25, 2010

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I take this opportunity to congratulate Mrs. Emma Allen who was born on June 2, in Bessemer, Alabama and now resides at Lexington Healthcare of Elmhurst, IL.

Mrs. Allen has lived a long and fruitful life; she is the last of twelve siblings, was married to her late husband Mr. John Allen for 68 years and has one (1) daughter, three (3) grandchildren, six (6) great grandchildren, and three (3) great-great grandchildren.

I also commend Lexington Healthcare of Elmhurst, IL for providing excellent care for individuals like Mrs. Allen so that they may be able to live and enjoy life even though they may have reached the age of 100.

I also commend and thank granddaughter Ms. Janice Meeks for bringing Mrs. Allen to our attention and I wish and hope that all grandparents would have grandchildren like her.

PERMANENTLY EXTENDING THE
FIRST-TIME HOMEBUYER TAX
CREDIT

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 25, 2010

Mr. PAUL. Madam Speaker, today I introduce legislation to permanently extend the first-time homebuyer tax credit and to make the credit available to people whose homes have been destroyed by a natural disaster, such as a hurricane. The legislation also makes a number of changes to existing tax credits in order to enhance their usefulness to victims of natural disasters. Specifically, this bill makes the casualty loss deductions available to taxpayers who do not itemize and it makes the casualty loss provision available for five years after the disaster. This legislation also helps people who have lost their jobs because of a natural disaster by making unemployment payments provided under the Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act tax free.

Renewing the first-time home buyer's credit will help Americans purchase a first home with their own money, instead of having to rely on government-funded or backed programs. The other sections of this legislation were inspired by conversations my staff and I had with constituents who had to purchase new homes because Hurricane Ike destroyed their prior homes. The first-time homebuyer's tax credit could be of tremendous value to these people, yet the law denies them the credit because they are replacing destroyed homes. My bill not only reinstates that first-time homebuyer's credit, it also corrects that oversight.

It is hard to think of a more beneficial or compassionate expansion of the first-time homebuyer tax credit than to make the credit available to those whose homes have been destroyed or damaged by natural disasters. In