

areas for the length of time as established by the regulations.

While it's unfortunate that it took almost 6 years for USDA to establish a final rule implementing this first step, I'm optimistic that when the first awards are issued in the coming weeks, we'll begin a slowdown and hopefully reverse this problem.

To the extent that the loan program is successful, it's important to consider that this was just the first step. While this assistance will be very helpful in attracting veterinarians to these communities, there remain gaps in veterinarian recruitment, attracting and training technical support staff, and simply meeting the long-term costs of operating veterinarian practices in these communities.

The Veterinarian Services Investment Act is meant to address these secondary needs and is designed to complement the loan repayment program to help large animal veterinarians become established in these communities.

This bill recognizes and addresses a real problem in rural America, and I'm proud to be an original cosponsor. I support this legislation, and I encourage all of my colleagues to do the same.

Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to my colleague from Nebraska (Mr. SMITH), who has done an outstanding job of shepherding this bill through, understands the challenges in his State and in rural communities across America, and he's trying to do something.

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. I sincerely appreciate today's consideration of H.R. 3519, the Veterinarian Services Investment Act. The need for skilled veterinarians has already been stated. It may not be at the forefront of debate here in Washington, but it is an issue which impacts many areas of our country and many aspects of our lives.

Our food animal veterinary workforce is on the front lines of food safety, public health, and animal health. This vital profession, however, is facing a critical shortage in the public, private, industrial, and academic sectors. To make matters worse, the problem is certainly on the rise.

Large animal veterinarians in particular are integral to small rural communities, but in many of these communities—communities with few people but with large numbers of animals—we are seeing a very distressing trend. According to the USDA, Nebraska's Cherry County, one of the top three beef production counties in the United States, has 145,000 food animals per one veterinarian.

To this end, I've introduced H.R. 3519, the Veterinarian Services Investment Act, with Mr. BOSWELL. The legislation authorizes the Secretary of Agriculture to award competitive grants to help develop, implement, and sustain veterinary services especially in identified and underserved areas.

Though we may not realize it, veterinarians make a difference every day.

They understand animals and are integral parts of our rural communities. Unfortunately, too many rural communities don't have this necessary support. This investment act will make a difference, and I urge its passage.

Mr. LUCAS. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BOSWELL. Madam Speaker, just a couple of things before we close.

There are an estimated 283 million pets and 2.3 billion farm animals in our country. That's a lot of animals, FRANK, don't you think? It is. There are nearly 86,000 veterinarians in the U.S.; however, the majority of them focus on pets—cats and dogs. Twenty-eight veterinary schools in the country, and something that's very important to this legislation, veterinary graduates have an average debt of \$120,000. So I think this is something that we ought to be aware of when we think of food safety and so on. So the demand for large animal veterinarians is increasing, and the lack of these faceless in many areas of the country will continue to put our agricultural economy and the safety of our food supply at risk.

H.R. 3519, the Veterinarian Services Investment Act, will help address this shortage and continue to ensure Americans have access to the safest, most plentiful, and most available food supply in the world. So I urge all of my colleagues to support this important legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time. The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. BOSWELL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3519, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

EXPRESSING CONDOLENCES TO PAKISTANI PEOPLE AFTER FLOODS

Mr. BARROW. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 1613) expressing condolences to and solidarity with the people of Pakistan in the aftermath of the devastating floods that began on July 22, 2010, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 1613

Whereas heavy rainfall that began on July 22, 2010, and subsequent flooding throughout Pakistan have caused a humanitarian crisis of unprecedented proportions that has affected over 20,000,000 people, killing more than 1,750, injuring over 2,700, damaging or destroying upwards of 1,800,000 houses, and displacing millions of men, women, and children;

Whereas the devastation wrought by the floods has been catastrophic, submerging

one-fifth of the country and destroying critical infrastructure, farms, schools, homes, and businesses, leaving an estimated 800,000 Pakistanis stranded and cut off from all help;

Whereas according to the Government of Pakistan, the floods have affected 30 percent of all agricultural land and could lower by one-half Pakistan's economic growth rate for the current fiscal year, further destabilizing a nation already beset by multiple daunting challenges;

Whereas the emergency continues to unfold in Sindh Province, where just under 7,000,000 people have already been affected, of whom 1,300,000 are in government relief camps, with new evacuation orders recently having been issued;

Whereas the danger of the floods extends beyond the current humanitarian crisis, with the potential to create significant instability in Pakistan;

Whereas the Pakistani Army, Navy, and Frontier Corps have sent humanitarian supplies and medical teams to flood-hit areas, while the National and Provincial Disaster Management Authorities have coordinated international relief activities;

Whereas the United States has responded to the crisis with relief and recovery funds, food and medical supplies, and logistical support that account for more than 20 percent of total international humanitarian contributions and commitments;

Whereas the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), through its Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA), has supported 26 mobile medical teams, delivered more than 8,000 rolls of plastic sheeting to provide temporary shelter for approximately 247,000 people, and dispatched 13 mobile water treatment units to support the Government of Pakistan's flood relief effort, which have produced more than 12,000,000 liters of clean water;

Whereas USAID's Office of Food for Peace (FFP) has provided direct support for the United Nations World Food Program's food ration distributions, helping to reach approximately 3,000,000 Pakistanis with more than 48,000 metric tons of food;

Whereas the United States Department of Defense has dispatched 23 military helicopters and four C-130 aircraft to deliver more than 5,000,000 pounds of relief supplies and has rescued more than 13,000 flood-affected individuals;

Whereas the United States has provided civilian and military in-kind assistance in the form of halal meals, prefabricated steel bridges, and other infrastructure support;

Whereas the United States is working in close partnership with United Nations-affiliated and international humanitarian organizations to support relief, recovery, and reconstruction;

Whereas the Pakistani-American community has demonstrated strong leadership in rallying support for flood victims, directing public attention to the crisis, and disseminating information about the response;

Whereas scores of United States private and voluntary organizations have mobilized quickly to respond to the crisis in Pakistan with both emergency relief and longer term development assistance, raising over \$11,000,000 in private donations for assessing emergency needs, distributing water, food, and relief items, and providing medical care and temporary shelter;

Whereas the success of United States Government humanitarian efforts depends heavily on the skills, expertise, and field presence of international and nongovernmental organizations;

Whereas United States businesses have contributed more than \$8,000,000 in humanitarian assistance for Pakistani flood victims;

Whereas the immediate and swift reaction of United States military personnel, diplomats, and development experts has saved countless lives and encouraged a generous international response;

Whereas the people of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and the United States share a long history of friendship, economic cooperation, and enduring family ties, and the interests of both nations are well served by strengthening and deepening the bilateral relationship;

Whereas the United States Congress adopted, and the President signed into law, the Enhanced Partnership with Pakistan Act of 2009, which authorizes democratic, economic, development, and security assistance over 5 years to help the Pakistani people achieve their aspirations for a democratic, stable, and prosperous society; and

Whereas the United States remains committed to helping the resilient and resourceful people of Pakistan surmount and recover from this natural disaster: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) mourns the significant loss of life, as well as the physical damage, caused by the flooding in Pakistan;

(2) expresses its deepest condolences and sympathy to the families of the victims of the floods, and its solidarity with the millions of affected Pakistanis;

(3) recognizes that Pakistan is and remains a close ally and friend of the United States;

(4) recognizes that an effective and accountable government in Pakistan is essential for the country's long-term recovery and stability;

(5) urges the United States Administration and the international community, including private citizens and foreign governments, to continue providing assistance to help the people of Pakistan and to help strengthen and support the capacity of the Government of Pakistan to meet the needs of its people;

(6) supports the use of funds authorized by the Enhanced Partnership with Pakistan Act of 2009 for the purposes of providing long-term recovery and rehabilitation for flood-affected areas and populations;

(7) urges a reexamination of priorities for spending the funds authorized by the Enhanced Partnership with Pakistan Act of 2009, with a view toward ensuring that the needs of the Pakistani people are appropriately addressed in the aftermath of the disaster;

(8) commends the relief and recovery actions, still underway, by the United States military, the Department of State, and USAID to assist the people of Pakistan during this critical period;

(9) commends the extraordinary humanitarian efforts and sustained commitment to helping the people of Pakistan by international and nongovernmental organizations;

(10) recognizes the contributions of the Pakistani-American community and United States businesses to relief and recovery efforts in Pakistan; and

(11) reaffirms the commitment of the people of the United States to partner with the people of Pakistan to respond to the immediate crisis and build the foundations for a successful and lasting recovery.

□ 1240

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. BARROW) and the gen-

tleman from Utah (Mr. CHAFFETZ) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BARROW. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the resolution under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. BARROW. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

On July 22, 2010, Pakistan began to experience devastating flooding, which in the subsequent days and weeks has led to a severe humanitarian crisis. Thus far, over 20 million Pakistanis have been affected. The flooding has resulted in the deaths of over 1,750 people, injured another 2,700, and left 800,000 cut off from assistance. The floods have submerged one-fifth of the country and damaged or destroyed more than 1.8 million homes, along with countless schools, farms, and businesses.

The Government of Pakistan says that the flooding has affected 30 percent of all agricultural land and could reduce by up to one-half Pakistan's economic growth rate for the current fiscal year, further destabilizing a nation already beset by daunting economic challenges.

The United States has responded to the crisis with over \$250 million in relief and recovery funds, more than 20 percent of the total international humanitarian contribution, in the form of relief and recovery funds, food and medical supplies, and logistical support. Governments and humanitarian aid agencies from around the world have mobilized to provide much needed assistance to the relief and recovery efforts. We hope that all of the committed friends of Pakistan are able to galvanize additional support and funding for the recovery and subsequent reconstruction efforts.

In addition to recognizing the devastating impact of the floods, this resolution emphasizes the importance of a robust and long-term strategic partnership between the United States and Pakistan, the enduring people-to-people and governmental ties between our two countries, and our long-standing support for a democratic, stable, and prosperous Pakistan.

Madam Speaker, I urge all my colleagues to support this bipartisan resolution.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of this timely resolution, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, the raging floodwaters that have battered much of Pakistan since late July are at long

last finally beginning to recede. But the challenges are no less today than they were earlier this summer. Indeed, if anything, they may be even greater as Pakistan and its friends abroad begin to assess the full magnitude of the economic and human costs of this devastating calamity. The heavy monsoon floods that struck the Indus River and its tributaries have caused enormous damage to the economy and the people of Pakistan.

The numbers are staggering. Nearly 20 million people have been affected by the floods, including millions of men, women, and children who have been physically displaced from their homes destroyed by the ravages of the ram-paging waters. As one Pakistani commentator has noted, "In the mounting humanitarian disaster, survivors have been engaged in a desperate daily struggle for food and shelter as well as a battle against deadly disease."

Pakistan's already shaky economy has been dealt a body blow. Growth is now expected to fall by half, with widespread losses to agriculture and livestock. Meanwhile, the floods have also wreaked havoc on Pakistan's public infrastructure, with bridges and roads cut off, power stations shut down, and gas and petroleum supplies suspended. In this dire circumstance, the United States has responded generously and with great dispatch to assist the people of Pakistan in their hour of need. The executive branch has mobilized expertise and resources at the Departments of State, Defense, and USAID, while the private sector, including Pakistani-Americans, religious communities, and nongovernment organizations have provided impressive financial and on-the-ground assistance.

Meanwhile, new and formidable challenges will present themselves to Islamabad and its friends abroad once the full extent of Pakistan's rehabilitation and reconstruction needs become known.

Madam Speaker, the enormity of this tragedy for the Pakistani people is grounds enough to merit a robust and compassionate response by the United States of America and the people. Our hearts go out to the millions of victims whose lives have been literally uprooted by the havoc that accompanied this unprecedented flooding.

At the same time, we need to be mindful that Pakistan is also a close friend and ally. It plays a large role in the United States' strategic policy towards Afghanistan and the broader reaches of South and Central Asia. It is a country that remains engaged in a deadly struggle against violent extremists seeking to destabilize its already fractured society. It is a nuclear weapons state in which the maintenance of domestic stability and the success of democratic governance bear directly on our own homeland security. To be sure, this is an enormously complex relationship.

Madam Speaker, in this context it is clear that the United States needs to

remain deeply engaged with Pakistan and the Pakistani people as they recover from the ravages of this crisis, including through continued humanitarian aid and related forms of effective, transparent, and targeted assistance. I therefore support the passage of this resolution, and I urge my colleagues to get behind this resolution.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BARROW. Madam Speaker, I yield the balance of my time to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE), and I ask unanimous consent that she be allowed to control that time.

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

There was no objection.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Let me thank the distinguished gentleman from Georgia, and let me thank him very much for his very important statement on this important resolution. And as well I would like to thank the chairman of our full committee, Mr. BERMAN, and the ranking member of our full committee, Ms. ROSLEHTINEN, and the manager of this legislation for the minority for the words that I believe are enormously important.

Let me indicate to my colleagues that this may be the most important, or one of the most important, and devastating humanitarian crises that we have faced over the time frame that we have been in Congress. And let me say this. We have gone through Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. As I stand here today, there are a number of hurricanes that are in the gulf region. We add our sympathy to the people in California experiencing an enormous and terrible explosion. To my friend from Utah, he knows that those dear friends have experienced their own share of concerns certainly with natural disasters. So we don't take anything away from the suffering of the American people or others. Many of us remember the tsunami, for all of our communities were engaged in trying to get our hands around that natural disaster and to be of help.

But as many have expressed as they have come back to the United States from Pakistan, Madam Speaker, I can assure you that this looms so large that it is without description. The reason is because we know that there was rain, we know that there was a flood, or flooding, but we probably are not aware that the water has remained in place in so much and so many areas of Pakistan that it equals the size of States like Rhode Island. So we have people who cannot return even to see what remains or what losses they have experienced, or to even begin to recover and to rebuild.

I would encourage my colleagues to see the extent of that damage by way of a presentation that is being made today, the Pakistan Flood Disaster Photo Exhibit, from which I will just share one picture. And you can go to

the Rayburn Foyer all day today and see the depth of the devastation.

So I want to thank you, Madam Speaker, as I rise today in strong support of H. Res. 1613, expressing condolences to, and solidarity with, the people of Pakistan in the aftermath of the devastating floods that began on July 22, 2010. I would like to thank my colleague, Chairman BERMAN, for introducing this important and timely resolution, which I offer and know that many have cosponsored, including myself.

On July 22, Pakistan experienced one of the heaviest monsoon rains in at least 80 years in the region. For those who have been to Islamabad, Karachi, Lahore, Peshawar, we understand the terrain of that Nation and realize that it is again unspeakable in its description. The massive amount of rain triggered both flash floods and river flooding throughout Pakistan, leading to widespread displacement, infrastructure damage, and contamination of water sources.

Madam Speaker, I have spoken about the value of clean water for many years as a member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, but as well in general in this Congress. And I will tell you that as Pakistani Americans have come to my office, they have said the most deadly aspect of this flood is for mothers and babies and children and families not to be able to have clean water. And therefore disease being spread through lack of clean water, seeing malnourished children, but children who are likewise devastated by not having water suffering from infection and disease.

The flooding has caused a humanitarian crisis of unprecedented proportions that has affected over 20 million people, which aid agencies assert has a greater human impact than Pakistan's earthquake in 2005, the Indian Ocean tsunami in 2004, and the recent earthquake in Haiti combined.

□ 1250

More than 1,750 people have been killed; 2,700 have been injured; and millions of men and women and children are displaced. Let me be very clear: we do not do one-upsmanship in disasters. We do not diminish Haiti; we do not diminish the tsunami or the earthquake. What we are saying is that the disaster we speak of today is ongoing, as there are in other places around the world, but ongoing to the extent that people who want to help, to come in and help and be part of recovery, cannot get to where they need to be.

Moreover, flooding is expected to intensify as rains continue. In the Sindh and Punjab provinces, for example, earlier rainfall in the north has led to rising levels in the Indus River and is expected to coincide with increased rainfall.

The flood disaster, which started 2 months ago as a result of heavy monsoon rain, has left more than 20 million people suffering in the ravaged condi-

tions. One-fifth of Pakistan is submerged in water, destroying critical infrastructure, schools, homes, hospitals, business and farms.

My heartfelt condolences go out to the families in Pakistan and those individuals here in the United States who have loved ones in the affected areas. I am urging our government to offer resources and expertise, including assistance and recovery efforts, to help our friends in Pakistan make it through this tragic episode.

We are now discussing how we provide new technology to decontaminate the water, and I hope that the State Department will receive the information that my office has to work on this new technology and literally carry it over to be able to decontaminate this water and to provide clean water to the refugee camps but also to those who may have been able to make it close to where their home was.

I have been working with the State Department to increase humanitarian relief funds for Pakistan and have asked for additional funds that have already been authorized for Pakistan to be reprogrammed in order to bolster relief and reconstruction efforts.

I again want to mention the Foreign Affairs Committee. I want to again mention our chairman and ranking member who have never stepped away from the international devastation that so many of our friends experience. The Foreign Affairs Committee has stood front and center to work with the Senate and work with the administration to ensure that the faith and the friendship of the United States is front and center on these terrible disasters. I thank the committee again.

I also wrote a letter to President Obama with Representative DAN BURTON, my fellow cochair of the Congressional Pakistan Caucus, expressing our deep concern for the humanitarian tragedy in Pakistan and asking them to expedite the flow of U.S. aid, supplies and workers in the region.

I would like to take this opportunity to encourage the President to aid Pakistan and to add Pakistan to his trip to South Asia, which is planned for the fall, and hope that we could join with him.

Madam Speaker, the key is how do we find solutions, and I would ask that we as Americans not be defined, as small news postscripts suggest, that we are not contributing to the aid of the Pakistani people. First of all, we are moving emergency dollars, but I also hope that we can draw upon Americans' individual caring and humanitarian commitment so that we can send a mercy plane stocked with medicine and baby formula and clothing for children and school supplies in short order to this devastated region.

In Houston, a number of my constituents met as a part of the Pakistan Caucus to commit themselves to this great humanitarian effort, and we would call upon all who can hear my voice to participate in helping us pursue that. This

resolution is a very important statement that says to the American people and to our colleagues that we are supporting the people of Pakistan who need our help.

I do again want to acknowledge the partnership of the Congressional Pakistan Caucus and the Pakistani American Leadership Center that is bringing these Pakistan relief workers here to discuss the devastating conditions in Pakistan.

I also want to mention Ambassador Anne Patterson, who is still in Pakistan, who has been a stalwart of representation of the United States, who has been through the earthquake, who has been through the tragedy of the loss of Benazir Bhutto and now this unspeakable tragedy of flooding and has maintained the leadership of the United States.

I am very glad that we have this resolution on the floor of the House. I want to thank my friend and colleague who likewise has given a very important statement, as well as the gentleman from Georgia, to acknowledge this resolution to express our commitment to the people of Pakistan.

I look forward to visiting Pakistan to see firsthand the extent of the devastation and to assess and assist in the relief efforts. With the need for reconstruction and recovery efforts growing, I believe it is vital that we lead a congressional humanitarian mission to Pakistan, which will signal to those people that the friendship between the United States and Pakistan remains unbroken as we fight the war on terror and continue to hope to improve the lives of the men, women and children of this great nation.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Res. 1613, "Expressing condolences to and solidarity with the people of Pakistan in the aftermath of the devastating floods that began on July 22, 2010." I would like to thank my colleague, Chairman BERMAN, for introducing this important and timely resolution.

On July 22, 2010, Pakistan experienced one of the heaviest monsoon rains in at least 80 years in the region. The massive amount of rain triggered both flash floods and river flooding throughout Pakistan, leading to widespread displacement, infrastructure damage and contamination of water sources. The flooding has caused a humanitarian crisis of unprecedented proportions that has affected over 20 million people, which aid agencies assert is a greater human impact than Pakistan's earthquake in 2005, the Indian Ocean tsunami of 2004, and the recent earthquake in Haiti combined. More than 1,750 people have been killed, 2,700 have been injured, and millions of men, women, and children are displaced. Moreover, the flooding is expected to intensify as rains continue. In Sindh and Punjab provinces, for example, earlier rainfall in the north has led to rising water levels in the Indus River and is expected to coincide with increased rainfall.

The flood disaster, which started two months ago as a result of heavy monsoon rain, has left more than 20 million people suffering in ravaged conditions. One fifth of Paki-

stan is submerged in water, destroying critical infrastructure, schools, homes, hospitals, businesses, and farms. My heartfelt condolences go out to the families in Pakistan and those individuals here in the United States who have loved ones in the affected areas. I am urging our government to offer any resources and expertise, including assistance with recovery efforts, to help our friends in Pakistan make it through this tragic episode. I have been working with the State Department to increase humanitarian relief funds for Pakistan and have asked for additional funds that have already been authorized for Pakistan to be reprogrammed in order to bolster relief and reconstruction efforts. I also wrote a letter to President Obama with Rep. DAN BURTON, my fellow Co-Chair of the Congressional Pakistan Caucus, expressing our deep concern for the humanitarian tragedy in Pakistan and asking him to expedite the flow of U.S. aid, supplies, and workers into the region.

I would also like to take this opportunity to encourage President Obama to add Pakistan to his trip to South Asia, which is planned for this fall. In light of the recent devastation affecting Pakistan and our important alliance with Pakistan in our anti-terrorism efforts in both Pakistan and Afghanistan, I think President Obama's visit would communicate to both the people and government of Pakistan the extent of our national commitment to their welfare.

Madam Speaker, the scale of the devastation is so large that it will take months before we know the actual death toll and be able to assess the damage of the flood. Hospitals are overwhelmed with the injured and thousands of people are stuck on their rooftops and in higher areas as they try to escape rushing floodwaters. Thousands of victims require additional shelter with the cold weather approaching; falling temperatures, food shortages, and water-borne diseases are making it necessary for Pakistan to shelter, cloth, and feed the millions of displaced and homeless before freezing temperatures arrive.

As Co-Chair of the Congressional Pakistan Caucus, I am extremely concerned with the security of the region. It is critical that the United States offer the economic and humanitarian assistance necessary for Pakistan in its recovery efforts. In a region of political and religious turmoil, the United States must do all it can in order for Pakistan's fragile democracy to survive and thrive.

Furthermore, as Co-Chair of the Pakistani Caucus, I have taken the initiative to work with several Pakistani organizations and members of the Pakistan community in Houston and throughout the United States to increase awareness and coordinate relief efforts in Pakistan. I have organized meetings and briefings in both Houston and Washington, D.C. as well. This includes a photo exhibit that is occurring in the Rayburn House Office Building foyer today that is being hosted by the Congressional Pakistan Caucus and the Pakistani American Leadership Center (PAL-C) illustrating the extent of the damage caused by the floods in Pakistan. My commitment to the people of Pakistan is unwavering, and I look forward to visiting Pakistan soon to see firsthand the extent of the devastation and to assess and assist in the relief efforts. With the need for reconstruction and recovery efforts growing, I believe it is vital to lead a Congressional humanitarian mission to Pakistan, which

will signal to the people and the nation of Pakistan the extent of our commitment to addressing the challenges they face in the recovery efforts.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
Washington, DC, September 8, 2010.

Hon. BARACK OBAMA,
President of the United States of America, The White House, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: As co-chairs of the Congressional Pakistan Caucus we remain deeply concerned about the humanitarian tragedy unfolding in Pakistan due to the recent historic floods. We respectfully ask you to do everything possible within your authority to help expedite the flow of U.S. and international aid supplies and workers into the region.

By all accounts, the flooding in Pakistan has now affected more than 20 million people, which aid agencies say is a greater human impact than Pakistan's earthquake in 2005, the Indian Ocean tsunami of 2004, and the recent earthquake in Haiti combined. Sadly, despite the commendable generosity of the American people and the international community to date, the situation appears to remain perilous. Reports indicate that waterborne disease is rapidly spreading among tens of thousands of flood victims. In addition, food shortages are becoming a major concern as the market prices of essential foods have skyrocketed after billions of dollars worth of crops were destroyed by the flood waters.

We commend the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) for immediately undertaking an aid mission to the region; however, we concur with John Holmes, the UN Undersecretary General for Humanitarian Affairs' opinion that "these unprecedented floods pose unprecedented logistical challenges, and this requires an extraordinary effort by the international community." The United States has an historic opportunity to reshape America's image in Pakistan by taking the lead in aggressively addressing Pakistan's immediate relief needs as well as forging international consensus to address Pakistan's longer-term reconstruction needs. For example, last year Congress authorized \$7.5 billion in civilian aid to Pakistan; of which approximately \$1 billion was set aside for democracy building. While we strongly support efforts to strengthen Pakistan's democratic institutions, relief and rehabilitation of the floods victims is a more pressing need. Reprogramming those funds for humanitarian relief would immediately quadruple U.S. aid funds—hopefully spurring other nations to follow suit—and it would do so at no additional cost to the U.S. taxpayer.

We also respectfully urge you to give all due consideration to using the power of the Presidency's bully pulpit to highlight the plight of Pakistanis to the U.S. media and encourage Americans to consider donating to the relief effort. The American people are extremely generous. Time and time again, whenever they have been asked, the American people have rallied to help people around the world. We are confident that the American people will once again demonstrate their generosity by donating to the Pakistani relief efforts if they are made more aware of the tragedy; and a statement from the White House is certain to garner such media attention. To that end, we respectfully ask you to consider making a public appeal to the American public on behalf of the people of Pakistan.

Mr. President, the global fight against extremists who exploit the religion of Islam is not only a military struggle but a struggle to win the hearts and minds of the Muslim world; particularly the young people. We

know that the U.S. response to the 2005 earthquake in Pakistan led to a short-term positive increase in public opinion of the United States in Pakistan. A significant and long-term commitment by the United States to help Pakistan recover from these devastating floods could have an even more profound affect. If we do not seize this opportunity we significantly increase the chances that Pakistan may fall under the influence of extremist elements; that would be disastrous for our future security. We must address the human tragedy unfolding in Pakistan now before it is too late. So once again, we respectfully ask you to everything possible within your authority to help expedite the flow of U.S. and international aide supplies and workers into the region.

We thank you for giving your personal time and attention to this critically important matter.

Sincerely,

DAN BURTON,
Member of Congress.
SHEILA JACKSON LEE,
Member of Congress.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Madam Speaker, we support the passage of this resolution. Our hearts and prayers go out to the people of Pakistan who are dealing with untold tragedies and difficult situations. I urge passage of this resolution.

I yield back the balance of my time. Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, seeing that we have no other speakers, let me simply conclude by thanking my distinguished friend from Utah. We worked together on other issues.

If I might take a point of personal privilege, I have never doubted his commitment when we speak of these humanitarian issues, and I want to thank you for that. As well, I want to thank Mr. BARROW for his leadership on the issue and hope that he will join us as we work on these devastating conditions in Pakistan.

I ask my colleagues to support this very important legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. BARROW) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 1613, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

ESTABLISHING ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS VETERANS' CURATION PROGRAM

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R.

5282) to provide funds to the Army Corps of Engineers to hire veterans and members of the Armed Forces to assist the Corps with curation and historic preservation activities, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5282

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

SECTION 1. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) *The Corps of Engineers and other Federal agencies are required to preserve and catalogue artifacts and other items of national historical significance that are uncovered during the course of their work.*

(2) *Uncatalogued artifacts within the care of Federal agencies are stored in hundreds of repositories and museums across the Nation.*

(3) *In October 2009, the Corps of Engineers, Center of Expertise for Curation and Management of Archeological Collections, used \$3,500,000 in temporary funds made available in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Public Law 111-5) to begin the Veterans' Curation Program to employ and train Iraq and Afghanistan veterans in archaeological processing.*

(4) *The Veterans' Curation Program employs veterans and members of the Armed Forces in the sorting, cleaning, and cataloguing of artifacts managed by the Corps of Engineers.*

(5) *Employees of the Veterans' Curation Program gain valuable work skills, including computer database management, records management, photographic and scanning techniques, computer software proficiency, vocabulary and writing skills, and interpersonal communication skills, as well as knowledge and training in archaeology and history.*

(6) *Experience in archaeological curation gained through the Veterans' Curation Program is valuable training and experience for the museum, forensics, administrative, records management, and other fields.*

(7) *Veterans' Curation Program participants may assist the Corps of Engineers in developing a more efficient and comprehensive collections management program and also may provide the workforce to meet the records management needs at other agencies and departments, including the Department of Veterans Affairs.*

SEC. 2. TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT FOR VETERANS AND MEMBERS OF ARMED FORCES IN CURATION AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION.

(a) *TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT.—The Secretary of the Army, acting through the Chief of Engineers, shall develop a Veterans' Curation Program to hire veterans and members of the Armed Forces to assist the Secretary in carrying out curation and historic preservation activities.*

(b) *AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATION.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section—*

- (1) \$5,000,000 for fiscal year 2011;
- (2) \$6,000,000 for fiscal year 2012;
- (3) \$7,000,000 for fiscal year 2013;
- (4) \$8,000,000 for fiscal year 2014; and
- (5) \$9,000,000 for fiscal year 2015.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I ask unani-

mous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous materials on H.R. 5282.

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

There was no objection.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in strong support of H.R. 5282, a bill introduced by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. BARROW) to provide a 5-year authorization for the Corps of Engineers' Veterans' Curation Program.

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H.R. 5282 is a worthy piece of legislation. It provides job training to our veterans. It helps to record and protect our Nation's cultural resources, and it assists the Corps in fulfilling its obligations to protect our Nation's cultural and historical legacy.

Thousands upon thousands of artifacts rest uncataloged in hundreds of museums and Federal repositories across the country. These objects represent our past and help describe who we are today. It is, therefore, a cultural imperative that we preserve and understand these pieces. It is also a matter of law and policy that we do so.

The Veterans' Curation Program, located at labs in Georgia, the District of Columbia, and Missouri, provides veterans with a skill set to preserve the many cultural and historical artifacts encountered by the Corps of Engineers.

These employees gain valuable work skills in a host of areas, including computer database management, photographic and scanning techniques, and software proficiency. The development of these skills provides valuable training and experience for future work at museums, forensics labs, records management entities, and at government agencies.

This legislation authorizes the program for 5 years, through fiscal year 2015. It also provides a realistic step increase of authorized funding from \$5 million in 2011 through \$9 million in 2015. This will allow the Corps to incrementally expand the program in a rational and deliberate manner.

The Corps has had success with this program using Recovery Act dollars, so I ask all of the Members to join me in supporting this bill. It will ensure the continuation of a worthwhile program that respects the Nation's cultural heritage at the same time as providing valuable training to the men and women who have valiantly served our Nation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Serving our country in uniform is, frankly, probably the most noble thing that any human being can do, and it is such incredible sacrifice that our