

SUPPORTING THE JAMES
ZADROGA 9/11 HEALTH AND COM-
PENSATION ACT

HON. STEVE ISRAEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 5, 2011

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak in support of the 9/11 Health and Compensation Act.

We all know where we were on that fateful morning. If we were lucky, we were safe and with loved ones and far from Ground Zero.

But there are thousands of others who were not so fortunate, and who are reminded of those attacks every day—whether that's because they lost a family member or a friend, or because they cannot breathe after spending weeks cleaning the rubble of our fallen Twin Towers.

It is those first responders whose health we have a solemn obligation to watch over, and they number in the thousands—over 13,000 sick World Trade Center responders, more than 53,000 whose health is being monitored and 71,000 who were exposed to poisonous toxins.

They are firefighters, police officers, EMTs, construction workers and volunteers—just people who saw a fire and ran towards it to see how they could help—ran into the fire—and they remain in need.

They come from every single state in the Union and nearly every Congressional District. The health of these men and women is truly a national duty. With this bill, we can fulfill that duty.

It establishes the World Trade Center Health Program to monitor and treat responders whose injuries were caused by exposure to airborne toxins or any other adverse condition resulting from the attacks, and ensures that there is a network of health care providers around the country to care for anyone enrolled in the program. The bill also sets up the World Trade Center Survivor Program to provide screenings, treatment and follow-up monitoring to survivors and those living in the surrounding areas.

No one asked these men and women to go do what they did. They shouldn't have to ask us for quality health care. I strongly urge my colleagues to vote yes.

THE UDALL-EISENHOWER ARCTIC
WILDERNESS ACT

HON. EDWARD J. MARKEY

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 5, 2011

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. Speaker, 50 years ago, on December 6, 1960, President Dwight D. Eisenhower set aside the core of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska. In so doing, President Eisenhower began the bipartisan legacy of protecting this majestic national treasure. 20 years later, in 1980, Representative Mo Udall succeeded in doubling the size of the Refuge.

Now it is time that we finish the job these great Americans began 50 years ago. Now it is time to permanently protect the Coastal Plain. The Congress needs to pass legislation designating it as wilderness.

If we don't enact permanent protections for the Refuge, oil companies and their allies in Congress will continue to push for short-sighted plans to drill one of our last pristine wild places.

Just last year, the BP Deepwater Horizon disaster led to more than 4 million barrels of oil spilling into the Gulf of Mexico. It was the worst oil spill in the history of the United States. The blobs of oil washing up on Gulf beaches recalled the ghosts of Valdez, and of Santa Barbara.

As we learned from the BP oil spill, the oil companies are prepared to drill ultra-deep, but they are not prepared to do it ultra-safe. Or respond ultra-quick.

What we did discover is that their response plans for a Gulf oil spill included plans to evacuate walrus from the warm waters off Louisiana, even though they had not called the Gulf home for 3 million years.

This disaster was born from boosterism from the oil industry. Boosterism led to complacency. And complacency led to disaster.

When it comes to the Arctic Refuge, we've heard the same boosterism for years. The oil companies and their allies repeat a list of talking points: Drilling has a small footprint. It will not spoil habitats. Drilling can be done in an environmentally safe manner.

Now the oil companies and their allies want to open the Refuge and undo 50 years of protections and eons of solitude, all for less than a couple pennies at the pump more than two decades from now.

Instead of looking for the last drops of oil on Earth, we should be harnessing the wind and the sun to power our economy and create new, safe American jobs.

And unlike an oil well, you don't need a blowout preventer on a solar panel. There's no such thing as a "tragic wind spill."

When we look upon the Refuge decades from now, will we see a monument to America's commitment to our natural heritage, or will we see the abandoned wells and spilled oil as a monument to our insatiable thirst for oil? Will the Refuge remain a monument to America's wisdom or will our children and grandchildren only be able to see polar bears, caribou and other iconic animals carved in stone, monuments to our lack of foresight and innovation?

Now is the time to create a refuge for the American people from hundreds of billions of dollars we spend every year on foreign oil. Now is the time to create a refuge from the fossil fuel policies that have devastated the economy of the Gulf. Now is the time to protect the Arctic Refuge.

STATEMENT ON SENATOR
BARBARA MIKULSKI

HON. STENY H. HOYER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 5, 2011

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, today, Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI, my colleague from the State of Maryland, becomes the longest-serving woman Senator in American history. It's a fitting milestone for a public servant who has been a trailblazer for her entire career. From her beginnings as a social worker and community activist, Senator MIKULSKI's career has

always been motivated by a deep commitment to open doors of opportunity, to serve the people of Maryland, and to carry their voices to Washington.

In 1986, Senator MIKULSKI became the first Democratic woman elected to the Senate in her own right, as well as the first woman elected to statewide office in Maryland's history. Since then, her constituents have returned her to office four times—a sign of the seriousness and skill she brings to her work in the Senate. For decades, BARBARA MIKULSKI has been an inspiration and a role model to women in public life, mentoring generations of women leaders. I congratulate her on today's important milestone, and I wish her all the best in her continuing service to our State and its people.

INTRODUCING THE IDENTITY
THEFT PREVENTION ACT

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 5, 2011

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, today I introduce the Identity Theft Prevention Act. This act protects the American people from government-mandated uniform identifiers that facilitate private crime as well as the abuse of liberty. The major provision of the Identity Theft Prevention Act halts the practice of using the Social Security number as an identifier by requiring the Social Security Administration to issue all Americans new Social Security numbers within 5 years after the enactment of the bill. These new numbers will be the sole legal property of the recipient, and the Social Security Administration shall be forbidden to divulge the numbers for any purposes not related to Social Security Administration. Social Security numbers issued before implementation of this bill shall no longer be considered valid federal identifiers. Of course, the Social Security Administration shall be able to use an individual's original Social Security number to ensure efficient administration of the Social Security system.

Mr. Speaker, Congress has a moral responsibility to address this problem because it was Congress that transformed the Social Security number into a national identifier. Thanks to Congress, today no American can get a job, open a bank account, get a professional license, or even get a driver's license without presenting his Social Security number. So widespread has the use of the Social Security number become that a member of my staff had to produce a Social Security number in order to get a fishing license!

One of the most disturbing abuses of the Social Security number is the congressionally authorized rule forcing parents to get a Social Security number for their newborn children in order to claim the children as dependents. Forcing parents to register their children with the state is more like something out of the nightmares of George Orwell than the dreams of a free republic that inspired this Nation's founders.

Congressionally mandated use of the Social Security number as an identifier facilitates the horrendous crime of identity theft. Thanks to Congress, an unscrupulous person may simply obtain someone's Social Security number

in order to access that person's bank accounts, credit cards, and other financial assets. Many Americans have lost their life savings and had their credit destroyed as a result of identity theft. Yet the Federal Government continues to encourage such crimes by mandating use of the Social Security number as a uniform ID!

The Identity Theft Prevention Act also prevents the Federal Government from establishing any form of national ID. In 2005, Congress attempted to turn state driver's licensing into a national ID; however, resistance to this unconstitutional and costly mandate on the states has been so intense that today, for all intents and purposes, the Real ID mandate has been nullified. The Identity Theft Prevention Act simply puts the nail in the coffin of the Real ID and similar schemes, thus protecting Americans from having their liberty, property, and privacy violated by private and public sector criminals.

Some members of Congress will claim that the federal government needs the power to monitor Americans in order to allow the government to operate more efficiently. I would remind my colleagues that, in a constitutional republic, the people are never asked to sacrifice their liberties to make the jobs of government officials easier. We are here to protect the freedom of the American people, not to make privacy invasion more efficient.

Mr. Speaker, while I do not question the sincerity of those members who suggest that Congress can ensure that citizens' rights are protected through legislation restricting access to personal information, the only effective privacy protection is to forbid the federal government from mandating national identifiers. Legislative "privacy protections" are inadequate to protect the liberty of Americans for a couple of reasons.

First, it is simply common sense that repealing those federal laws that promote identity theft is more effective in protecting the public than expanding the power of the federal police force. Federal punishment of identity thieves provides cold comfort to those who have suffered financial losses and the destruction of their good reputations as a result of identity theft.

Federal laws are not only ineffective in stopping private criminals, but these laws have not even stopped unscrupulous government officials from accessing personal information. After all, laws purporting to restrict the use of personal information did not stop the well-publicized violations of privacy by IRS officials or the FBI abuses of the Clinton and Nixon administrations.

In one of the most infamous cases of identity theft, thousands of active-duty soldiers and veterans had their personal information stolen, putting them at risk of identity theft. Imagine the dangers if thieves are able to obtain the universal identifier, and other personal information, of millions of Americans simply by breaking, or hacking, into one government facility or one government database?

Second, the federal government has been creating proprietary interests in private information for certain state-favored special interests. Perhaps the most outrageous example of phony privacy protection is the "medical privacy" regulation, that allows medical researchers, certain business interests, and law enforcement officials access to health care information, in complete disregard of the Fifth

Amendment and the wishes of individual patients! Obviously, "privacy protection" laws have proven greatly inadequate to protect personal information when the government is the one seeking the information.

Any action short of repealing laws authorizing privacy violations is insufficient primarily because the federal government lacks constitutional authority to force citizens to adopt a universal identifier for health care, employment, or any other reason. Any federal action that oversteps constitutional limitations violates liberty because it ratifies the principle that the federal government, not the Constitution, is the ultimate judge of its own jurisdiction over the people. The only effective protection of the rights of citizens is for Congress to follow Thomas Jefferson's advice and "bind (the federal government) down with the chains of the Constitution."

Mr. Speaker, those members who are not persuaded by the moral and constitutional reasons for embracing the Identity Theft Prevention Act should consider the American people's opposition to national identifiers. The numerous complaints over the ever-growing uses of the Social Security number show that Americans want Congress to stop invading their privacy. Furthermore, according to a survey by the Gallup company, 91 percent of the American people oppose forcing Americans to obtain a universal health ID.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I once again call on my colleagues to join me in putting an end to the federal government's unconstitutional use of national identifiers to monitor the actions of private citizens. National identifiers threaten all Americans by exposing them to the threat of identity theft by private criminals and abuse of their liberties by public criminals, while diverting valuable law enforcement resources away from addressing real threats to public safety. In addition, national identifiers are incompatible with a limited, constitutional government. I, therefore, hope my colleagues will join my efforts to protect the freedom of their constituents by supporting the Identity Theft Prevention Act.

THE ANGELES AND SAN
BERNARDINO NATIONAL FOR-
ESTS PROTECTION ACT

HON. DAVID DREIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 5, 2011

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I have the honor of representing the Foothill communities at the base of the San Gabriel Mountains. Included in my district are the Angeles and the San Bernardino National Forests. These National Forests are two of the most widely visited forests in the Nation. In addition, they provide over 30 percent of the drinking water for Los Angeles County alone. Unfortunately, this area is also prone to devastating wildfires. Ensuring the public safety of our first responders and residents remains a top priority of mine. That is why I have been working for over a year with multiple parties on a proposal to assist our firefighters and preserve recreational activities in the region.

It is also vital that we continue to care for our natural resources. The Angeles and San Bernardino National Forests Protection Act,

which I am introducing today, adds approximately 17,700 acres of forest lands to the Cucamonga and Sheep Mountain Wilderness Areas. With their close proximity to dozens of communities, the Angeles and San Bernardino National Forests provide residents with an opportunity to easily enjoy the public lands in their own backyard. It is my hope that this legislation will protect this area for the benefit of future generations.

Throughout this entire process, my number one focus has been to protect our firefighters and other first responders who are responsible for keeping lives, homes and communities safe from approaching fires. I have worked closely with the Los Angeles and the San Bernardino County fire departments and have incorporated their suggestions on how we can make their job easier and safer. I am pleased that this legislation has the support of both the Los Angeles County and the San Bernardino County fire departments as well as the support of local fire chiefs. I will continue to work with our fire departments to ensure they have the resources needed to do their job as safely and effectively as possible.

This legislation also calls on the Forest Service to reduce the severe maintenance backlog that exists in both the Angeles and San Bernardino National Forests and to restore valuable recreational opportunities that were lost in the devastating 2009 Station Fire. Numerous facilities and trail markers were damaged during this fire and my legislation calls on the Forest Service to restore the facilities impacted in the Station Fire. This will allow individuals and families to enjoy our public lands for many years to come.

I also want to take this opportunity to note that this legislation will not impact any existing private property or water rights in this area. Multiple recreational uses, including horseback riding as well as hiking currently occur in these National Forests and these activities must be allowed to continue.

As this legislation works its way through the legislative process, I will keep working with all of the interested parties to ensure that our first responders can safely and securely protect our communities from forest fires while also preserving recreational opportunities for everyone.

HONORING INLAND HOSPITAL

HON. MICHAEL H. MICHAUD

OF MAINE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 5, 2011

Mr. MICHAUD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the accomplishments of Inland Hospital in Waterville, Maine.

Inland Hospital is a 48-bed, not-for-profit, community hospital that was founded in 1943 by a group of osteopathic physicians with a vision of providing compassionate care that focused on the whole patient, not just the disease. Today, that patient-centered approach is alive and well at Inland, where staff provide the kind of care we all want for our own families. Patients are treated with respect and dignity and benefit from an open communication process that delivers an extraordinary experience and the best possible medical outcome.

Inland Hospital has been recently recognized as one of the nation's top rural hospitals