

Mr. Speaker, I urge the Speaker of this House to reconsider and to act immediately. Now is the time to act.

Mr. RUNYAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in disbelief that a Hurricane Sandy disaster relief bill has failed to come to the floor in the current Congress.

It has been over two months since Super Storm Sandy devastated my home state of New Jersey, and Congress has failed to act. After Hurricane Katrina Congress acted and passed a supplemental spending bill within 10 days.

My district was ground zero for Sandy and suffered horrific damage.

I can personally attest to the devastation as I toured many of the coastal towns in the days after the storm, and I can honestly say that some areas look like they had just been bombed.

Governor Christie, after careful examination, estimates the damage to New Jersey alone to be \$36.9 billion.

I fully support the Governor's request. New Jersey will need every last dime in order to rebuild successfully.

My constituents and I are extremely disappointed that in our time of need this Congress has failed to act.

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my absolute shock that the House Republican leadership has adjourned the 112th Congress without addressing the needs of the victims of Superstorm Sandy.

Like most Members whose constituents were affected by Sandy, we expected, and were all but assured, that there would be consideration of a supplemental appropriations bill before this House adjourned. It is utterly unacceptable to leave millions of Americans across the most densely populated part of the nation, including my Long Island district, on the hook for the unexpected costs of a natural disaster.

The House Republican leadership had plenty of time to act—let's review the timeline. In November, Governors from affected states acted to give preliminary assessments of the damage caused to their cities and towns. In early December, the President submitted to Speaker BOEHNER a detailed supplemental package. By the end of December, the Senate passed a bipartisan supplemental providing sixty billion dollars in federal resources to Sandy victims. And yesterday, House Republican leadership chose to give Members an extra day of vacation rather than take up the Senate-passed bill or, at the very least, even attempt to address the needs of millions because of this natural disaster. All the House leadership did was tell storm victims to wait until the next Congress. Excuse me for being cynical, but I don't have much faith that this House leadership can keep its word and deliver for the people in a timely manner. Midnight hour deals on fiscal cliffs, pending dysfunction with the debt ceiling situation in two months—I just don't believe it.

Ladies and gentlemen, this represents an unprecedented action in the Congress. Never before has the United States Congress turned its back on its citizens after a natural disaster. Members of this Congress whose constituents were affected by Sandy have time and time again supported supplemental appropriations bills for other areas of the country affected by natural disaster. We were there with funding after Katrina, and we were there after the

floods in the Midwest. Now we need to be there for millions in the Northeast. How come when it is our constituents' unfortunate circumstance to be in need of similar funding we are told to wait?

It's shameful.

I am pleased that both my Republican and Democratic colleagues have expressed their shock and disappointment in House leadership for not allowing a vote on a Sandy aid package. I will not rest until I can deliver this funding to my constituents on Long Island and to the millions who live throughout the Northeast. The Senate passed a good bill, a bipartisan bill, a bill that includes much needed mitigation funding as well. Nine weeks is already far too long for folks to wait to be helped by our federal government after a disaster of this magnitude. FEMA alone cannot provide all the necessary funding until this House acts. The Small Business Administration, the Army Corps of Engineers, other vital federal agencies and our state and local governments NEED the additional resources to help stem the hurt Sandy caused.

I am ashamed of the actions of this House Republican leadership and I remain committed to getting Long Islanders and those across the Northeast the federal assistance they deserve.

#### SUMMARY OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, we've had a very good session of the 112th Congress, and we got through it last night. I think all of us, regardless of how we voted, feel a certain relief that we can move on in this country and start to tackle the huge deficit we have.

This is going to be my last speech on the floor. I had the opportunity yesterday to deliver a speech that deals with what I felt were some of the problems in this country with regard to the deficit.

I quoted a lot from Thomas Jefferson, who aptly realized how troublesome and serious the amount of borrowing by this Congress and past Congresses could be to this country. He, of course, inherited a similar situation when he became President, and how he solved it, I felt, was important to put in the RECORD—his acute sense of urgency and how he went about solving the deficit he inherited. So I talked about that last night in my speech on the floor.

The second thing I talked about was this whole idea of Keynesian economics and that the problem we have is continuing to stimulate the economy with either QE1, QE2, QE3, and so on with this quantitative easing that Chairman Bernanke is doing and how that is ultimately hurting this country.

I also thought I would speak briefly today on some of the accomplishments that I have had over my 24 years. Some of these are very important, I think, for my district and, of course, I think, for the country.

The first one I'll mention is the Cross Florida Barge Canal. This was 86,000

acres that were tied up at the Federal Government. President Nixon wanted to do the Cross Florida Barge Canal. Ultimately, he decided against it, so this amount of land was tied up in the Federal Register. With the help of Charlie Bennett, a Congressman from Jacksonville at that time, I sponsored a bill to retake that 86,000 acres and move it back to Florida, where it was originally located. So we de-authorized the Cross Florida Barge Canal, and President Bush signed into law my bill on November 29, 1990.

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The second major piece of legislation I am very proud of is the Telecommunications Act of 1996. I was a conferee with the Senate. I had many amendments involved with that, particularly with the broadcast side. It provided competition, reduced regulation, and it started this whole innovation in our telecommunication industry. And it was a great honor for me to serve and to be contributing to that great bill which created all of the new jobs in this country.

The third one was the Veterans Millennium Health Care and Benefits Act, which was signed by President Clinton on March 10, 2000. This bill was to provide extended care services for our veterans, to make improvements in health care programs at the Department of Veterans Affairs. I was chairman of the Health Subcommittee at the time, and I was able to advance this bill, and I am very proud that President Bill Clinton signed it.

The fourth bill was the Cardiac Arrest Survival Act. President Clinton signed it on February 13, 2000. It prevents as many as 50,000 unnecessary deaths each year in the United States by using what are called AEDs, which are automated external defibrillators. It allowed people to be trained to save lives, and so this act was very important. I'm glad that it was signed as my bill.

The fifth one I am very proud of that President Bush signed is dealing with asthma conditions. Self-administration of medications was prevented in schools because they had no drugs allowed, and some of the children had asthma and they needed EpiPen or they needed some albuterol, and if it wasn't available they could go into asthma attack. This bill allowed nurses in schools to provide this type of treatment.

The sixth one is the Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act. It was signed by President George Bush on October 26, 2005. It basically provided civil liability action protection for companies that were manufacturing, distributing, or importing firearms or ammunition, for damages that were caused. Cities and States were suing these manufacturers, putting them out of business. They were nuisance suits, and I'm glad that President Bush signed it.

The last one I'm very happy to talk about is a bill that President Clinton

signed, H.R. 5109, which basically assisted the Veterans Health Administration to help personnel.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Jack Seum, my chief of staff, for his 20 years of service; Paul Flusche for his 17 years; Sherrie Porter for her 10; and Shawna Williams for her 14 years of service. They did an extraordinarily good job, and I thank them.

I recognize my long time employees.

Jack Seum, Chief of Staff, 20 years of service; Paul Flusche, Press Secretary, 17 years of service; Sherrie Porter, District Director, 10 years; and Shawna Williams, Staff Case-worker, 14 years.

And I thank all of my staff for their strong efforts.

Also I want to thank Jay Pierson for his help during my tenure in Congress. He was the floor manager and did a great job. His 34 years of service was extremely impressive.

#### DISTRICT FUNDING REQUESTS SUMMARY

1. Establishment of an outpatient clinic for Veterans in Leesburg and Ocala, Florida.

2. Instrumental in building a Veterans' hospital facility in western Marion County, part of The Villages, with ten acres of land donated by Gary Morris, the owner of The Villages.

3. Funding for a 235-bed facility for the Veterans Administration Hospital in Gainesville.

4. Numerous funding support for the infrastructure for the beltway in Ocala and the beltway in Clay County.

5. Conversion of the Master Navy Jet Base Cecil Field into the Cecil Field Commerce Center with continuous appropriated funding made to help transition this into a commercial enterprise.

6. Further funding for the National Guard in Camp Blanding for the new Education Center as a result of the 9/11 tragedy and terrorist attack. Also helped National Guard in the relocation of the space program deposit of rocket fuel at Camp Blanding.

7. Federal funding for the building of a new prison in Sumter County and the funding for the intersection to allow transportation requirements to be met off of I75.

8. Accomplishments for Jacksonville Area: JAX VA Cemetery: I first offered legislation (H.R. 3882) to establish a new VA cemetery in northeast Florida in 1996. There are approximately 189,000 veterans in the Jacksonville area, but there were no veterans' cemetery to provide them a permanent place of honor. It was not until 2003, with the inclusion of language from my bill (H.R. 197) into H.R. 1516, the National Cemetery Expansion Act of 2003, that a veterans' cemetery in Jacksonville was finally established.

Cecil Field: With the closure of Cecil Field, I have worked with area leaders and involved citizens in transforming Cecil into a commercial center. Since 2001, I have secured \$10.5 million in appropriations funding for the former Cecil Field, now Cecil Commerce Center.

I also worked through the Military Airport Program (MAP) to upgrade the facilities at Cecil. From FY 2000 to 2003, I helped Cecil receive more than \$12.5 million in MAP funding for building and hangar renovation, runway rehabilitation, and infrastructure improvements.

Florida National Guard: I have a long record of working with the Florida National Guard and its premier facility at Camp Blanding. I have secured funding and support for establishing the Rocket Motor Storage Facility, various infrastructure upgrades, and the Air National Guard Weather Readiness Training Center.

NADEP: I support the mission and workers at Jacksonville NADEP. Stearns contacted Secretary of Defense and pointed out specific examples in which NADEP personnel contributed directly to returning equipment to combat readiness.

JAX Port: I consistently join the area delegation in supporting dredging at JAX Port Authority.

#### MORE RECENT EXAMPLES ARE

1. Representative STEARNS introduced FAST, the "Faster Access to Specialized Treatment Act" (H.R. 4132), which rewrote Section 506 of the Food, Drug & Cosmetics Act to modernize the accelerated approval pathway for rare disease drugs. FAST was included in the FDA Prescription Drug User Fee Act (PDUFA), Rare Disease Bill.

2. Congressman STEARNS worked with Rep. ED TOWNS (D-NY) to craft H.R. 734, the Pedestrian Safety Enhancement Act of 2009 which directed the Secretary of Transportation to set a noise level sufficient to alert blind and other pedestrians of the presence of operating motor vehicles. This legislation was signed into law on January 4, 2011 as S. 841.

3. One of the high points for veterans and serving on the 24 years on the Veterans Affairs Committee was the accomplishment of getting a new cemetery in Jacksonville. The language in Representative STEARNS' bill H.R. 1516 was incorporated into the National Cemetery Expansion Act of 2003, establishing a veterans' cemetery in Jacksonville. This was signed by President Bush. Representative STEARNS had originally dropped H.R. 3882 and it was ten years later that this Act was accomplished and signed into law by President Bush.

4. Representative STEARNS served as a member of the Air Force Congress with Sam Johnson who spent 6½ years as a POW at the Hanoi Hilton. While a member of the Air Force Caucus the Air Force Association presented to Congressman STEARNS the W. Stuart Symington Award which is the highest honor presented to a civilian in the field of national security.

5. A recent bill which passed the Congress for the first time with Democrat support was H.R. \* \* \* (James) the Concealed Weapons Permit to allow Americans to carry a concealed weapon if they have established their credentials from the state of their residency to other states.

#### HURRICANE SANDY RELIEF

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER) for 3 minutes.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, sometimes events occur that are so out of the ordinary, so unusual as to defy belief. Such is the decision of the Speaker last night not to permit this House to vote on relief aid for the three States and some other areas that were devastated by Hurricane Sandy.

I have been in this House for 20 years. There have been many disasters—floods, hurricanes, tornadoes, earthquakes, wildfires. In every single instance, this House has voted aid for the necessary States; in every single instance, usually within a week or 2. Never more than 3. It has now been 9 weeks since October 29 when Hurricane Sandy devastated three States and parts of more—9 weeks.

The Senate passed a bill to aid us. The House was ready. The bill was prepared and an amendment was prepared. We were assured the bill would be on the floor last night or today. At the last minute the Speaker, without even talking to Republicans, not to mention Democrats from New York, refusing to meet with them, suddenly pulled the bill and said we wouldn't have a vote; as if the people in New York and Connecticut and Pennsylvania, New Jersey are not in need of aid; as if thousands of people are still not without heat, without water—as if thousands of small businesses don't need loans and aid so that they don't go under; as if thousands of people don't need help to rebuild their homes, to clear the trash from their properties; as if hundreds of municipalities don't need aid to finance this activity, having used up all their budgets for that purpose.

We're told by the chairman of the Appropriations Committee we'll get a bill on the floor later this month in the next Congress. It's already 9 weeks. It's already an unprecedented length of time. And why? Are New Yorkers and Pennsylvanians and Connecticut residents and New Jersey residents less American than the people that we aid in the Midwest and the South when we vote for aid for those people because they are the victims of natural disasters? How can we treat an entire region of the country this way? It is the most disgraceful action I've seen in this House in the 20 years I've been here.

I see that we're told that, well, FEMA still has money until March. But it's not just FEMA; it's the Small Business Administration that needs the appropriation now to help small businesses now; it's the Army Corps of Engineers that needs the authorization, the appropriation now to help the people who are victimized.

There is no excuse for this, none. It is a betrayal of the people of those States. It is a betrayal of the people of the United States. It is a betrayal by the Speaker personally of the Members of this House not to permit a vote. I have never seen an action like it. I hope I never see it again.

I urge the Speaker to reconsider and to rectify this decision today, because today is the deadline to avert going down in history as shameful.

#### HURRICANE SANDY RELIEF

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. GRIMM) for 5 minutes.

Mr. GRIMM. Mr. Speaker, it's very difficult to stand here and have to speak to my constituents knowing that we're going to break, we're going to end this Congress, and I'm going to go and walk the streets in Midland Beach, in South Beach, in New Dorp Beach and Tottenville, and I'm going to meet with homeowners that I've been meeting with for 9 weeks now and I can't