

needs against appropriate environmental protections. Under current law, fringe groups are allowed to—for the cost of a postage stamp—file lawsuits against any infrastructure project needing a Clean Water Permit that they spot in the Federal Register. These lawsuits, and the fear of them, have stopped numerous projects that were necessary for local governments to protect their constituents and would have caused minimal harm to the environment. My legislation would modernize the application process for CWA permits submitted by local governments that are for levees, self-closing flood barriers, seawalls, flood gates, slough and stream construction and dredging for flood control, retention ponds for residential areas, and roads and bridges for hurricane, wildfire, and other extreme weather event evacuations. It creates firm time limits for the Corps to act, and a petition process should the agency be unwilling to complete consideration of the project. The legislation also caps mitigation costs to being no more than twenty percent of the total project's cost to ensure projects costs are responsible to the taxpayer. This legislation does not waive NEPA and protects practical environmental review. With local governments struggling to allocate scarce taxpayer dollars for badly needed public safety projects, we must ensure the Federal Government properly balances public safety and environmental concerns. I look forward to working with my colleagues to move this legislation through Congress.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOAQUIN CASTRO

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 12, 2013

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 630 on H.R. 3521—The Department of Veterans Affairs Major Medical Facility Lease Authorization Act of 2013, I am not recorded because I was absent due to awaiting the impending birth of my daughter. Had I been present, I would have voted “aye.”

Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 631 on H.R. 1402—VA Expiring Authorities Extension Act of 2013, I am not recorded because I was absent due to awaiting the impending birth of my daughter. Had I been present, I would have voted “aye.”

Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 632 on H.R. 2019—Gabriella Miller Kids First Research Act of 2013, I am not recorded because I was absent due to awaiting the impending birth of my daughter. Had I been present I would have voted “nay.”

Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 633 on H.R. 2319—Native American Veterans' Memorial Amendments Act of 2013, I am not recorded because I was absent due to awaiting the impending birth of my daughter. Had I been present, I would have voted “aye.”

Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 634 on S. 1471—Alicia Dawn Koehl Respect for National Cemeteries Act, I am not recorded because I was absent due to awaiting the impending birth of my daughter. Had I been present I would have voted “aye.”

Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 635 on H.R. 3212—Sean and David Goldman International Child Abduction Prevention and Return Act of 2013, I am not recorded because I was absent

due to awaiting the impending birth of my daughter. Had I been present, I would have voted “aye.”

Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 636 on H.R. 1992—Israel QME Enhancement Act, I am not recorded because I was absent due to awaiting the impending birth of my daughter. Had I been present I would have voted “aye.”

HONORING BOLTON FUNERAL HOME

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 12, 2013

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a landmark establishment within the Bolton community, the Bolton Funeral Home.

The Bolton Funeral Home came into existence with a vision and endearing motivation to provide burial services for African Americans living within rural areas of Hinds County, Mississippi. On August 15, 1946, Mr. Walter Robinson, Sr. and Mr. Wren Walton purchased a parcel of land within the city limits of Bolton, Mississippi from Jennie Klingman. The purchasing price was \$450.00, which was paid in cash. The funeral home was constructed and opened for business in November 1946. During that time, the average cost for burial services through the Bolton funeral home was approximately \$300.00.

During the time of legalized segregation, the Bolton Funeral Home became an essential business for many in the African American community seeking to bury their loved ones. At the time, the nearest African American owned funeral homes were located in Jackson, Mississippi. With the establishment of the Bolton Funeral Home, those living within the rural communities surrounding the town of Bolton were granted closer access to a very important and much needed service.

Upon the passing of the Mr. Wren Walton and Mr. Walter Robinson, Sr., the Bolton Funeral Home was inherited by Mr. Lewis Kinney (nephew of Mr. Wren Walton) and Mrs. Ruth J. Robinson (wife of Mr. Walter Robinson, Sr.). Today, the business is operated by Mr. Willie Earl Robinson, Walter L. Robinson, Jr., Yvonne Robinson, and Minnie P. Robinson.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the Bolton Funeral Home for providing burial services for African Americans during a period of legal segregation and, often times, isolation from such services.

BUSINESSES SHOULDN'T HAVE TO PLAY DEFENSE AGAINST FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

HON. RANDY HULTGREN

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 12, 2013

Mr. HULTGREN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to draw attention to the regulatory war being waged by this administration on American families, individuals, small businesses, states, cities and towns.

The administration has developed a bad habit of making endless rules and regulations,

with little regard for their negative effects on Americans.

From writing confusing tax forms, to mandating what type of water comes out of fire hydrants, the vast bureaucratic machine in Washington delights in determining how Americans should live and work.

The exponential increase of government rules and regulations poses a clear threat to our freedom, for instance, the freedom of individuals to start their own businesses and pursue the American Dream.

But there is a solution.

I have introduced H.R. 309, the Regulatory Sunset and Review Act of 2013, to break this terrible habit.

I believe that reforms are needed to halt this administration's practice of regulating beyond the intent of the laws we pass, and to reduce the burden these regulations place on Americans, especially American businesses.

Before talking more about the solution, allow me to more fully illustrate the problem and its impact on growing jobs and the economy.

Now, not all regulation is bad, and businesses are more than willing to follow commonsense regulations.

The U.S. Grade Standards for fruits and vegetables, for instance, makes sense for grocers by defining the quality standards for fresh produce.

If a dispute between buyer and seller arises, the standards can then determine who is at fault.

But many federal rules are duplicative, obsolete, unnecessary, conflicting or otherwise inconsistent.

An analysis by the Government Accounting Office found that in fiscal year 2013, \$95 billion of the \$3.6 trillion the federal government spent was duplicative.

For instance, according to the GAO report, there are 76 federal drug abuse and prevention treatment programs, spread among an astounding 17 different agencies.

Combined, they generate 6.1 million hours of paperwork, almost \$300 million in costs, and 122 forms to be filled out by individuals, organizations and businesses.

This is an unacceptable waste of tax money and resources.

The engine of our economy—our small businesses—need room to innovate and expand.

But burdensome and duplicative regulations drain resources from businesses—harming their ability hire new workers and create jobs.

In Illinois' 14th District, business owners tell me this is the chief block to investing and hiring.

When it costs them more than \$10,500 per employee annually to comply with all federal regulations, their concerns make sense.

But in 2012, the Obama administration piled on \$236 billion in new regulations.

It's a little wonder we suffer from weak economic growth and still-too-high unemployment.

President Obama has pledged a comprehensive review of existing regulations.

But unfortunately, his administration has actually done little to get rid of regulations currently on the books.

In fact, he's going to be adding many more next year.

According to an American Action Forum report, upcoming regulations from the Obama administration in 2014 could cost the private sector more than \$143 billion.

That's billion with a “b.”

The administration calls this the “unified agenda,” which includes 15 new “major” rules—those that cost at least \$100 million annually to our economy.

It’s these “major” rules that my bill addresses directly.

How does it actually work?

The bill establishes a responsible process for federal agencies to identify, review, and, if necessary, put major regulations that are no longer needed and serve no beneficial purpose on a path to elimination.

And I want to make sure the public—who are directly affected by bad regulations—have a say.

Under my bill, agencies overseeing these major rules will be required to consider the comments of the public, the regulated community, and Congress with regard to the costs and burdens of rules under review.

This will help them determine which rules need to go.

The agencies would then establish a review process to “sunset” bad rules.

The head of each agency would designate an existing employee as the Regulatory Review Officer, charged with implementing the sunset review.

Six months later, the Administrator would publish a first list of major rules, and then an updated list annually.

The agency would be charged with issuing reports to Congress about rules they reviewed.

But some rules are still bad for individuals and businesses even if they fall under the \$100 million cost.

The public and congressional committees would be able to petition agencies to review these rules as well.

This would ensure less-major, but no-less-harmful, regulations could be considered for elimination.

And if an agency claims it cannot change or get rid of a regulation because it is bound by congressional statute, then they would have to recommend to Congress what we can do to change the law.

This ensures a transparent review process that leads to actual regulatory reform.

We must act now to lend a hand to our struggling economy.

Federal agencies, mostly unaccountable to the people they regulate, should review and remove regulations that hurt American businesses and individuals.

My bill exposes duplicative and obsolete regulations to the public, placing them on a path to elimination.

My colleagues are hearing from their constituents about the harm excessive regulations are having on them.

And the Regulatory Sunset and Review Act of 2013 now has 61 co-sponsors.

We’re seeing a real desire to put regulations under closer scrutiny than they’ve traditionally had.

Mr. Speaker, our job creators need all the help they can get.

Small businesses and startups should spend their time hiring workers and growing their business, instead of wasting time playing defense against an aggressive federal government.

Let’s defend and extend the sphere of freedom, freedom to pursue the American Dream without government on your back.

H.R. 309 gets us heading in that direction.

I urge the House to take up this legislation in the New Year.

CELEBRATING THE U.S. NATIONAL GUARD'S 377TH BIRTHDAY

HON. PHIL GINGREY

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 12, 2013

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize the United States National Guard as they celebrate 377 years of selfless sacrifice to our great nation.

The National Guard pre-dates all other active U.S. military branches. On December 13, 1636, what we have come to know as the National Guard was formed as a colonial militia, made up of ordinary citizens who stood to protect their communities. From their service in the Revolutionary War where they stood their ground during the opening shots at Lexington Green and Concord Bridge, to valiantly fighting in Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom, the Guard has participated in every major American conflict. All Guardsmen are combat-trained, and while abroad they serve in combat missions, build schools and hospitals, and train local peacekeepers.

National Guard members have established a proud history and tradition of service in all 50 states, organized territories, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia. Today's force is comprised of both Army and Air Force divisions and has grown to nearly 500,000 soldiers strong.

The National Guard in my home state of Georgia will hold a special celebration at Clay National Guard Center, giving special recognition to its retirees, Maj. Gen. Jim Butterworth, Brig. Gen. Joe Jarrard, and displaying many of its units' specialized training.

Mr. Speaker, it is with sincere gratitude that I extend my deepest thanks and appreciation to our servicemen and women in the National Guard for their sacrifice and hard work to protect our way of life.

TIME TO BRING OUR TROOPS HOME FROM AFGHANISTAN

HON. CANDICE S. MILLER

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 12, 2013

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, 12 years ago on September 11, 2001, al Qaeda terrorists trained and supported by Osama bin Laden from Afghanistan attacked and murdered nearly 3,000 Americans.

Shortly after that horrible day, American armed forces struck back in Afghanistan. Our troops have performed brilliantly and have significantly damaged al Qaeda terrorists' operations and brought the ultimate justice to bin Laden. At the same time our troops have shed their blood to provide the Afghan people with the opportunity to break from the tyranny of the Taliban and achieve freedom and liberty.

In recent months, our government has offered the additional opportunity provided by a bi-lateral security agreement which would keep American forces in that country beyond

2014. To date, Afghan President Karzai has refused to sign that agreement.

I believe that agreement should be withdrawn and President Obama should bring our forces home by the end of next year. Our troops have performed brilliantly. And now it is time for the Afghan people to step up and secure their own nation. We have offered freedom and democracy to Afghans and they must either choose to take it or not. And it is time for our troops to come home.

CELEBRATING THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF SAINT JAMES' 125TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. RODNEY P. FRELINGHUYSEN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 12, 2013

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Episcopal Church of Saint James, located in Essex County, New Jersey, as it celebrates its 125th anniversary.

The Episcopal Church of St. James began as a small, sixteen person group in 1887 lead by Reverend P.M. Bleecker. As the group grew, a Missionary Committee was established and, at the suggestion of the Bishop, the name “St. James Church, Upper Montclair” was adopted. Within that year, the congregation would grow to consist of 45 people. On December 12, 1888, the Bishop gave canonical permission to form a Parish in the Diocese of Newark. On December 27 of that same year, the Articles of Association were signed. The next day the articles were filed and the church became official.

Around the same time, the church purchased the “Cliffside Chapel” from a nearby Presbyterian Church, which now serves as the cornerstone of the current church.

In 1892, an Alter Guild was formed to attend to the clerical vestments and appointments of the alter. That same year, the Rood Screen was added to the Chancel, and gas was introduced for lighting. The first Vested Choir began in 1898, two members of which continued to sing for the church for over forty years.

In 1902, the church organ was not functioning properly because the building lacked electricity. Later that year, a pipe organ was anonymously donated to replace it. Ten years later, the church ordered a new organ, which was so large they had to modify the roof to fit it.

In 1941, the Willet Studios of Philadelphia began to commission the stained glass windows for the church. That same year, the church installed the Hildreth Meiere painting of James and John fishing over the alter. By 1956, the “Windows of St. James” were completed.

Since the church was built, the congregation has significantly grown. So, the church has developed many programs and groups to help its members. These programs include Youth Groups, Bible Studies, Adult Education, as well as a pre-school.

The church also participates in community service and outreach locally, nationally, and internationally. They work with many organizations to send their congregation, along with others who are interested, on missionary trips to various places in need of aid. Previous trips have been to Appalachia and New Orleans.