

House Members to have included in the new Water Resources Reform and Development Act. This bill, also known as WRRDA, is a vital piece of legislation that Congress will consider later today.

Our provision would help improve the Nation's water infrastructure, including the aging locks and dams along the Mississippi and Illinois Rivers, through public-private partnerships that would expedite projects and save taxpayers money. It comes from a House and Senate, Democrat and Republican bill called the Water Infrastructure Now Public Private-Partnership Act.

I was proud to introduce this bill earlier this year with Senators Durbin and Kirk and Representative RODNEY DAVIS, all proudly of Illinois. Our provision would help clear a \$60 billion backlog in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers projects that will take decades to complete without outside investment. It does this by creating a pilot program to explore agreements between the Army Corps of Engineers and private entities as alternatives to traditional financing, planning, design, and construction models.

The Mississippi and Illinois Rivers are absolutely critical to the economic well-being of my region in Illinois, the entire Midwest, and the United States and the world. These locks and dams were built during the administration of Franklin Roosevelt and are now close to 80 years old. This is why action must be taken to expand and modernize the locks and dams that help transport our goods and products worldwide.

By encouraging public-private partnerships, our bipartisan effort will help make the movement of the high-quality goods of our region, whether they be from any of the numerous farmers and manufacturers that call Illinois home, more swift, efficient, and safe.

To put this in perspective, the Mississippi River is the world's largest navigable inland waterway. Just on the Mississippi River alone, 60 percent—well over half—of the Nation's agricultural goods are transported. It is absolutely critical to American commerce and the smooth movement of goods that this is made as efficient as possible.

Our bill fits perfectly into that equation, and it is good for the taxpayer, the farmer, and industry. I am very proud of that.

In addition to our efforts to improve our Nation's locks and dams, the Water Resources Reform and Development Act also contains many provisions that will boost local economies across our country. The WRRDA bill will lead to upgraded water transportation systems and offer vulnerable communities better protection against flooding, which is very important to the region that I represent. It will promote America's competitiveness, prosperity, and economic growth for years to come.

Mr. Speaker, I came to Congress to work with those I don't always agree with and who don't always agree with me, but as a way to find commonsense,

reasonable solutions to create jobs and lay the foundation for a stronger middle class.

I was proud that the WRRDA bill passed out of the House Transportation Committee on a bipartisan, unanimous basis. I give a great deal of credit to Transportation Committee Chairman BILL SHUSTER, Ranking Member NICK RAHALL, Subcommittee Chairman BOB GIBBS, Subcommittee Ranking Member TIM BISHOP, and all of my colleagues on the committee for their hard work over the last year. It is truly an example of congressional Republicans and Democrats working together, and I hope it is something that we will see a lot more of.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this important job-creating bill when it comes to the floor later today.

FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY: THE BATTLE RESUMES IN 2014

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

Mr. BROOKS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, Benjamin Franklin once advised:

When you run in debt, you give to another power over your liberty.

Washington is in an epic political battle that controls America's destiny for decades to come. The fight is between those who are financially responsible and have the understanding and backbone needed to prevent an American bankruptcy, and those who do not.

Last week, mainstream news media pundits declared a great win for Democrats and President Obama when the Federal Government reopened and the debt ceiling was raised. To the contrary, and for reasons I will explain, last week was a major loss for the American people.

America's economy suffers from a \$17 trillion debt—the worse in history—and 5 years of deficits averaging more than a trillion dollars per year. Again, the worst in history.

During the past 5 years, the Federal Government borrowed 30 percent of its spending. How many families and businesses can avoid bankruptcy if, year after year, 30 percent of their spending is borrowed money? Not many, and not for long. Yet that is exactly what our country, America, is doing.

Economic principles don't care if you are a family, a business, or a country. If you borrow more money than you can pay back, you go bankrupt.

Mr. Speaker, America has been warned.

President Obama's Comptroller General Dodaro warns America's finances are on an "unsustainable path." Former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Mike Mullen warns that our greatest national security threat is not Iran, al Qaeda, China, or Russia; it is our debt burden that undermines our ability to pay for America's national defense and thus risks our national security.

Detroit and Stockton bankruptcies mean retirees may lose their pensions. Greece, another debtor nation, has a 27 percent unemployment rate—worse than any year in America's Great Depression.

There are good and bad ways to fund the Federal Government and raise the debt ceiling. Last week, Washington chose the worst way by not fixing the underlying problems: deficits and debt. Instead, Washington again kicked the can down the road, forcing America to revisit government funding issues in January and the debt ceiling issues in February, with one major difference: America will be financially weaker and less able to face the problem because we will be burdened by another half-trillion dollars in debt.

Mr. Speaker, another half-trillion dollars in debt. I wonder why you didn't hear that from the media pundits.

What did America get for another half-trillion dollars in debt? Not one penny in spending cuts, not a single economic policy that creates jobs and grows our economy, and nothing that fixes our deficit and debt problem.

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What Washington did last week is akin to a sick patient going to the emergency room and getting pain-killing drugs that help the patient feel good, yet do nothing to cure the disease that ultimately kills the patient. In the real world, that is medical malpractice. Similarly, Washington's refusal last week to cure our deficit and debt disease was governing malpractice.

Mr. Speaker, America enjoys prosperity today because past generations sacrificed to make us who we are. We have the same obligation to our descendants.

President George Washington once advised Congress:

No pecuniary consideration is more urgent than the regular redemption and discharge of the public debt. On none can delay be more injurious.

George Washington gave prudent advice in 1793. It is prudent advice now. Washington must cut out-of-control spending and balance the budget before America's debt burden spirals out of control and is so great that we cannot recover. Failure risks a bankruptcy that will destroy the America it took our ancestors generations—centuries—to build.

Mr. Speaker, the fight for America resumes in January on properly funding the government and in February on properly raising the debt ceiling. Ours is a fight America must win. Congress and the White House must rise to the challenge and be financially responsible when funding the government and raising the debt ceiling. America's future as a great Nation and a world power depends on it.

IN HONOR OF LUIS FERRE ON THE 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF HIS PASSING

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Puerto Rico (Mr. PIERLUISI) for 5 minutes.

Mr. PIERLUISI. Mr. Speaker, Monday marked the 10th anniversary of the passing of Luis Ferre. I rise this morning to pay tribute to this giant of a man whom The New York Times called the "dominant force in the politics, economy and culture of Puerto Rico" for much of the 20th century.

In a real sense, Don Luis personified his beloved Puerto Rico, embodying both its progress and its struggles. He was born in Ponce in 1904, a few years after Puerto Rico became a U.S. territory; was a teenager when island residents were granted American citizenship in 1917; served as a delegate to the convention that drafted Puerto Rico's local constitution in the early 1950s; was elected as the island's governor in 1968; served as a member of the Puerto Rico Senate, including as its president, in the late 1970s and early 1980s; and remained engaged in public life as a revered elder statesman well beyond his formal retirement from politics.

Don Luis lived to age 99, but it was the fullness of his life, not its length, that is so remarkable. Trained as an engineer at MIT and as a classical pianist at the New England Conservatory of Music, Ferre was a true renaissance man. He loved ideas, intellectual debate and culture, founding the renowned Ponce Museum of Art; but he was also at home in the practical world of business, taking a small company and transforming it into one of Puerto Rico's most successful conglomerates. He published a newspaper, now called *El Nuevo Dia*, which is run by his grandchildren, and has the largest circulation of any periodical on the island. Don Luis was also a committed philanthropist, who took to heart the biblical axiom: to whom much is given, much is expected.

In 1991, Ferre was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the Nation's highest civilian honor, by President George H.W. Bush, who called Ferre "a public servant of the first order" and an "extraordinary leader in the life of Puerto Rico."

On a personal level, Ferre refuted the notion that great men are seldom good men. Like any effective leader, he was tough when he needed to be, but he was also kind, warm and generous, inspiring affection and loyalty as well as respect. Don Luis was a gentleman through and through. He was "old school" in the best sense of the term.

Few, if any, Puerto Ricans have accomplished as much in their lives as Don Luis or have left behind such a lasting legacy. A proud Republican and founder of the local New Progressive Party, Ferre did not live to see his goal of statehood for Puerto Rico realized, but he encouraged and mentored a new generation of leaders who understand

that Puerto Rico's "colonial status," as Don Luis called it, deprives island residents of political and civil rights, hinders their economic progress and harms their quality of life. As I and other pro-statehood advocates work to perfect Puerto Rico's union with the U.S., we are guided by Don Luis' example and draw strength from his memory.

Ferre once described himself as revolutionary in his ideas, liberal in his objectives, and conservative in his methods. Thanks to Don Luis and others, statehood is no longer a revolutionary idea. It has become the predominant force in Puerto Rico politics while support for the status quo continues to decline and support for separate nationhood remains slight.

Last November, a clear majority of voters in Puerto Rico rejected territory status, and more voters expressed a preference for statehood than for any other status option. I wish Don Luis had been alive to witness this historic event. When Puerto Rico does become a state, as I know it will, we will look back upon Luis Ferre's life and say that this man, as much as any other man, was responsible for this crowning achievement.

ACCELERATING THE END OF BREAST CANCER ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, October is National Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

It is estimated that almost 40,000 women in the United States will die of breast cancer this year. Those are mothers, sisters, grandmothers, wives, daughters. We will miss them, and it shouldn't be. Thousands of men will be diagnosed with breast cancer as well.

Breast cancer is the second leading cause of cancer deaths among women in the United States. Globally, breast cancer accounts for one-quarter of all cancers suffered by women. Every family probably in this Chamber today and across America has been touched in its life by somebody who has had breast cancer, and I am certainly no exception. My mother-in-law, Ruth Eskew Capito, died tragically at age 51—diagnosed with breast cancer. I never knew her as a mother-in-law, and my children never got to enjoy the pleasures of having her as their grandmother. The emptiness and the hurt never go away.

With the efforts of many dedicated to fighting breast cancer, we are making some progress—but limited progress—in stopping premature deaths caused by this terrible disease. In 1991, an average of 119 women in the United States died of breast cancer each day. Today, more than 20 years later, an average of 108 women will die of the disease each day. So between the years of 2000 and 2009, the cancer mortality rate for women has declined by 1.9 percent annually.

We must accelerate the progress we are making in finding new lifesaving treatments for breast cancer. That is why I, along with a bipartisan group of cosponsors, introduced H.R. 1830, the Accelerating the End of Breast Cancer Act. The Accelerating the End of Breast Cancer Act sets a national goal of ending deaths from the disease by 2020. This bill would establish a commission that would direct Federal and private sector resources towards the promising treatments aimed at stopping metastasis, or the spread of breast cancer, to other parts of the body.

The legislation is not designed to spend more taxpayers' dollars. In fact, the bill does not authorize any new Federal spending. Instead, it is designed to direct our existing research dollars in the most efficient way possible. The Accelerating the End of Breast Cancer Act will not duplicate the efforts of existing government agencies and programs. It will, instead, provide a vital check and balance and will help ensure our limited research dollars are funding the most promising science in the area of breast cancer research. In working in this way and in building on the decades of Federal investment and achievement in breast cancer research, we can move forward to end breast cancer and learn how to prevent the disease within the next decade.

So far, there are 172 House Members from both parties and all ideologies who have cosponsored this legislation. I invite my colleagues today, in this month of October—National Breast Cancer Awareness Month—who have not yet cosponsored, to join us in a cosponsorship. I look forward to working with Members on both sides of the aisle to spur the development of new lifesaving treatments for those with breast cancer. The hope to end breast cancer can become a reality. Let's join together to make that happen.

WATER RESOURCES REFORM AND DEVELOPMENT ACT

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

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to voice my concerns about provisions in the Water Resources Reform and Development Act that put communities, taxpayers and the environment at risk by undermining the National Environmental Policy Act.

NEPA reviews have been useful for identifying potentially costly problems with water projects, allowing changes to save taxpayer dollars and avoid delays. This bill contains so-called "streamlining" provisions based on the flawed notion that NEPA is causing project delays; but studies have shown that other factors, like insufficient funding for the Corps, are the cause of delays. The bill limits public participation in the decision-making process, which will deny the Corps the benefit of public and expert input.