

inspiration to all; now therefore, I, HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, Jr. do hereby proclaim August 30, 2015 as Ms. Gladys Opelousas Day in the 4th Congressional District of Georgia.

Proclaimed, this 15th day of August, 2015.

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PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. JOE COURTNEY**

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, June 24, 2015*

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to be present for votes on June 23, 2015 due to responsibilities back in my district. Had I been present, I would have voted:

"No" on roll call no. 376, passage of H.R. 1190, the Protecting Seniors Access to Medicare Act of 2015;

"Yes" on roll call no. 377, on the Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass, as amended, H.R. 805, the Domain Openness Through Continued Oversight Matters Act of 2015 (DOTCOM Act of 2015); and,

"Yes" on roll call no. 378, on the Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass, as amended, H.R. 2576, the TSCA Modernization Act of 2015.

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HONORING LOUIS WILLIAMS

**HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON**

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, June 24, 2015*

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a tremendous public servant who has dedicated his life to serving the needs of his community. Louis Williams, of Edwards, Mississippi, is retiring from the police force after 39 years of service, 38 of which he spent as chief of police. As an officer, Williams has served as a vital link between law enforcement and the youth of his community as a figure both highly respected and admired.

Before joining the police force, Williams coached Edwards' youth baseball and basketball and has continued doing so over the years. His mentorship gave him the relatability necessary to effectively police his city and maintain a healthy relationship with its citizens. The number of adolescents he has coached now spans three generations for many families whom Williams has gotten to know over his decades of service.

As police chief, his dedication is unquestioned, as he has made the concerted effort to maintain round-the-clock availability. While Williams views that as a condition of the job, he is greatly appreciated for it by all who have ever given him a call. His career has exemplified how policemen and women can govern efficiently by truly committing their time and effort to their citizens.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Chief Williams for his dedication to serving others.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. GRACE F. NAPOLITANO**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, June 24, 2015*

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, June 23rd, 2015, I was absent during roll call vote #377. Had I been present, I would have voted "YEA" On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass, as Amended, H.R. 805, Domain Openness Through Continued Oversight Matters Act of 2015 (DOTCOM Act of 2015).

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IN SUPPORT OF THE INTRODUCTION OF H. RES. 329 "LGBTQ PRIDE MONTH"

**HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, June 24, 2015*

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commemorate LGBTQ Pride Month and the remarkable progress that has been made in making our country more diverse and tolerant and embracing differences in the 17 years since the cruel murder of Matthew Shepherd, a college student from Laramie, Wyoming, and 12 years since the historic case of *Lawrence v. Texas* that laid the groundwork for the Supreme Court decision in *United States v. Windsor*, which held that the Defense of Marriage Act was unconstitutional.

As a country, America has made and continues to make great progress in the area of social equality, as evidenced most dramatically by the seismic shift in public support for marriage equality over the past decade.

Today, supporters of marriage equality dramatically outnumber opponents by 61%–35%; a near total reversal from 2004, when opponents outnumbered supporters 58–39 percent. Currently, we await a critical ruling from the Supreme Court which could legalize same-sex marriage nationwide later this month.

Our country made progress in bringing our LGBTQ brothers and sisters, mothers and fathers, out of the shadows with the repeal of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell," which I was proud to support.

Our nation is now stronger and our people are safer thanks to the sacrifices made by these brave Americans, who no longer need to choose between service and silence.

There have been other changes for the better.

In April 2015, President Obama issued a landmark Executive Order prohibiting discrimination against LGBTQ persons in the workplace.

This civil rights victory ensures the tax dollars used to pay government contractors support contractors that are committed to equal employment opportunity for all persons regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity.

This legislation marks a major shift from a time when the U.S. Civil Service Commission prohibited the hiring of LGBTQ persons to a time when the Secretary of Defense has selected an openly gay man as his chief of staff.

Mr. Speaker, this year marks the 46th anniversary of the LGBTQ Civil Rights Movement, where activists such as Frank Kameny led the struggle for the voices of the LGBTQ community to be heard.

Frank Kameny's courageous demonstrations inspired others to resist mistreatment, and we witnessed in 1969 what happens when a community says enough is enough.

Our country has made progress since the Stonewall uprising of 1969, and with the support of equal rights for all communities by leaders such as President Barack Obama, more and more voices are being heard.

Mr. Speaker, although more remains to be done to realize the full promise of America that all are equally treated and protected by the law, it is undeniable that America is closer to realizing that promise than it was during the dark days of Stonewall.

So there is much reason for joy and optimism as my home city of Houston celebrates Houston Pride Week right now.

According to the 2010 U.S. Census, the 16th largest LGBTQ community in the nation is located in the Houston metropolitan area, which I am privileged to represent.

The Houston LGBTQ community is culturally diverse, economically dynamic, and artistically vibrant.

Houston Pride Week has been an annual event for the last 36 years, since 1979, and promotes the individuality of Houston's ever-growing LGBTQ community.

The Pride Festival and Parade are at the center of the Celebration and are annually attended by more than 400,000 people from Houston and around the world. I am a proud participant and previous grand marshal of the event.

Mr. Speaker, progress is made through the efforts of courageous leaders who actively engage their communities and face adversity to ensure that the rights of all are clearly recognized and protected.

People like the legendary Bayard Rustin, who organized the 1947 Journey of Reconciliation which inspired the Freedom Rides of the 1960s and helped Dr. King organize the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and who was the driving force behind the historic 1963 March on Washington.

Texas natives such as Sheryl Swoopes, a 3-time WNBA Most Valuable Player and champion for the Houston Comets, as well as Houston Mayor Annise Parker, whose election made Houston the largest city in the U.S. to have an openly gay mayor.

These leaders have set an example of what can happen when we lift the limits of inequality and support our fellow Americans in pursuit of their inalienable rights.

Other members of the LGBTQ community whose contributions have enriched American culture and made our country better include the great poet Langston Hughes; Mandy Carter, 2008 national co-chair of Obama Pride and lifelong activist; Billy Strayhorn, the musician and gifted composer whose 30-year collaboration with Duke Ellington gave the world some of the greatest jazz music ever; Tom Waddell, army medical doctor and Olympic athlete; and James Baldwin, one of the towering figures in the history of American literature.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to acknowledge the achievements of just a few of the countless number of Americans who overcame prejudice and discrimination to make America a more welcoming place for succeeding generations of LGBTQ community members.

## CALIFORNIA DROUGHT

SPEECH OF

**HON. JOHN GARAMENDI**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 23, 2015*

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, we need to think in a comprehensive way about water in California. The controversial California Water Fix, formerly known as the Bay Delta Conservation Plan (BDCP), is an outdated and destructive plumbing system. It does not create any new water nor does it provide the water and the ecological protection that the Golden State must have. California and the federal government must set aside this big, expensive, destructive plumbing plan and immediately move forward with a comprehensive approach that includes:

- 1) Conservation,
- 2) Recycling,
- 3) The creation of new storage systems,
- 4) Fix the Delta—right sized conveyance, levee improvements, and habitat restoration,
- 5) Science driven process,
- 6) Protection of existing water rights.

This combination of projects constitutes a comprehensive water plan for the state.

Through a comprehensive plan that brings all stakeholders to the table, California can solve its water needs, and it can avoid the continuous water wars that have long divided our state. Unfortunately, California is once again embroiled in a bitter water war brought about by the California Water Fix (BDCP), the most recent attempt to fix California's water supply. After more than five years of study and over \$200,000,000 spent on consultants, the process has become bogged down and turned into another battle pitting north vs. south, water exporters vs. environmentalists, and senior water right holders vs. new comers. A classic California water brawl is in full bloom.

The governor's water plan for California is to take water out of the Sacramento River just south of Sacramento and put it into two tunnels each 40 miles long, 40 feet in diameter and with a potential capacity of moving 15,000 cubic feet per second (cfs). While the current proposal is set up to move 9000 cfs, the twin tunnels have a much larger capacity therefore setting the system up for future expansion. Pumping would also continue directly from the southern Delta at the Tracy pumps. The system will be able to deliver up to 5.3 million acre feet of water to the pumps in Tracy and then on to the San Joaquin Valley farmers and Los Angeles.

So what is wrong with the Water Fix (BDCP)? It is not a water plan for California. It does not create one gallon of new water. It does not solve the long term needs of the state. With a minimum estimated construction and operating cost over 50 years of \$24.5 billion, it is an extraordinarily expensive plumbing system dressed up with a coating of habitat restoration. The plan simply takes water from one region and delivers it to another while tearing up acres of prime agricultural farm land in the process. All of this while stoking the fire of divisiveness over water that has plagued our state for years.

A quick look at the water flow in the Sacramento River over the last two decades shows that approximately six months out of

the year there is somewhere between 15 and 20 thousand cubic feet per second (cfs) of water flowing in the Sacramento River. This proposal has the potential to suck the river dry and destroy the largest delta estuary on the west coast of the Western Hemisphere. Critical habitat for dozens of fish species like salmon, striped bass, and sturgeon would be threatened. These fish and the water they live in are crucial for jobs, agriculture and fishing businesses, and the region's economy.

We should never build a water system that has such destructive potential. It is never safe to assume that ecological concerns will trump greed and thirst. We should keep in mind that in 2012 the U.S. House of Representatives voted on H.R. 1837, the euphemistically titled Sacramento-San Joaquin Valley Reliability Act. The bill passed by a vote of 246 to 175 and swept away all environmental protections for the Delta while stealing 800,000 acre feet of water from the aquatic environment. Luckily, the legislation was derailed in the U.S. Senate, but H.R. 1837 in one form or another is likely to return in future legislative battles.

California must move beyond a patched plumbing system. We need to think about what California really needs, and what it needs is a comprehensive water plan. Big changes are coming that threaten our water supply and our economy. A short list of these challenges include: climate change and related weather events, population growth, world food supplies, and earthquakes.

Climate change is real and its effect on California will be significant. The Colorado River Basin is in a prolonged drought, and likely to be much drier in the future. Based on today's water flows, the water in the Colorado River is oversubscribed by a third and projections indicate less water in the future. This is a big, big problem for the seven states that rely on the river, and especially for Southern California.

The Sierra Nevada Mountains, the Central Valley, and the coastal ranges will also be drastically impacted by climate change. We know that the timing of the precipitation is going to change and the snow is already melting earlier. As a result, the snowpack is moving up the mountains and while it may be deeper at the higher altitudes, the amount of land it covers is greatly reduced. It's the lower snowpack that has the greatest volumes of water and if that continues to recede, we will have less and less water. The 2009 "California Water Plan," published by the California Department of Water Resources, estimates that the snowpack will decrease 25–40 percent by 2050. We must also anticipate more severe storms and flooding. All of this means the natural and man-made storage systems will hold less water. Putting the denial of scientific facts aside, California has to deal with the reality of climate change and its water policy implications.

We know California's population will continue to grow and therefore, the demand for water will increase. We know the world will be very hungry in the future, and we know that the role of agriculture in California is going to be exceedingly important. California agriculture not only fills our own desire for diverse and nutritious foods, but it will also continue to meet basic food needs for people around the world and will continue to serve as an essential component of our nation's economy.

We know the Delta is in serious trouble. The fish species are threatened with extinction and

a total collapse of the estuary ecosystem is possible if the current water pumping program continues. Rising sea levels and deferred maintenance threaten the Delta levees which protect nearly 500,000 people, thousands of acres of valuable farm land, and miles of critical highways, gas and water transmission lines, and water delivery channels. Major upgrades are needed.

For these reasons, California must take off its blinders and expand its scope when thinking about ways to manage its water supply. It must be a holistic approach that is applied to every project that will impact the water needs of all Californians.

To achieve this comprehensive approach, here are six specific actions to provide a foundation for California's water future. If California does all of these, we will create new water supplies and better use the resources we already have:

- 1) Conservation,
- 2) Recycling,
- 3) The creation of new storage systems,
- 4) Fix the Delta—right sized conveyance, levee improvements, and habitat restoration,
- 5) Science driven process,
- 6) Protection of existing water rights

The quickest and cheapest source of new water is to stretch our current supplies by conserving what we have. Californians have been at this for years in our cities, in our industries, on the farm, and in our homes. We have engaged in serious water conservation, yet more can and should be done everywhere.

There are many conservation strategies. One conservation strategy is to use devices that measure the moisture in the soil to provide real time monitoring of the exact amount of water needed for ideal growing conditions. These devices are connected to a computer that automatically turns on just the right amount of water. These systems are in use and conserve at least ten percent with a financial payback in less than one year. If they were deployed widely perhaps at least 1 percent of the 30 million acre feet of water consumed by agriculture could be saved each year (300,000 acre feet).

All of us are going to do a lot more water conservation, not just the agriculture community. The water conservation mandate set by the state is a 20 percent reduction per capita by 2020 which equals 1,600,000 acre feet. In a very real way conservation can create new water that was not previously available for use. To be on the conservative side, let us assume that just one quarter of the State's goal could be obtained in the next decade, thereby adding 400,000 acre feet of new water to our supplies each year.

Can you name the fifth biggest river on the west coast of the Western Hemisphere? It's the water that flows out of the sanitation plants in Southern California and is dumped into the Pacific Ocean.

Why would any sane government take water from the Sacramento River, pump it 500 miles south, lift it 5,000 feet in the air, clean it, use it once, clean it to a higher standard than the day it arrives in Southern California, then dump it in the ocean? California does just this as it discharges over 3.5 million acre feet of water to the ocean each year, much of which could be reused.

We need to think seriously about recycling, not just in Southern California, but everywhere. The State of California currently recycles approximately 650,000 acre feet of water