

additional \$64,000 for 1 year and ongoing funding for continuing noxious and invasive weed eradication; and \$180,000 were secured for the Mariposa Creek Parkway and other improvements. Supervisor Pickard has been an integral member of the Mariposa County Board of Supervisors, his impact on the county will be displayed for years to come.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend and congratulate Supervisor Bob Pickard upon his retirement from the Mariposa County Board of Supervisors. I invite my colleagues to join me in wishing Supervisor Pickard many years of continued success.

INTRODUCTION OF THE OCEAN AND COASTAL MAPPING INTEGRATION ACT

HON. MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 9, 2009

Ms. BORDALLO. Madam Speaker, today I have reintroduced legislation to provide a framework for an integrated ocean and coastal mapping program within the Federal government. The bill, entitled the "Ocean and Coastal Mapping Integration Act," specifically requires the President to establish a program for the development of a coordinated and comprehensive federal ocean and coastal mapping plan for the Great Lakes and coastal state waters, the territorial sea, the exclusive economic zone, and the continental shelf of the United States.

The program is meant to enhance ecosystem-based approaches in decision-making for conservation and management of marine resources and habitats, establish research and mapping priorities for federal-state-local government partnership, support the sound siting of research and other platforms off our coastlines, and advance ocean and coastal science. The President shall coordinate with affected coastal states and territories and an Interagency Committee on Ocean and Coastal Mapping to be convened by the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, NOAA, in establishing this program. The program is also meant to facilitate the adoption of uniform mapping standards and the utilization of the latest technology for mapping activities. Such an approach will allow for the sharing of maps among stakeholders.

Today, at least 15 Federal agencies, most coastal states and territories, and numerous local agencies, academic institutions, and private companies conduct mapping and charting activities for U.S. waters. No central repository or coordinating authority, however, exists under U.S. law to oversee and track these various mapping efforts. The absence of coordination in mapping has resulted in redundancy of efforts in certain areas. While some areas are "over mapped," there is a lack of data for other regions. The program authorized by this bill is meant to reduce such redundancy, and expand the availability of quality, up-to-date, accurate and comprehensive maps and charts for all U.S. waters.

I introduced this bill in the 110th Congress as H.R. 2400. The bill passed the House of Representatives on July 23, 2007, but did not receive the approval of the Senate despite it

having been considered in the other body as part of omnibus legislation. I have, therefore, reintroduced this bill today given the ongoing necessity and importance of improving and streamlining our ocean and coastal mapping capabilities. Ultimately, this bill, if enacted, will improve the conservation and management of marine resources and marine transportation safety.

LETTER TO SPEAKER PELOSI

HON. JAMES R. LANGEVIN

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 9, 2009

Mr. LANGEVIN. Madam Speaker, I submit the following:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, January 6, 2009.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Capitol, Washington, DC.

DEAR MADAM SPEAKER: This letter is to advise you that, effective today, I am taking a leave of absence from the Homeland Security Committee until my tenure on the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence is completed. I understand that I will retain my seniority on the Homeland Security Committee for the duration of my leave.

Thank you for your assistance with this matter.

Sincerely,

JAMES R. LANGEVIN,
Member of Congress.

CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF WOMEN AND WORKPLACE POLICY

HON. JOHN D. DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 9, 2009

Mr. DINGELL. Madam Speaker, today, Representative CAROLYN MALONEY and I are reintroducing our bill to establish a Center for the Study of Women and Workplace Policy. The Center would compile and analyze data on the differences between the earning of men and women and to identify factors which affect those differences. The Center would also publish their results in the form of a "Best Practices Guide" for businesses containing guidelines to promote workplace equity, retaining women in the workplace and promoting a family friendly workplace.

I'm sorry to say that my home state of Michigan has one of the largest earning gaps between college educated men and college educated women. College-educated women in Michigan earn just 70 percent of what college-educated men earn, making the state 47th in the Nation in terms of pay equity—that according to the American Association of University Women. I know that Michigan is home to some of the most talented, skilled women on that planet. It is time that they get paid in a way that reflects those abilities. The establishment of such a center and the publication of its research findings will go a long way toward closing the pay gap in Michigan and throughout our Nation.

RECOGNIZING ISRAEL'S RIGHT TO SELF DEFENSE

HON. BEN CHANDLER

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 9, 2009

Mr. CHANDLER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Israel's enduring friendship with the United States of America, as well as its right to self-defense in an appropriate and proportional manner from the threats posed to it by its neighbors who seek its demise.

As most Palestinians hunger for peace, the actions of Hamas, sponsored by Iran and often attempting to maximize Palestinian civilian casualties, make this road to peace much more difficult. Israel withdrew from Gaza in 2005, hoping that this withdrawal would usher in peace between the two rivals. However, since 2005 Hamas has fired thousands of rockets into Israel. Over the past 6 weeks alone, Hamas, outside the confines of the ceasefire agreement, fired hundreds of rockets and mortars into Israel without warning, killing men, women and children. These continuous acts of terror have left Israel with no other choice but to defend its citizens.

An important and reliable ally in an unstable region, Israel is fundamental to our foreign policy in the Middle East. I am disappointed to see an end to the 6-month ceasefire between Israel and Hamas, as this ultimately leads to more civilian casualties on both sides. However, I think it is important to recognize that Israel faces great threats along its border from which it has every right to defend itself.

During the 6-month ceasefire, Israel's support of the people of Gaza—such as supplying food, medical and other supplies—was commendable. This assistance highlights the potential for a peaceful resolution to this enduring conflict, which I hope to see in my lifetime.

IN HONOR OF LIEUTENANT COLONEL RICHARD W. SKOW

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 9, 2009

Mr. FARR. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the distinguished military career of United States Army LTC Richard W. Skow. On behalf of the whole House, I am honored to extend to Lieutenant Colonel Skow and his family the gratitude of the Congress and the American people for his service on the occasion of his retirement after 24 years in uniform.

During his long and decorated career Lieutenant Colonel Skow made enormous contributions to the success of the U.S. Army's worldwide mission. Most recently, he served for the last year and a half as the Defense Language Institute's, DLI's, Chief of Staff where he had previously studied Portuguese. He built a reputation for an outstanding work ethic, sound judgment, and proactive leadership—a true example for the junior officers under his command. As chief of staff, he played an instrumental role in helping his commander fulfill the DLI's complex mission. His duties included, but were not limited to, personnel and budget management, special