

years, and are the proud parents of two wonderful children, their daughter Sam and son Ryan.

After five years as President, Rick recently announced that he is stepping down and becoming President Emeritus of the Ripon Society. I would like to take this opportunity to thank him for all that he has done for Ripon. What started out 47 years ago as a seed on the Harvard campus has become a strong and sturdy tree in Washington, DC, today.

It is a tree rooted in ideas, and one whose growth over the past 30 years would not have been possible without the dedication and commitment of Rick Kessler.

I thank him for his service.

#### EARMARK DECLARATION

#### HON. ROB BISHOP

OF UTAH

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2009

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Madam Speaker, pursuant to the Republican Leadership standards on earmarks, I am submitting the following information regarding earmarks I received as part of H.R. 2996, the Interior-Environment Appropriations Act, 2010.

Requesting Member: ROB BISHOP

Bill number: H.R. 2996

Account: Forest Service Land Acquisition

Legal name and address of requesting entity: The Trust for Public Land, 660 Pennsylvania Avenue SE, Suite 401, Washington, DC 20003

Description of project: The Bonneville Shoreline Trail was initiated in 1990 to complete a trail corridor along the prehistoric shoreline of Lake Bonneville and along the foothills of the Wasatch mountains from Ogden to Provo. This partnership has been so successful that the communities in Cache and Box Elder counties have worked to extend the trail north. The 150-acre North Ogden property is a priority for protection by the U.S. Forest Service. The property serves as important habitat for deer and elk and as an important buffer for fire protection for the rapidly developing area along the Wasatch Front. The property also provides watershed protection for neighboring areas in addition to key recreational resources.

The North Ogden program is a partnership effort to fill in the boundaries of the national forest along the BST in North Ogden and Pleasant View. In 2005, a five-mile stretch of the BST along North Ogden and Pleasant View was secured through a trail easement along an existing utility corridor granted to the nonprofit Weber Pathways. The property available for protection this year is critical to the North Ogden program because it will bring Forest Service ownership to this stretch of the BST and add critical trail access to the citizens in this area of the state. Protection of this property will also protect beautiful views of the foothills of the Wasatch Front and Ben Lomond Peak, one of Weber County's most important landmarks, while conserving important wildlife habitat and winter range along this rapid growth area.

#### RECOGNIZING THE RETIREMENT OF CHARLES HILDEBRAND FROM THE SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

#### HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2009

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Charles Hildebrand, a community leader and public servant who is retiring from over thirty-five years of service with the Social Security Administration. Charles spent his career serving others, and I am proud to honor this dedication and service.

After graduating from South Carolina State College, Charles started his federal career in 1970 as a program specialist with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. He moved to the Social Security Administration in 1973 as a claim representative in Newark, New Jersey. From 1974 to 1977, Charles also served as the vice president of American Federation of Government Employees Local 2389.

Over the course of his career with the Social Security Administration, Charles worked as an operations supervisor, a level 2 manager, an analyst for the Georgia and North Florida area office staffs, and a level 1 manager. He graduated from the Atlanta Leadership Development Program in 1991. The SSA twice awarded him the agency's highest honor, the Commissioner's Citation.

Charles is also a community service leader. He serves as the 2009–2010 Chairman for the EscaRosa Combined Federal Campaign local agency application review committee and the non-military agencies committee. He is also chair of the North Florida E-service and Integrity/Anti Fraud cadres. As chairman of the board of the Beach Institute Historic Association, Charles oversaw the development of a low-income rehabilitation project to serve the underprivileged in our area.

Madam Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, I am honored to recognize Charles Hildebrand for his service to the people of Northwest Florida. He has been a dedicated public servant for forty years. My wife Vicki and I wish all the best for Charles, his wife, Iris, and his children, Nikki and Amii, as they embark on this next endeavor in their lives.

#### CONGRATULATING PROFESSOR PANNING

#### HON. CHRISTOPHER JOHN LEE

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2009

Mr. LEE of New York. Madam Speaker, I wish to congratulate SUNY Brockport Professor Anne Panning on being named the 2009 New York Professor of the Year. This is a tremendous accomplishment and the western New York community is proud to have Professor Panning as a member of our community.

After receiving her undergraduate degree from Augsburg College, Anne went on to receive her master of fine arts degree from Bowling Green State University and then her doctorate from the University of Hawaii.

She has received much praise from her students and fellow literary scholars alike. In a review for her 2007 work *Super America*, the New York Times wrote that it "radiates infectious optimism."

In addition to teaching several classes at SUNY Brockport, Anne also co-directs the Brockport Writers Forum, one of the foremost reading series in the country. The Forum has had a significant impact on the direction of Brockport's English department on both the undergraduate and graduate level, and Anne has played an integral part in the Forum's continued success along with her co-director, poet Ralph Black.

Anne has won several awards for her fiction and nonfiction writing and also for her teaching, including the Flannery O'Connor Award for short fiction, the Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching, the Lillian Fairchild Award, and now, the New York Professor of the Year.

Madam Speaker, I again wish to congratulate Professor Panning on being named the New York State Professor of the Year, and wish her much continued success.

#### FIRE GRANTS REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2009

SPEECH OF

#### HON. GENE GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 18, 2009

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 3791) to amend sections 33 and 34 of the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974, and for other purposes:

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Chair, I rise today in support for H.R. 3791, the Fire Grants Reauthorization Act of 2009, introduced by my good friend Representative HARRY MITCHELL.

H.R. 3791 will reauthorize the FIRE Grants programs—comprised of the Assistance to Firefighter Grant, AFG, program and the Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response, SAFER, grant program—to ensure that our local firefighters have the tools and resources they need to keep us safe and secure.

Since 2001, the Fire Grants Programs have provided more than \$5 billion in support to local fire departments across the Nation, \$190 million of which has gone to support Texas fire departments. H.R. 3791 provides a 5-year reauthorization of \$1 billion per year for the AFG and \$1.194 billion for the SAFER programs.

The AFG program was created to address concerns that local budgets were unable to handle the mounting responsibilities allocated to the fire service by providing funds to local fire departments to purchase equipment, vehicles, and training. The SAFER program assists fire departments in hiring quality personnel and ensuring that volunteers meet the required safety standards. Funding through these programs has been a valuable tool in helping local fire departments provide emergency response services to their communities.