

today had the gun lobby not insisted on adding an amendment that would not only have eliminated the District's gun safety laws, but also would have added measures making the nation's capital one of the most permissive gun jurisdictions in the country.

In introducing these bills, we lay down a marker of our determination to never relent or retreat until we have obtained each and every right to which we are entitled, whether through the frustration and anguish of the incrementalism that Congress has always forced upon the District or through statehood. We will be watchful to both make and seize every opportunity to pursue our rights, regardless of who controls Congress. We accept no imposed limit on our equal rights as American citizens, and we will pursue them all until the day when there is no difference in citizenship between residents of the District of Columbia and other American citizens.

REINTRODUCING THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY CENTERS ESTAB- LISHMENT ACT

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 23, 2013

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to reintroduce the National Emergency Centers Establishment Act, a bill that I first introduced in the 109th Congress. This legislation authorizes the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to make use of already closed military facilities to coordinate emergency response and provide voluntary humanitarian assistance to Americans displaced by natural disasters.

From Hurricane Katrina to Hurricane Sandy, and numerous other destructive disasters, we have seen time and time again how emergency relief efforts can be complex, expensive, and oftentimes chaotic. Despite the extraordinary efforts can be complex, expensive, and oftentimes chaotic. Despite the extraordinary efforts of agencies like FEMA, the American Red Cross, and other local and national organizations to provide immediate relief, natural disasters can leave tens of thousands of Americans struggling for long periods of time. Sixteen months after Hurricane Katrina, 60,000 Americans were still ill-housed, and struggling to access adequate food and health care, education and jobs. I have seen similar effects following hurricanes in my home state of Florida.

While disaster preparedness, response, and recovery has improved greatly in recent years, difficult challenges remain. I believe that we must increase the availability of temporary housing in times of national emergencies, and improve training and preparedness for national emergencies in order to ensure that we can mitigate as much as possible the humanitarian catastrophes that occurred in the Gulf Coast, the Atlantic Coast, and elsewhere in the nation.

My legislation authorized FEMA to establish six National Emergency Centers throughout the United States. The Centers will be used to provide temporary housing, medical and humanitarian assistance for individuals and families displaced due to an emergency. The Centers will also serve as a centralized location

for the training and coordination of first responders in the instance of an emergency. In addition, the Centers will improve the coordination of preparedness, response, and recovery efforts between governments, private companies, not-for-profit entities and faith-based organizations.

I would like to point out, Mr. Speaker, that the use of these facilities would be totally voluntary on the part of displaced Americans. No federal agency is authorized under this legislation to force anyone to evacuate to these facilities, nor to force those who voluntarily arrive there to remain longer than they wish. The goal is to provide the facility and means for Americans displaced by disasters to continue leading their lives as much as possible.

The National Emergency Centers will be located on military bases that have been closed during the most recent Base Realignment and Closures (BRAC) round. I am proposing these sites because the necessary infrastructure to house, feed, and care for evacuees over an extended period of time is already in place, thus limiting the cost and time needed to construct these facilities. Military bases often contain large warehouses or hangars, ideal locations for storing large amounts of supplies and equipment. Finally, military bases are often accessible by a wide range of transportation links, and may themselves have train yards or airstrips capable of facilitating the rapid disbursement of supplies or relief efforts.

Mr. Speaker, we have an obligation to better prepare and more adequately respond to the needs of communities hit by natural disasters. Furthermore, we must ensure that basic needs of disaster victims are met immediately following the devastation. The goal of this legislation is to improve humanitarian relief to individuals and families displaced and suffering from the effects of a natural disaster. The idea is to have an accessible central location that can house large numbers of people while providing for their immediate medical and daily needs.

I ask my colleagues to support this legislation, and urge the House Leadership to bring this bill to the floor for its swift consideration.

A TRIBUTE IN HONOR OF EVELYN FILICE STANTON

HON. ANNA G. ESHOO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 23, 2013

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Evelyn Filice Stanton who died peacefully while on a family vacation on December 29, 2012.

Evelyn was born on December 17, 1926, in Hollister, California, at the apricot and prune ranch of her parents. She lived there until World War II when her father moved the family to San Francisco, where she entered Lowell High School, graduating with the Class of 1944. She earned her A.B. degree from U.C. Berkeley where she met her future husband, returning war veteran Emmett Stanton, whom she married in 1949.

Evelyn earned a teaching credential from San Francisco State University, and taught at El Cerrito High School while Emmett practiced dentistry. The couple moved to San Mateo County in 1952, where they raised their four sons.

Evelyn Stanton served as the President or as a board member of the United Way of the Bay Area; Mills Peninsula Hospital; Belmont Hills Psychiatric Center; AAUW Education Foundation; San Mateo County League of Women Voters; Family Services Association; American Heart Association; Poplar Center for the Developmentally Disabled; the Hillsborough Concours D'Elegance, which she co-chaired with her husband, and for which they were honored as Hillsborough's Citizens of the Year in 1979; San Mateo High School and Crocker Middle School PARENT Groups; Admiralty Home Owners Association; and the Citizen Task Force to study county government operations in 1975–1977.

In 1979, Evelyn began working for the Mental Health Association of San Mateo, her first foray into the paid workforce since her years as a teacher. She became Executive Director in 1979 and served in that post until 2003. Evelyn Stanton distinguished herself in every community organization she was part of but her extraordinary leadership in the mental health community of San Mateo County was legendary. She was "Mrs. Mental Health", shaping and making the system the best in California.

Together we were founding members of the San Mateo County General Hospital Foundation. She was a member of the AIDS Community Board, and Chair of the Mental Health Contract Agencies. Evelyn earned and was awarded many honors—the Soroptimist Woman of the Year; the Evelyn F. Stanton Endowed Fellowship established by AAUW; the Seaton Manning Outstanding Agency Professional Award; and she was inducted into the San Mateo County Women's Hall of Fame in 1987.

Evelyn will be deeply missed by her four devoted sons, Gary of San Mateo, Greg of San Diego, Dave of San Francisco, Emmett of San Francisco and her nine beloved grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring a great and good woman who served the people of San Mateo County with honor and generosity, earning the respect of the entire community, as well as her colleagues in public service. I ask my colleagues to extend to her family our most sincere sympathy for their loss. Evelyn Stanton will be missed by everyone who had the good fortune to know her, and I count myself among those so blessed. Our community has been strengthened by her life and her service, and our country has been immensely bettered by her extraordinary contributions and a life lived exceedingly well.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 23, 2013

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on January 3, 2009, the day I took office, the national debt was \$10,627,961,295,930.67.

Today, it is \$16,432,619,424,703.06. We've added \$5,804,658,128,772.39 to our debt in 4 years. This is a \$5.8 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a Balanced Budget Amendment. We must stop this unconscionable accumulation of debt.