

in community centers located in affordable housing communities throughout Fairfax County. Programs for youth focus on academics, self-esteem, substance abuse prevention, healthy relationships and college or career planning. Approximately 450 youth participate in these programs. Nearly 90 percent of children who received homework and tutoring help improved their GPAs or overall academic performance. Last summer, FACETS served 1250 lunches, sent 7 children to camp, and hosted additional activities designed to keep children and teens safe.

Programs for adults include computer and financial literacy, career development and ESL. Residents can participate in individualized case management, focusing on eviction prevention and emergency food and financial assistance to keep them stable and in their homes. In FY12, nearly 60 adults participated in FACETS' community programs. Of those who received case management, 40 percent became actively involved with life skills classes and 60 percent gained employment assistance, including résumé development and increasing earning power.

FACETS has earned well-deserved recognition for these efforts. The Dulles Regional Chamber of Commerce honored FACETS as its 2013 Large Nonprofit of the Year. In June 2013, the Housing Association of Nonprofit Developers recognized the FACETS' Education and Community Development Program as the Best Community Life Program in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area. Last year,

FACETS earned a Team Excellence Award: Leadership Role in the Fairfax County Family Shelter In-take Redesign.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing FACETS for its 25 years of service to our community and in extending our sincere appreciation to the dedicated staff and volunteers for their commitment to ending poverty in Fairfax County as well as to the individual, corporate, non-profit, and government agency sponsors for supporting the critical work of this organization.

INTRODUCTION OF THE WATER TRUST FUND ACT

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 21, 2013

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, there is nothing more essential to quality of life, to the health of our families and of our communities than water. Water, at its most basic level, is life. Safe drinking water and basic sanitation make the difference between health and sickness, between a family thriving or struggling just to exist.

Water quality and quantity are serious issues in communities across the country, especially now, when changing weather patterns, extreme drought, continued growth combine to put an even greater demand on our aging, inadequate infrastructure. To ease these pressures, I am introducing the Water Trust Fund Act, which would establish a trust fund to help local communities meet their water infrastructure needs.

Over a thousand communities across the country are struggling with combined sewer

overflows as well as inadequate and aging sewer pipes. Small communities in particular, which already face huge questions of water supply and quality, have few resources with which to pay the bills and are seeing sky-high monthly costs for consumers.

The Water Trust Fund Act creates a deficit-neutral, consistent, and firewalled trust fund to help states replace, repair, and rehabilitate critical wastewater treatment facilities. It will be financed by voluntary fees from companies that participate, in exchange for the use of advertising materials indicating their support for America's water systems.

We face unprecedented challenges to our water infrastructure. More and more products are designed to be flushed down toilets and drains, placing them in systems that are already stressed. Pharmaceutical residues are showing up in treated wastewater and because they are difficult to treat, I'm afraid we are slowly medicating vast numbers of Americans against their will. Aging water systems—some still made out of brick or wood, some dating from the century before last—mean that America also faces old-fashioned system reliability issues. Unpredictable weather means that water systems are dealing more frequently with sewage overflow, flooding, and overwhelmed systems. Reports indicate that each year an average of six billion gallons of drinking water leaks from these inadequate and ancient pipes. Six billion gallons is enough to fill 6,000 Olympic sized swimming pools—if lined up, these pools would stretch from Washington, D.C. to Pittsburgh, PA.

These aging and outdated systems are not just a local problem, relevant only to a single neighborhood, city, county, or even state. Water does not obey county boundaries or even state lines, and it is a resource on which we all rely. The federal government should help fill the funding gaps that local communities and states cannot. The opportunity is now: There is significant state and local investment, interest rates are low, and the Water Trust Fund will help leverage billions of additional dollars to repair our aging infrastructure.

The American public is already paying a disproportionate share of the costs of water infrastructure. Residential households have the least capacity to absorb additional costs during these difficult times, and they already face wildly escalating costs to deal with problems that they did not create. The voracious water demands of industry far outstrip household needs. Clean water is absolutely essential for these industries and the rest of the business community to function. Water infrastructure upgrades will provide the business community far more in benefits than it would cost, and it could be used to leverage a broader range of investments.

This bill will help communities deal with their water infrastructure needs in a stable, proactive way, and will provide significant benefits for those who rely on our water system, the local government officials charged with making the system work, and the industries who rely on a clean, consistent source of water for their products.

HONORING THE LIFE OF JOE F. ALVERNNAZ

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 21, 2013

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the life of Joe F. Alvernaz. His character exemplified that of a role model and true community leader—he placed others ahead of himself, made family his first priority, and possessed a strong work ethic.

Joe began his life of service at an early age. After the bombing of Pearl Harbor in 1941, he enlisted in the United States Marine Corps and it was there that he received the nickname "Sweet Potato Joe" from his fellow marine and close friend, actor Brian Keith. It was while Joe was in boot camp, that he would come to marry the love of his life: Florence Cardoza of Merced in 1942. As the war went on, he served our country proudly during a period of history that seemed as if it would never pass; a period that forever changed our nation and the world.

After the war ended, Joe became as busy as ever. He came back to California to once again farm sweet potatoes. He later served as President of the California Sweet Potato Council, and U.S. Sweet Potato Council, where he was a Director for over 20 years. To say that Joe was busy is an understatement; he also served as President of the Merced County Farm Bureau and was on the Board of Directors of the Nisei Farmers League.

Joe's involvement in the community could not be described in one word or even in one sentence. From 1946 to 1996, "Sweet Potato Joe" announced all the Livingston High School football games, parades, and even radio programs. This is where Joe earned another name for himself: "The Voice of Livingston." However, his talents did not end there; Joe's acting skills also benefited the Livingston Little Theater group, where he starred in several productions, most notably as Elwood P. Dowd in "Harvey." Adding to his list of accomplishments, Joe also organized the first kid's hardball team in Merced County in the early 50's. Joe was particularly drawn to baseball, and served as coach, sponsor, announcer, and booster for over fifty years. Later, he would become the third Area Commissioner of Baseball. From this, he achieved perhaps his greatest accomplishment; having a local baseball field be renamed the "Joe F. Alvernaz Baseball Field."

Joe was predeceased by his parents, Joe and Mabel Alvernaz, brothers, Arthur and John Alvernaz, and sister, Mary Geyer. He was also predeceased by his oldest son, Joey Alvernaz, in 1980 and by his wife of 64 years, Florence, in 2007. Although Joe has passed on from this life, Heaven is a little bit brighter today because he has joined Florence, the true love of his life. He is survived by 5 children, 17 grandchildren, and 13 great grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great respect that I ask my colleagues to pay tribute to the life of a truly amazing father, coach, neighbor, and everyone's friend, Joe F. Alvernaz. His service to his country, community, and to his family will be painfully missed, yet celebrated, honored and never forgotten.