

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF THE SENATE AMENDMENT TO H.R. 2028, ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2016, AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF S. 612, GEORGE P. KAZEN FEDERAL BUILDING AND UNITED STATES COURTHOUSE

SPEECH OF
HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 8, 2016

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in reluctant opposition to S. 612, the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation Act (WIIN), a bill which reauthorizes water infrastructure projects and includes authorizing language regarding Flint aid.

First, let me acknowledge Congressman DAN KILDEE, who has worked tirelessly to bring justice to the Flint families. His work and the work of the Michigan delegation, is essential to ensuring the people of Flint have the resources that they need to recover.

Mr. Speaker, while I strongly support that this bill included \$170 million for Flint and other communities impacted by lead to replace water infrastructure and provide needed health care, I am deeply concerned about the poison pill California drought rider.

This shameful rider would gut environmental protections in California's Bay-Delta, threatening thousands of fishing jobs, water quality, and endangered species. This harmful rider also fails to adequately address critical elements of California's complex water challenges and will only worsen the effects of the drought.

Mr. Speaker, it is completely unacceptable to hold Flint funding hostage to this anti-environmental rider.

Since the beginning of this crisis, I have long supported providing robust funding for the families in Flint.

And let me also say that I was part of a Congressional Delegation that traveled to Flint, Michigan to listen to the residents regarding the horrendous impact of these government decisions that led to the poisoning of those on children and families.

However, while this bill does include funding for Flint, Republicans played partisan politics by inserting a poison pill drought rider, and sadly I cannot support it.

WISHING GEORGE HAYDEN A
HAPPY 80TH BIRTHDAY

HON. LOU BARLETTA

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 12, 2016

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to recognize Mr. George Hayden as he celebrated his 80th birthday on December 11, 2016. George's commitment to his family, employees, and neighbors has been nothing short of inspiring, and his lasting impact in my hometown of Hazleton will be felt for generations to come.

Countless Hazleton residents call George Hayden a personal friend, and I am certainly

among them. People at home know that I am a big fan of the New York Yankees, and that George is a fan of their arch-rival Boston Red Sox. Despite this, George and I remain friends to this day, and enjoy claiming bragging rights based on which team won the last game they played against each other.

George graduated from Pennsylvania State University with a degree in electrical technology in 1960 and later put that expertise to use as an electrician with the Coast Guard and Navy Reserves. Later, while working as a plant engineer, George and his wife, Florence, began to realize a lifelong dream of owning their own business. While Florence managed the finances, George assembled a small crew of electricians and started Hayden Electric, which eventually grew to include a team of sixty professionals that work both across the country and internationally.

When his family was young, George developed a habit of taking them to Wendy's restaurants, which they enjoyed tremendously. So in 1987, he opened a new Wendy's near Laurel Mall in Hazleton, later expanding to three additional Wendy's in downtown Hazleton, Drums, and Mt. Pocono. After seeing the positive impact on his business and the community, George and Florence started Citiscape, Inc. in 2004 with the goal of revitalizing downtown Hazleton by buying and restoring office and retail spaces for new and expanding businesses.

George is most known for his unwavering commitment to his family and the community at large. He has been active throughout the years with the American Cancer Society, the Greater Hazleton Chamber of Commerce, the Hazleton Rotary Club, and the Holy Trinity Church. George has also served on the boards of Security Savings, First Federal Bank, and Penn State Hazleton, among many others. To support their strong belief in the value of education, he and his wife established The Pennsylvania State University Florence L. and George J. Hayden Scholarship Fund, so that the next generation of aspiring students can achieve their dreams of receiving a college degree.

Mr. Speaker, with so many successful undertakings throughout his life, it is my honor to recognize Mr. George Hayden as he celebrates his 80th birthday with his wife, Florence, five children, George, Marybeth, Theresa, James, and Alicia, and his 17 grandchildren. On behalf of my constituents, I wish him and his family all the best as they continue to hold such a special place in our Northeastern Pennsylvania community.

TRIBUTE TO LEON BILLINGS

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 12, 2016

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a great man who has made a positive impact in the life of every American—Leon Billings.

Today, the air we breathe and the water we drink is cleaner and healthier because of Leon Billings. He may not be known to many, but his work as an architect of key environmental laws has saved countless lives.

Leon's instinct to stick up for the underdog was undoubtedly shaped during his years

growing up as the son of two journalists in Big Sky country in Missoula, Montana. His parents were editors for a weekly newspaper, The People's Voice, which was owned by a farmer-labor cooperative that provided the counterpoint to the daily papers controlled by the Anaconda Mining Company. Above his father's column was the quotation: "The hottest place in hell is reserved for those who, in a time of moral crisis, refuse to take a stand."

Leon lived by that creed; it was in his DNA. In my time serving with Leon, he was always a crusader for justice; always speaking out for the public interest against excessive corporate greed and unchecked power; standing up against bigotry and hate.

I first got to know Leon Billings through Maryland politics, when we served together in the Maryland House of Delegates. By that time, Leon was already a legend in the national environmental community. As a top staffer to Senator Ed Muskie, he had helped craft the landmark Clean Air and Clean Water Acts. That legislation was forged through constant clashes with powerful special interests that wanted to put their profits over the public health. Leon, a brilliant strategist, is credited with working across party lines to erect the pillars of many of our key environmental laws.

Leon Billings brought that same passion for taking on powerful special interests to the Maryland legislature, where he stood up for consumers in battles with the utility industry and fought for state environmental and consumer protections. I will fondly remember the many battles we waged together in the Maryland legislature.

Leon's successes were due in large part to a special mixture of passionate advocacy and a no-nonsense manner that was sometimes unsettling to the uninitiated, but always deployed for a good cause. Those who knew Leon understood that his sometimes gruff exterior was primarily reserved for the big shots who tried to enrich themselves by stomping on others. At his core, Leon was a very gentle soul; a plain speaking, compassionate man with a heart as big as Montana.

As we confront an incoming Administration that is looking to turn back the clock on Leon's work and erode the laws that have protected clean air, clean water, and public health for a generation, we must govern by Leon's example and stand up for the little guy against the special interests. We must be fierce defenders of the American public and its resources, and protect the right to clean air and healthy waterways.

Leon Billings waged battles on behalf of every American. I will miss my friend Leon, but pledge to continue his good work on behalf of all Americans.

RECOGNIZING JOHN LESZCZYNSKI
FOR 30 YEARS OF DEDICATED
SERVICE TO THE SOUTH BEND
COMMUNITY

HON. JACKIE WALORSKI

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 12, 2016

Mrs. WALORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the outstanding service that John Leszczynski has dedicated to the South Bend community. For 30 years and on behalf of four