

The alliance has accomplished its mission by establishing several important programs. The alliance's public policy program builds consensus on issues that directly affect the bay; the Information Services Program provides unbiased information about issues; and the Watershed Restoration Program gets people involved in hands-on habitat restoration work.

I urge my colleagues to acknowledge the fine work of the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay and to commit themselves to preserving the important programs that are so vital to the health of the Chesapeake Bay.

Patriotism is Alive and Well  
in America

HON. FRANK A. LOBIONDO

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, April 22, 1996*

Mr. LOBIONDO. Mr. Speaker, I commend to my colleagues and all Americans the following letter I received from Vincent E. Pellegrino, Adjutant of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 386 in Cape May, NJ. Patriotism is indeed alive and well in America.

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS  
OF THE U.S.,

*Cape May, NJ, April 1, 1996.*

Congressman FRANK LOBIONDO,  
*Cannon House Office, Washington, DC.*

DEAR CONGRESSMAN LOBIONDO: On Sunday, March 24, 1996, we both attended the Fiftieth Anniversary celebration of the Veterans of Foreign War Petrella, Repici, Caprionini, Champion Post 6257 in Belle Plain, New Jersey. The celebration was also attended by many veterans groups from the surrounding area, as well as the Gold Star Parents of Leland Champion, Jr., one of the veterans for whom this post is named.

I only wish that all of your colleagues in Congress could have been with us, to hear a very patriotic and emotional speech given by Commander Frank DiLorenzo, a veteran and Commander of Post 6257 in Belle Plain, N.J.

Commander DiLorenzo pointed out that it is no longer fashionable to salute or respect the flag of the United States, our greatest symbol of freedom. He also reminded us that Congress had refused to pass a law making it a crime to deface or destroy the American Flag.

As a veteran of World War II who served in the European theatre, I sometimes become discouraged at the direction this country is going. It appears that our Democratic system has failed, with high crime rates in our cities, failure of our children to be properly educated, families struggling to survive, high taxes, corruption in government, and a political system that appears to be in chaos. These concerns are also shared by many of my fellow veterans. We sometimes wonder if the sacrifices that were made in World War II, Korea, Vietnam, Lebanon, Somalia and Desert Storm are appreciated by our fellow Americans.

On Sunday, March 24, 1996, my faith in our Democratic way of life was restored, after listening to the speech given by Commander DiLorenzo. I know that he and many other Frank DiLorenzos throughout this country will continue to carry the message that patriotism is still alive in America.

I was also encouraged as we paraded through the streets of Belle Plain, N.J. to

see American flags displayed on every home along our parade route.

Belle Plain, N.J. is a small rural community and during World War II had approximately two hundred residents. Twenty five men enlisted in the service and in 1944, Belle Plain, N.J. was notified that four of their young men, Joseph Petrella, Frank Repici, Thomas Caprioni, and Leland Champion, Jr. were killed in action. This is a close knit community where patriotism and family values are high.

Congressman LoBiondo, there are many communities like Belle Plain, N.J. in this country and my faith in the American system has been renewed.

I know that you are able to make a one minute speech in Congress before the regular session begins.

Please give your fellow Congressmen the message conveyed by Commander DiLorenzo, that patriotism still lives in America. Let them know that the sacrifices made by the residents in Belle Plain, N.J. through the four veterans Corporal Joseph Petrella, Private 1st Class Frank Repici, Private 1st Class Thomas Caprioni, and Staff Sergeant Leland Champion, Jr., who gave their lives for their country were not in vain.

God Bless Our Flag.

God Bless America.

Very truly yours,

VINCENT E. PELLEGRINO,

*Adjutant.*

Earth Day and AST  
Legislation

HON. JAMES P. MORAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, April 22, 1996*

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, today we commemorate the 26th anniversary of Earth Day and recommit ourselves to protecting and improving our environment. We celebrate the progress we have made in cleaning our air and our water. We recognize, however, that we still have much more to do to ensure that our natural resources are preserved and protected for future generations.

It is in this spirit of protecting and preserving our environment that I rise today to introduce legislation that will provide greater protection for our ground and surface water against leaks from aboveground petroleum storage tanks [AST's]. Currently there are approximately half a million aboveground storage tanks located throughout this country. According to the Environmental Defense Fund [EDF], between 20 and 25 percent of AST's nationwide are leaking, posing threats to our ground water and surface water.

In northern Virginia, we learned all too well the problems that leaking tanks can cause. In September 1990, a petroleum sheen was discovered in a neighborhood creek in a Fairfax, VA, community. It was the beginning of a continuing nightmare for a number of local residents, who had to live with the knowledge that more than 200,000 gallons of petroleum products had seeped into their ground water and spread underneath their community, posing risks of fire and explosion. Home values plummeted, many people living in the community suffered from respiratory ailments, and Star

Enterprise, a Texaco affiliate, spent more than \$100 million cleaning the leak and settling claims.

No one wants these leaks to occur. But, unfortunately they do. Problems with leaking AST's are not restricted to northern Virginia. Leaks have occurred across the Nation, from Anchorage, AK, to Everglades, FL.

I have introduced comprehensive AST legislation in the past to address these leaks. In this session of Congress, I have moved away from the idea of a comprehensive regulatory program for AST's. Instead of duplicating efforts undertaken by States and the petroleum industry to improve AST safety, this bill builds on and enhances those efforts.

This bill represents a commonsense approach to ensuring better management of AST's. It acknowledges that five different Federal offices currently regulate AST's and that tankowners feel overwhelmed and overburdened by duplicative regulations.

To address these concerns, the bill requires the EPA to consolidate AST offices within EPA. In performing that consolidation, EPA must review all regulations that currently apply to ASTs and eliminate those that are duplicative. This consolidation will lead to simplification of the regulatory program and will ensure that tankowners understand the current regulations with which they must comply.

By improving the organization of the current AST program we allow EPA to do more with less. We also permit tank owners the opportunity to benefit from a streamlined, understandable regulatory structure.

In 1995, the General Accounting Office conducted a study of the AST regulatory program and identified seven areas where the program needed improvement. The bill provides EPA the authority to correct those deficiencies in federal law identified by the GAO. Any new regulations must be designed in the most cost-effective manner and substantial weight must be given to current industry standards.

This needed regulatory reform will improve the effectiveness of current regulations, lead to greater prevention and containment of releases from AST's and improve the environment. This new, streamlined approach to AST regulation has been developed with the guidance and input of a diverse coalition of industry and environmental groups, from the American Petroleum Institute, to the Petroleum Marketers Association of America, to the Environmental Defense Fund. Together, we have drafted a bill which both industry and environmental groups can support.

I am proud to have both Congressman DAVIS and Congresswoman MORELLA as original cosponsors of this legislation. In addition, I want to thank Senator ROBB for his work on similar legislation which has bipartisan support in the Senate.

This bill is a commonsense proposal to help improve our environment through regulatory reform. I look forward to working with my House colleagues and with the chairman of the relevant congressional committees to ensure that this legislation becomes a reality.