

EMERGENCY SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT TO MEET IMMEDIATE NEEDS ARISING FROM THE CONSEQUENCES OF HURRICANE KATRINA, 2005

SPEECH OF

HON. DALE E. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 2, 2005

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to support the Emergency Supplemental Appropriations request before us today to provide \$10.5 billion in immediate aid to our fellow Americans who have been devastated by Hurricane Katrina. This \$10.5 billion in emergency funding will allow the Department of Defense and the Federal Emergency Management Agency to continue the Federal Government's efforts to help the people of Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and other States impacted by the effects of Hurricane Katrina.

I am sure that the President will be requesting additional funds in the near future, and I am equally sure that the Congress will respond as quickly to approve the additional funds as they are needed. Anyone watching their televisions over the last week realizes that the effects of Katrina have been of biblical proportions. State and local officials have estimated the number of deaths from Katrina to be in the thousands, and property damage is estimated to be in yet unknown billions of dollars.

This is a national, natural disaster, and as such it deserves a swift and effective national response. We as a nation must come together to help our neighbors who have suffered such devastating losses.

It is the proper role of the Federal Government to provide that national response to such a national emergency. That is why I am pleased that the Congress has acted so swiftly to provide this immediate emergency funding of \$10.5 billion. And we as a nation, stand ready to provide additional aid to the people affected by Hurricane Katrina.

Once again, Mr. Speaker, I add my support to the swift passage of this down payment of \$10.5 billion for recovery efforts from Hurricane Katrina.

CONGRATULATIONS TO ST. FRANCIS MEDICAL CENTER COLLEGE OF NURSING

HON. RAY LAHOOD

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 6, 2005

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to extend hearty congratulations to the Saint Francis Medical Center College of Nursing in Peoria, IL, as they celebrate 100 years of providing quality nursing education. This outstanding program was organized in 1905 as the Saint Francis Hospital School of Nursing by The Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis. Only 10 years later, the school was approved for a diploma nursing program by the State of Illinois.

As testament to their academic rigor and overall success, the School of Nursing has been accredited by the National League of

Nursing for 55 years. Additionally, in 1985, the School of Nursing established the baccalaureate in nursing degree program and became the Saint Francis Medical Center College of Nursing. More recently, in 2001, the College of Nursing began offering a master of nursing degree as confirmation of their adherence to the highest standards of academic and clinical instruction.

The achievements of the College of Nursing are numerous and great, as evidenced by their attainment of the highest level of accreditation by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association and National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission, as well as the significant impact of more than 4,300 graduates on patients throughout the United States and the world.

I wish the Saint Francis Medical Center College of Nursing all the best with their centennial celebration and thank them for their dedication to developing caring professionals through the finest nursing education.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 6,
ENERGY POLICY ACT OF 2005

SPEECH OF

HON. BETTY MCCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 28, 2005

Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, Congress had the opportunity and the charge to develop a comprehensive energy policy that would make America safer, decrease our dependency on foreign oil, and invest in the next generation of clean and renewable energy.

Unfortunately, H.R. 6 fails the current and future needs of our Nation miserably. As gas prices and oil industry profits rise, this bill rewards oil and gas companies with \$2.8 billion in tax breaks and provides \$1.4 billion in tax breaks for coal producers. These corporate giveaways only continue our addiction to Middle Eastern oil and enable our dependency on old and polluting technologies.

Mr. Speaker, the U.S. needs to be a world leader in energy self-sufficiency through conservation, alternative energy sources, and responsible leadership from the White House and Congress. Regrettably, this bill fails on all those counts. It neglects to include a Renewable Portfolio Standard, which would have required large electric companies to obtain 10 percent of their power from clean renewable energy sources by 2020. This act, once again, fails to increase much-needed fuel efficiency standards of cars and trucks.

As if this bill was not already bad enough, a new provision appeared after the conference committee had adjourned, which steers \$1.5 billion to a private consortium located in the home district of Republican Majority Leader TOM DELAY. It provides that the consortium, of which Halliburton is a member, can keep up to 10 percent of the funds for administrative purposes. This is an outrage and a mockery of the democratic process.

America deserves a comprehensive energy policy that invests in the development of the next generation of fuel sources like fuel cells, hydrogen power and home grown Minnesota fuels like ethanol. I was pleased to see the measure tripling the amount of ethanol re-

quired in gasoline by 2012, but this bill could have done so much more to liberate our Nation from Saudi Arabian and Middle Eastern oil and move our Nation toward a sustainable and energy-independent future.

Mr. Speaker, this is an energy bill for 1950, not 2050. It would have been difficult to support this outmoded policy decades ago, and I certainly cannot vote for it today.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 6,
ENERGY POLICY ACT OF 2005

SPEECH OF

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 28, 2005

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, of everything that can be said about this \$15 billion giveaway to the oil and gas industry—that it does nothing to alleviate the record high costs of oil, nothing to reduce our dependence on oil—the worst may be that it is a missed opportunity. And that is because it fails to harness America's entrepreneurial spirit to develop new sources of energy. It is a continuation of the status quo at a time when we need a new American energy policy—bold new thinking to foster energy independence and grow our Nation's economy in a way that addresses the threat of global warming.

But instead, this bill provides billions in tax breaks for oil companies already reaping record profits. It does little to encourage development of new forms of energy. And it restricts States' abilities to protect their own natural resources.

Mr. Speaker, Americans are rightly concerned about how our dependence on foreign oil affects our foreign policy. This bill does nothing to reduce that dependence. If anything, it enshrines that dependence into law. Today we import 58 percent of our oil, and by 2025 we will still import between 64 and 68 percent of our oil, even after enacting this legislation. Nor does it reduce skyrocketing gasoline prices—something even the president has conceded.

And that is because this bill rejects common sense ideas that could help us reduce our need for foreign oil. The conference committee rejected a measure that would have required America to decrease its oil consumption by 5 percent by 2015. At a time when Americans are fed-up with high gasoline prices, we should be looking for ways to reduce their need to fill-up at the pump. But the committee also rejected a modest proposal that would have increased the fuel efficiency of our cars by one mile per gallon per year for the next 15 years.

The final version of this bill also rejects a Senate proposal to require utilities to generate 10 percent of their electricity from renewable sources by 2020. This provision would have helped us to significantly reduce our dependence on traditional polluting sources of electricity. Another missed opportunity.

As if the lack of new thinking in this bill weren't enough, it also declares war on States' rights when it comes to protecting their citizens. The bill would eviscerate the role of the States in the siting of LNG facilities and grant sole jurisdiction in such matters to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission,

FERC. This provision flies in the face of the Coastal Zone Management Act. CZMA is a unique partnership between coastal States and the Federal Government that allows States to protect their own coastal resources. This is an especially important law for Connecticut, where the commerce that comes from the Long Island Sound fishing grounds, ports and recreational area makes it a \$5 billion economic asset. Because our State's economy depends on the Long Island Sound, we believe that the State has the obligation to protect it from possible environmental harm.

Rather than passing this legislation, we ought to be reducing our dependence on foreign oil by improving our energy efficiency and maximizing our domestic energy production in an environmentally sound way—by investing in cleaner, more secure energy sources such as solar, wind, biomass and fuel cell technology. My State of Connecticut is a leader in fuel cell technology, with several businesses doing research that is on the cusp of revolutionizing the way our Nation powers its homes, cars and businesses. This bill should be investing in American small businesses like Proton Energy in Wallingford, Nxegen in Middletown and Danbury's Fuel Cell Energy—companies that already do over \$300 million worth of fuel cell business and move us closer to true energy independence.

Mr. Speaker, this bill proposes 20th century solutions for 21st century energy challenges. It neglects the realities of a changing world—that our dependence on foreign oil has real consequences for our foreign policy, that the warming of the planet will have a serious impact on the lives of all Americans. It ignores our entrepreneurial spirit and technological know-how to develop and harness new forms of energy. And it ignores the rights of States to look after the interests of their citizens.

America can do better—and deserves better—than this conference report. I urge my colleagues to oppose it.

INTRODUCING THE TEXAS EDUCATOR RETIREMENT EQUITY ACT

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 6, 2005

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to introduce the Texas Educator Retirement Equity Act, which restores to widowed Texas public school teachers the means to receive the same spousal Social Security benefits as every other American. As I am sure my colleagues are aware, widowed public school employees in Texas, like public employees throughout the Nation, have their spousal Social Security benefits reduced if they receive a government pension. This "Government Pension Offset" affects Texas teachers who work in school districts that do not participate in Social Security and even applies if the teacher in question worked all the quarters necessary to qualify for full Social Security benefits either before or after working in the public school system!

Until last year, Texas schoolteachers could qualify for full widow benefits by working one day in a school that participates in Social Security. Unfortunately, last year Congress took that option away from Texas teachers.

One consequence of this action is that many teachers have taken early retirement while others have been discouraged from entering teaching. Thus, the victims of this action are not only Texas teachers, but also Texas school children who are denied access to quality teachers.

Passing the Texas Educator Retirement Equity Act is a good first step toward treating teachers fairly. Of course, I remain committed to working to pass H.R. 147, the Social Security Fairness Act that repeals both the Government Pension Offset and the Windfall Elimination Provision, another provision that denies public employees full Social Security benefits.

Congress should also be encouraging good people to enter the education profession by passing my Teacher Tax Cut Act (H.R. 402) that provides every teacher with a \$1,000 tax credit, as well as my Professional Educators Tax Relief Act (H.R. 405) that provides a \$1,000 tax credit to counselors, librarians, and all school personnel.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in enabling Texas teachers to obtain the Social Security benefits for which they would be eligible if they were not teachers by cosponsoring the Texas Educator Retirement Equity Act.

EMERGENCY SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT TO MEET IMMEDIATE NEEDS ARISING FROM THE CONSEQUENCES OF HURRICANE KATRINA, 2005

SPEECH OF

HON. RON KIND

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 2, 2005

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, the destruction of Hurricane Katrina and the massive flooding of the city of New Orleans and surrounding areas have created a national tragedy that is unprecedented in U.S. history. The resulting humanitarian crisis and the horror that has developed in the streets of New Orleans are both appalling and unacceptable. Our national response must be equal to the need of the victims, and although emergency responders and relief workers on the frontlines are working around the clock to do everything they can, immediate Federal efforts were inadequate.

However, despite this grave tragedy, I am confident that together we will overcome the challenges ahead to help our brothers and sisters of the city of New Orleans and the impacted Gulf region. For the victims and their families, know that your country grieves with you, and we stand with you in this time of need. Be assured that help is on the way.

President Bush has told the Nation that the government will commit all the necessary resources, and we in Congress are working hard to make sure Federal aid is delivered and victims are helped. In the last few days thousands of National Guard troops, including 475 Wisconsin soldiers, have been deployed to the Gulf States to provide assistance and security to the region. Today, Congress will pass what is likely a first installment of emergency aid for the ravaged areas.

The national community is rallying in other ways as many local communities and volunteers are organizing fundraising drives and

other relief projects. I have heard from many constituents who want to know how they can help and who are already assisting in local efforts. The people of western Wisconsin have consistently demonstrated their generosity in times of crisis and once again they are answering the call of compassion.

There is a lot of work to do in the days, weeks and months ahead, but we will not stop until we have found a safe haven for every citizen, provided the necessary medical care to the weak and ailing, and attended to the needs of all victims of this awful tragedy. May our hearts, thoughts, aid, and support continue to be with the victims and their loved ones over the Labor Day weekend and throughout the relief and reconstruction process.

RECOGNIZING THE COMMUNITY OF ALMA, KANSAS

HON. JERRY MORAN

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 6, 2005

Mr. MORAN of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the community of Alma, Kansas for the successful revitalization of the Alma Creamery.

Beginning in 1946, this town of 762 people was identified by the presence of the Alma Creamery, famous for producing delicious Alma Cheese. Bernie Hansen, a pioneer in the development of value-added foods, furthered this tradition when he purchased the company in 1986. Bernie developed the company and sold it more than a decade later. Unfortunately, the creamery then closed in 2000. This was a setback to the community of Alma. And for more than 3 years, the production plant lay dormant. However, during this time, Alvin Kahle and Jim Ferguson, two longtime employees, did something great. On their own initiative, they regularly cleaned up and maintained the plant with the hope that one day it would reopen.

Their hopes were fulfilled in October of 2003 when former owner Bernie Hansen purchased the plant at an auction. Bernie quickly rehired Alvin and Jim. He also asked Linda Craghead, who serves part-time as Wabaunsee County economic development director, to serve as general manager of the company. In addition, more than one million dollars was invested in equipment, facilities and personnel.

On April 28, 2004, the hopes of Bernie, Linda, Alvin, Jim and the entire community were realized. On that day, the first batch of hand-made Alma Cheese was produced in a completely remodeled plant. Since the plant reopened, this delicious product has been attracting more and more customers. The company's workforce has expanded from 5 to 15 employees in order to keep up with increasing demand.

According to Bernie Hansen, the company's growth is the result of an inspired team effort "The renewed success of Alma Creamery can be attributed to a hard working staff, a supportive community and a trusted brand name widely-recognized across the state of Kansas," Hansen said.

For rural communities to survive and prosper into the future, citizens must be willing to create their own opportunities for success.