

and put it inside New Orleans and Jefferson Parish.”

In the same year that Betsy inundated the city, Congress authorized a hurricane protection project to protect the city. That project was supposed to take 13 years, cost \$85 million, and, according to the Army Corps, protect greater New Orleans from the equivalent of a fast-moving category 3 hurricane.

In the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee's investigation into the preparation for and response to Hurricane Katrina, our committee learned that that project was still a decade or more away from completion—close to 50 years after this body authorized its construction—and the total cost of the project had ballooned to more than \$750 million. In addition, the project did not provide the level of protection for New Orleans and the region that it was expected to provide.

There were many reasons for the delay, including natural ones such as the subsidence of the land in southeastern Louisiana. Building levees in this part of the country required the Army Corps to return time and time again to add additional layers to the levees, known as lifts, to accommodate for the sinking soils.

But there were also manmade reasons for the delay, such as the absence of Federal funding. In recent years, local Army Corps officials have had to scramble to move these Louisiana hurricane protection projects forward. Local Army Corps officials had to urge local levee boards to contact their congressional delegation to ask for financial help to restore levees to their original design height, and on two recent occasions, the Army Corps had to rely on the local levee districts, which share in the cost of these projects, to advance them money so they could continue construction of segments of the hurricane protection system.

As the Corps of Engineers' own Interagency Performance Evaluation Taskforce, or IPET, investigators observed, if one part of the levee system comes up short, it can compromise the entire protection system. Yet this levee system, which was supposed to be protecting one of America's most vulnerable cities, was never finished, and as a result, when Katrina hit last August, dire consequences ensued.

We learned from Katrina that there is a need to focus limited Federal resources on finishing flood control projects that are critical to our Nation's health, safety, and welfare. The Army Corps' current process to do this is inadequate. As the GAO testified before the House in March, “The Corps' planning and project management processes cannot ensure that national priorities are appropriately established across the hundreds of civil works projects that are competing for scarce federal resources.”

The McCain-Feingold amendment on prioritization, which I am proud to co-

sponsor, will address this problem by requiring the Water Resources Planning Coordinating Committee, which the underlying WRDA Bill already establishes for other purposes to evaluate the importance of Corps projects in three different categories—storm damage reduction projects, navigation projects, and environmental restoration projects. The amendment also requires the committee to rank projects in each category so that Congress, and the Corps itself, can determine what projects are the most important to pursue and most worthy of funding. The Coordinating Committee will then submit its report to Congress and make the report available to the public.

With that information, Congress can make better decisions about how to spend scarce Federal resources on critical infrastructure projects across the country. We have to learn from Katrina and we should never again allow a project that is so critical to the very livelihood of so many to languish because we did not give it the priority it deserved.

I know many of my colleagues are concerned that this amendment will remove authority from individual Members about how to spend Army Corps dollars. I understand that concern, but the reality is that the Corps has more work to do than funding to do it. This WRDA bill will add another \$10 to \$12 billion in Army Corps projects on top of the estimated \$58 billion in backlogged Army Corps projects that are authorized but not yet funded. Without some system of prioritizing projects, as this amendment would require, we run the risk of another Katrina-like situation where critical projects are not given the priority they deserve. On the other hand, by requiring the Corps to prioritize projects in each category—flood control, navigation, and environmental restoration—we can ensure that there is a balance among the types of projects that are funded and that the most important and cost-effective projects in each category get the attention they deserve.

Water resources projects are important to each and every State, but we need to heed the lessons of Katrina and make sure that we spend our tax dollars where they are most needed.

I urge my colleagues to support this critical amendment.

GLOBAL WARMING POLLUTION REDUCTION ACT OF 2006

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, I want to express my appreciation to my good friend and colleague, Senator JEFFORDS, for his hard work and leadership in developing comprehensive legislation that will assist in decreasing U.S. greenhouse gas emissions. I am proud to join him, along with my other colleagues Senators BINGAMAN, BOXER, KENNEDY, LEAHY, LAUTENBERG, and REED in introducing the Global Warming Pollution Reduction Act of 2006, GWPRA. This bill sets the United

States on a path to reducing emissions to 1990 levels by 2020 through a 2 percent annual reduction from 2010 through 2020, as well as achieving by 2050 emissions that are 80 percent below 1990 levels.

The global warming debate began in Hawaii over 30 years ago when the Mauna Loa Climate Observatory first documented evidence of increased carbon dioxide levels in the Earth's atmosphere. The international scientific community now concurs that human activities are altering the climate system. The U.S., which is the world's largest emitter of greenhouse gases, must be accountable as a leader in reducing emissions and combating the threats resulting from global warming.

My home State of Hawaii is disproportionately susceptible to increases in sea level rise and ocean temperature, which jeopardize public safety, economic development, cultural resources, and the health of our unique island ecosystems and wildlife. It is clear that coastal States will also face similar challenges caused by sea level rise resulting in flooding of low-lying property, loss of coastal wetlands, beach erosion, saltwater contamination of drinking water, and damage to coastal roads and bridges. Climate models forecasting intense storms and severe weather further threaten Hawaii's capacity to respond to natural disasters and acquire immediate relief from neighboring states. Remote and rural areas are likely to be confronted with similar issues of self-sufficiency and limited access to assistance.

I am very concerned about the impact of fossil fuel emissions on the health of our planet and believe that we must actively seek solutions to curb the buildup of greenhouse gases. This bill sets energy efficiency targets to assist both the industry and energy consumers in meeting these standards. This legislation lays out ambitious goals to minimize U.S. emissions and assist in the stabilization of global atmospheric greenhouse gas concentrations.

We must invest in technology research to control greenhouse gas emissions. Encouraging renewable energy technologies will play a crucial role in successfully meeting the objectives of this legislation. Under the guidance provided by this bill, I firmly believe the State of Hawaii, along with the rest of the United States, will be poised to substantially reduce greenhouse gas emissions. But Federal support is vital to accomplishing our goals to combat global warming.

I appreciate the technical assistance provided by the Hawaii Natural Energy Institute and the Hawaii Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism. I remain committed to working with them, other stakeholders in Hawaii, and my colleagues, under the leadership of Senator JEFFORDS, to enact this legislation that will improve the health of our planet and the quality of life for all Americans. Senator

JEFFORDS is a dedicated advocate for environmental protection. With the GWPRA, he leaves a legacy to guide and inspire future generations to actively address the issue of global warming. I encourage my colleagues to join Senator JEFFORDS in supporting this worthy initiative.

THIRTY-SECOND ANNIVERSARY OF THE TURKISH INVASION OF CYPRUS

Mr. REED. Mr. President, today, on behalf of the Greek Cypriot population of Rhode Island, and Greek Cypriots around the world, I recognize the 32nd anniversary of the Turkish invasion of Cyprus.

Shortly before dawn 32 years ago today, heavily armed Turkish troops landed on the northern coast of Cyprus launching the invasion and subsequent occupation of Northern Cyprus. Over the next 2 months, over 200,000 Greek Cypriots, an overwhelming 82 percent of the island's population, were forced to seek refuge in the southern Greek controlled portions of Cyprus. Turkey eventually called a ceasefire after seizing 37 percent of the island. To this day Turkey is the only country that recognizes the self-declared "Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus."

Over the last 30 years, the United Nations Security Council and General Assembly have striven to resolve this ongoing territorial dispute through multiple failed peace talks and resolutions. While many years and much thought has gone into determining an equally agreeable solution, talks between the Greek Cypriot south and the Turkish Cypriot north constantly end in a stalemate.

However, hope was renewed this month when the United Nations began drafting recommendations on reviving stalled peace talks between this war-divided island's Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities. Furthermore, Cyprus President Tassos Papadopoulos and Turkish Cypriot leader Mehmet Ali Talat were hailed by the Cyprus Parliament Speaker Demetris Christofias as taking positive steps toward restarting the Cyprus peace talks.

We must applaud the continued efforts of the United Nations and the renewed focus of the Cypriot leaders to reunite a divided Cyprus and remain committed to ushering the settlement process forward. Cypriot, Mediterranean, and U.S. interests will benefit from a settlement that addresses all legitimate concerns of both sides and promotes the stability of a hostile region.

Much like the Greek proverb, "learn to walk before you run," Cypriot leaders must take small steady steps forward and continue forward even when the road looks unpaved. There is a path that leads to the reunification and peace between these two communities. Traversing this path, however, will take patience and tolerance.

DM&E RAILROAD LOAN FROM THE FEDERAL RAILROAD ADMINISTRATION

Mr. DAYTON. Mr. President, I have arisen previously to talk about a proposal of the DM&E Railroad to reconstruct its rail line across southern Minnesota in order to run up to 36 unit coal trains, rail cars containing grain and other agricultural products, and possibly shipments of hazardous materials. The DM&E is presently seeking a \$2.5 billion low-interest loan from the Federal Railroad Administration for this project, which the company initially said would be financed to the private capital markets.

Evidently unable to attract that necessary financing, DM&E has now turned to the American taxpayer to assume the enormous financial risk that such a project entails. If the project were to be successful, the financial benefits would go to DM&E's executives and investors. If the project were to fail, the losses would be paid by American taxpayers. It is for that reason that I have urged the Administrator of the Federal Railroad Administration and the U.S. Secretary of Transportation, who have the ultimate decision-making authorities, to exercise all necessary due diligence before their decisions about this enormous financing.

Previously, I have also expressed the strongest possible concern about DM&E's intention to run this rail line through downtown Rochester, MN, and immediately adjacent to the world-renowned Mayo Clinic. Mayo Clinic and Rochester City officials vehemently oppose DM&E's intended route and maintain that it would be catastrophic to their clinic and their city. I agree.

The Mayo Clinic is known and respected nationally and worldwide for its medical excellence. Last year, the Mayo Clinic saw over 1,700,000 patients who came from throughout Minnesota, our country, and the world to seek the best possible medical care. The Mayo Clinic is the largest private employer in Minnesota, employing over 28,000 people, including 2,400 physicians.

In addition to the serious financial questions surrounding this project and major environmental concerns across its intended route, new information has just come to light that demonstrates even more conclusively how unacceptable its proposed route through downtown Rochester, MN, and adjacent to the Mayo Clinic would be. According to a report released today by the Mayo Clinic, but using public, factual information, DM&E has one of the very worst safety records in the entire U.S. railroad industry. In fact, last summer, Mr. Kevin Sheffer, President and CEO of DM&E's parent company, told DM&E employees, in their newsletter, "We have a very poor safety record."

The report discloses that from 2000 through 2005, the DM&E reported train accidents at a rate 7.5 times higher than the national average; during 2005,

the DM&E's rate of accidents at crossings was 2.3 times higher than the national average; the DM&E had the highest rate of employee casualties among regional freight railroads in 2004, and was a close second in 2003 and 2005; during the past 10 years, DM&E had 107 accidents involving trains carrying hazardous materials, including a record 16 in 2005; and since 2003, when the Federal Railroad Administration loaned DM&E \$233 million, DM&E's main track accident rate has soared to eight times the national rate—a 175 percent increase over its pre-loan rate.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the the overview of this report, "The Sum of All Fears: Unsafe Railroad Plus Unsafe Plan Equals Disaster," and the forwarding letter from the Mayo Clinic to The Honorable Joseph H. Boardman, Administrator of the Federal Railroad Administration, be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, follows:

JULY 20, 2006.

Hon. JOSEPH H. BOARDMAN,
*Administrator, Federal Railroad Administration,
Washington, DC.*

DEAR ADMINISTRATOR BOARDMAN: On May 8, 2006, the County of Olmsted, the City of Rochester, Mayo Clinic, and the Rochester Area Chamber of Commerce submitted an independent study by a prestigious accounting firm setting forth detailed reasons why granting a \$2.5 billion loan to the Dakota, Minnesota and Eastern Railroad (DM&E) posed a substantial risk to the American taxpayers that the loan will not be repaid. We believe that documented risk to the taxpayers is reason enough for the loan to be denied.

In addition to the substantial risk of default, the public safety impact of any loan to the DM&E must be considered, especially given the DM&E's abysmal safety record as outlined in the enclosed analysis. In light of the DM&E's record as the most unsafe regional railroad in America, granting a \$2.5 billion loan to the DM&E would clearly and dramatically increase the public safety risk to the residents of Rochester and the patients and physicians at Mayo Clinic. It would also violate the statutory admonition that the Secretary of Transportation shall give priority to projects that "enhance the public safety," and undermine the Federal Railroad Administration's (FRA) statutory obligation to "carry out all railroad safety laws."

The proposed loan would not enhance the public safety. To the contrary, the proposed loan would fund a project that could have terrible consequences for the residents of Rochester, Minnesota, and the patients, doctors and scientists at Mayo Clinic. Transporting hazardous materials, at high speeds, on one of the country's most dangerous railroads, is an "accident" waiting to happen. If that accident were to occur in the City of Rochester near Mayo Clinic, then the consequences could be catastrophic.

The safety problems at the DM&E are well documented by the FRA itself. Last October, the FRA cited the DM&E for "numerous problems with management and implementation of [its] safety program." The FRA should carefully consider the safety consequences because granting the proposed loan would simply reinforce the DM&E's attitude that safety does not matter. We believe that denying the loan would make it clear that safety comes first.