

new peoples have come to also rely on New Mexico's scarce supply of water, new approaches to its management have become necessary. Recent reports from the Bureau of Reclamation, Bureau of Indian Affairs, and Government Accounting Office have identified a state of disrepair among the Pueblo irrigation networks, and a gap in the Bureau of Indian Affairs' capacity to maintain these systems. The Rio Grande Pueblos Irrigation Infrastructure Improvement Act seeks to address this issue of fundamental importance to New Mexico tribes.

A 2000 report by the Bureau of Reclamation and Bureau of Indian Affairs entitled Pueblo Irrigation Facilities Rehabilitation Report determined that a significant percentage of Pueblo irrigation works are in disrepair. Additionally, a recent GAO Report (GAO-06-314) on Bureau of Indian Affairs' irrigation program also made clear that the agency has not had the financial and technical resources to maintain irrigation systems on Indian land. The lack of financial and technical resources within the Bureau of Indian Affairs is further compounded by the Department of the Interior's view that maintenance of Indian irrigation systems is not an obligation pursuant to its trust responsibility. The result is continued degradation of agricultural systems in Indian Country and no identifiable program to address irrigation infrastructure problems on Pueblo land.

Because a significant percentage of Pueblo irrigation works are in disrepair, and because of the Pueblos' inability to use land that was historically irrigated, there is an inefficient use of the limited water supplies available to the Pueblos. In the arid west, water inefficiencies impact everyone negatively. If the Pueblos lose this precious resource due to inefficiencies, it is a loss for the surrounding communities as well, and to New Mexico as a whole.

The Rio Grande Pueblos Irrigation Infrastructure Improvement Act will direct the Secretary of the Interior, through the Bureau of Reclamation, to work with the 18 Pueblos in the Rio Grande basin to first assess Pueblo irrigation infrastructure, and then initiate projects to rehabilitate and repair such infrastructure on Pueblo lands. It will be left to the individual Pueblo Councils to determine their interest in partnering with the Department of Interior to carry out a study of irrigation infrastructure and to carry out rehabilitation projects.

This legislation requires the Bureau of Reclamation to work with the Pueblos, rather than the Bureau of Indian Affairs, because of the lack of relevant resources within the BIA, as well as its historical lack of attention to this issue. The Bureau of Reclamation has a technical expertise in water infrastructure that will be invaluable to the Pueblos. Moreover, the activity authorized in the bill is consistent with Reclamation's Water 2025 program. While the expertise at the Bureau of Reclamation is key to filling the technical gap in irrigation infrastructure rehabilitation, it is recognized that there are limited resources available within Reclamation, and that every initiative functions better when the flexibility of collaboration and cost sharing is a possibility. As such, the bill directs the Secretary of the Interior to work with the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Natural Resource Conservation Service, and the Army Corps of Engineers to identify opportunities to use the authorities of those agencies to collaborate on projects satisfactory to all involved.

As America moves into an era of climate change and resource scarcity, it is essential that areas such as the arid west mobilize creative new initiatives to address the new water resources needs. The Rio Grande Pueblos Irrigation Infrastructure Improvement Act is one piece of the water puzzle that impacts New Mexico, and our nation as a whole.

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#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

### HON. GWEN MOORE

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, May 12, 2008*

Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin. Madam Speaker, on Thursday, May 8, I missed the vote on rollcall No. 302. Had I voted I would have voted "aye."

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#### HONORING CHIEF STANDING BEAR ON THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF HIS DEATH

### HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, May 12, 2008*

Ms. McCOLLUM of Minnesota. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 1043, which honors the life and legacy of Chief Standing Bear on the 100th anniversary of his death.

Chief Standing Bear is an important figure in our Nation's civil rights movement. He was born in what is now Nebraska, where his tribe, the Ponca, was forced to leave by a Federal treaty in 1878. The young chief led his tribe to the Indian Territory of Oklahoma, an inhospitable region that killed many of his members, including his own son. Determined to bury his son on Ponca soil, Chief Standing Bear returned to Nebraska, where he was arrested by Federal authorities.

His case went to Federal court in 1879, where prosecutors argued that Native Americans were not considered people under the Constitution. Impressed with Chief Standing Bear's impassioned defense, the judge ruled he was indeed a citizen with full Constitutional rights. Thanks to this significant legal precedent, the Ponca were allowed to return home and better lands were given to Native American tribes.

Chief Standing Bear's story won the attention and sympathy of many throughout the United States. At a time when tribal rights were ignored and abused, Chief Standing Bear stood up for justice.

On this 100th anniversary of Chief Standing Bear's death, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this resolution to honor this man of courage and integrity and his important role in our Nation's continuing struggle for justice and equality.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CENTER FOR DOMESTIC PREPAREDNESS IN ANNISTON, ALABAMA

### HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, May 12, 2008*

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Madam Speaker, I respectfully ask the attention of the House today to pay recognition to the dedicated workforce of the Center for Domestic Preparedness, CDP, in Anniston, Alabama, who on June 3 will celebrate the facility's 10th anniversary.

On June 1, 1998, the Center opened its doors to America's first responders. Over the past 10 years, the more than 1,000 men and women of the CDP have offered cutting-edge training to first responders from all 50 States and every U.S. territory. Through the years, the Center's unique training capabilities have focused on mission-critical emergency management skills and training using live hazardous materials. CDP's hands-on approach builds skills and confidence that can save American lives in a homeland security crisis.

Since its inception, the Center has expanded its facilities and mission to better meet the needs of first responders. The addition of the Noble Training Facility, NTF, in 2007 gave CDP the only medical facility in the United States dedicated to training health care professionals in disaster response. NTF adds new training resources and two prototype mass casualty decontamination lanes to the Center's training arsenal. Today the CDP serves an essential role within the Department of Homeland Security for helping provide unique training that ultimately helps keep our communities safe.

I am pleased to recognize the staff of the Center for Domestic Preparedness today for reaching this important milestone, and look forward to witnessing its next decade of growth and service to our Nation.

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#### HONORING THE ST. PAUL CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL SCIENCE BOWL TEAM

### HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, May 12, 2008*

Ms. McCOLLUM of Minnesota. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate the Science Bowl team at St. Paul Central High School for their outstanding achievements at the State and national level. The students and coaches of Central High School deserve our congratulations.

In February, the team won its first-ever State championship. Coach Randy Knoche and his students, Daniel Monahan, Elwood McCreary, Jennifer Wei, Jon Schellengberg and Martin Camacho, are to be commended for their dedication and competitive spirit. As Minnesota State champions, the team qualified for the National Science Bowl in Washington, DC.

The 4-day competition that ended on May 5 was a benefit for the students and our community. Renewing student interest in science,