

2007, but a recent shift from calendar year reporting to fiscal year reporting makes comparisons with data from previous years much more difficult.

The Pentagon has made some efforts to manage this epidemic—most notably in 2005, after the media received anonymous e-mail messages about sexual assaults at the Air Force Academy. The press scrutiny and congressional attention that followed led DOD to create the Sexual Assault and Response Office. Since its inception, SAPRO has initiated training and improved reporting of rapes and sexual assaults but has inexplicably failed to track prosecution rates or how victims are faring within the military structure.

At the heart of this crisis is an apparent inability or unwillingness to prosecute rapists in the ranks. According to the DOD's own statistics, a mere 181 out of 2,212 subjects—or 8 percent—investigated for sexual assault in 2007 (including 1,259 reports of rape) were referred to courts martial. In nearly half of the cases investigated, the chain of command took no action and in the majority of those that were acted upon, the offenders were assigned administrative or non-judicial punishment. In other words, slaps on the wrist. In more than one-third of the cases that were not pursued, the commander took no action because of “insufficient evidence.”

This is in stark contrast to the civil justice system, where 40 percent of those arrested for rape are prosecuted, according to the Department of Justice and FBI.

The DOD must close this gap and remove the obstacles to effective investigation and prosecution. Failure to draw bright red lines produces two harmful consequences: it deters victims from reporting rapes and it fails to deter offenders. The absence of rigorous prosecution perpetuates a culture tolerant of sexual assault and rape—an attitude that says “boys will be boys.”

The legislation that Mr. TURNER and I introduce today calls on the Secretary of Defense to develop and implement a comprehensive strategy to end assault and rape in the military—to encourage and increase investigations and prosecutions.

I have raised the issue personally with Defense Secretary Gates, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs Admiral Mullen, and Army Secretary Geren, among others. While they express real concern, thus far the military's response has been underwhelming. The apparent lack of urgency is inexcusable.

Congress can do better too. While these sexual assault statistics are readily available, our oversight has failed to come to grips with the magnitude of the crisis. No doubt the abhorrent and graphic nature of the reports makes people uncomfortable. But this is no excuse for inaction. I applaud the National Security and Foreign Affairs Subcommittee of the Oversight and Government Reform Committee for holding hearings later this week to shine a light on the failure of existing policies.

Madam Speaker, most of our service women and men are patriotic, courageous and hard-working people who embody the best of what it means to be an American. The failure to stem sexual assault and rape in the military runs counter to those ideals and shames us all.

INTRODUCTION ON THE CONNELL LAKE WATERSHED PROTECTION AND RECREATION ACT

HON. DON YOUNG

OF ALASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 29, 2008

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Madam Speaker, today I introduce a really simple bill which will help one of the towns in my home State of Alaska. This bill will fix a problem which cannot be solved without this legislation. The bill, entitled the Connell Lake Watershed Protection bill, will allow the Forest Service to apply the Recreation and Public Purposes Act to a vital watershed in the Ketchikan Gateway Borough.

By doing this, the local government, the Borough, can manage and protect the watershed which is now owned by the Forest Service. While the Forest Service can manage this area, it is better that the local government has control of its own watershed since that watershed is located within the Borough's boundaries.

This is a small area—just 880 acres consisting of a natural lake which was enlarged by a dam constructed in the 1950s when the area was used by the now defunct Ketchikan Pulp Company. The company needed a water source and constructed a small dam to enlarge the already existing, natural Connell Lake. That lake has since served as a water source for the Ketchikan area and the Borough wishes to own and maintain the lake and the surrounding area.

If Ketchikan were not completely contained within the Tongass National Forest, there would be an easy solution, the Recreation and Public Purposes Act, which is specifically designed to solve problems like these. If these lands were in the public domain in the lower 48 States, the Bureau of Land Management would simply process a deed under that Act to allow the Borough obtain ownership of the land subject to a reverter if the land is not used for either recreation or public purposes.

However, the Recreation and Public Purposes Act does not apply to the National Forest System. So, Congress must approve the use of the act for this purpose. This is not an unprecedented situation, and Congress has passed similar legislation in the past. For example, in The Southern Nevada Public Land Management act of 1998, P. L. 105–263, Congress approved a bill to allow this Act to be used in both Southern Nevada and in the Tahoe Basin, which lands became part of the National Forest System.

So, Madam Speaker, I ask only that this bill be passed to allow local government to use the Act just as it would in Nevada or any other western state. The Borough is well able to handle this management and will maintain the current management which is as a recreational site and for water source and watershed protection. The full terms and conditions of the Recreation and Public Purposes Act would apply—no exceptions are being asked.

I look forward to rapid consideration and passage of this bill.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 29, 2008

Mr. POE. Madam Speaker, on H. Res. 1311—National Gear Up Day, H. Res. 1202—National Guard Youth Challenge Day, H.R. 6493—Aviation Safety Enhancement Act of 2008, I was not able to return to the House because myself and 6 other Members of Congress from Texas had to make an emergency plane landing due to mechanical problems on CO flight 458. Thus this emergency prevented a timely return to Washington, DC.

Had I been present, I would have voted “yea” on all three of these measures.

TRIBUTE TO DALE MORSE

HON. TOM LATHAM

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 29, 2008

Mr. LATHAM. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Dale Morse for his longtime service to the International Lions Club.

Dale has been a member of the Rippey, Iowa Lions Club for 40 years. The International Lions Club is a volunteer organization which works together to answer the needs that challenge communities around the world, including an end to preventable blindness, cleaning local parks and providing essential supplies to victims of natural disasters. Dale's dedication to his community and fulfilling the objectives of the Iowa Lions Club has made a lasting impact on those around him.

Although Dale is no longer able to regularly attend meetings, his Lions Club membership remains active, and his community remains grateful for his service and continued participation. I consider it an honor to represent Dale Morse in the United States Congress, and I wish him the very best in his future.

EARMARK DECLARATION

HON. JIM SAXTON

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 29, 2008

Mr. SAXTON. Madam Speaker, pursuant to House Republican Earmark Guidance, I am including the following projects I supported that were included in the 2008 President's Budget and subsequently received funding in H.R. 6599:

Project: Modified Record Range

Cost: \$3,825,000

Account: Military Construction—Army

Legal Name of Requesting Entity: McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst Joint Base

Address of Requesting Entity: Command Headquarters, Building 5417, Fort Dix, NJ 08640.

Description of Request: Range will train and test individual soldiers on the skills necessary to identify, engage and defeat stationary infantry targets for day/night qualification requirements with the M16 and M4 rifles. Range improves the capability of Fort Dix, which supports the Army Reserve and National Guard