

THROUGH UNITY, STRENGTH—
TRAGEDY AT TEXAS A&M

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 24, 2009

Mr. POE of Texas. Madam Speaker, the Texas A&M Aggies are known to boast many mottos, but a saying less famous than "Gig 'em" or "Hullabaloo" is one they lean on during times of hardship: "Through Unity, Strength." Last month, the student body was struck with another tragedy and two of Texas' warriors were taken from their families, friends and fellow students. The student body has banded together to get through this tragedy and in that unity they, once again, are finding their strength. I would like to take this opportunity to honor the two men who dedicated their lives to serving this country and whose time was cut short by a tragic accident.

On January 12th, during routine helicopter training on Texas A&M's campus, two soldiers were killed in the accidental crash. Lieutenant Zachary Cook was a recent A&M graduate and had just been commissioned as a United States Army officer. His temporary assignment was with Texas A&M's ROTC program which was holding the training demonstration for some ROTC cadets. Zachary, 22, was a former member of the Corps of Cadets Company D-1 and had just received his degree in December. There has already been an outpouring of support for this young man from A&M's student body and there will assuredly be hundreds of voices answering "Here" during roll call at the university's memorial service known as "Muster" in April.

Sergeant Charles Mitts, 42, of Spring, TX also died in the helicopter crash. Sergeant Mitts had served his country dutifully his entire adult life. After graduating from high school in Killeen, TX Charles served in both the Gulf War and Operation Iraqi Freedom. During his deployment to Iraq he served in General Petraeus' personal helicopter unit and he was currently enlisted in the Texas Army National Guard. Sergeant Mitts devoted his life to serving this country and is one of the many warriors that Texas is proud to call its own.

Madam Speaker, we honor these soldiers and their oath to serve us and protect all that we hold dear. Across the entire state Texans are honoring Sergeant Mitts, Lt. Cook and their families. As P.H. Duval Jr. put it so eloquently in his famous poem "The Last Corps Trip"—

It was Judgment Day in Aggie land
And tenseness filled the air;
All knew there was a trip at hand,
But not a soul knew where . . .
. . . And the band poured forth the anthem,
In notes both bright and clear
And ten thousand Aggie voices
Sang the song they hold so dear.
And when the band had finished,
St. Peter wiped his eyes
And said, "It's not so hard to see
They're meant for Paradise."
And the colonel of the Cadet Corps said
As he stiffly took his stand,
"It's just another Corps Trip, boys,
We'll march in behind the band.

And that's just the way it is.

EARMARK DECLARATION

HON. LAMAR SMITH

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 24, 2009

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Madam Speaker, pursuant to the Republican Leadership standards on earmarks, I am submitting the following information for publication in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD regarding earmarks I received as part of the FY 2009 Omnibus.

Requesting Member: Congressman LAMAR SMITH.

Bill Number: FY 2009 Omnibus.

Account: Small Business Administration, Salaries and Expenses Account.

Legal Name of Requesting Entity: Alamo Community Colleges.

Address of Requesting Entity: 201 W. Sheridan, San Antonio, TX 78204-1429.

Description of Request: I have secured \$100,000 for the Alamo Region Energy Futures Park Center of Excellence with Alamo Community Colleges. The funding will help establish the Futures Park which will house advanced energy credit and non-credit instructions for students, education, and business and industry. The center will combine education and training with practical hands-on applied research. It is my understanding that approximately 30% of instructional costs will be reimbursed by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and that scholarships will be made available through the ACCD Foundation and Alamo Workforce Board. The ACCD Foundation will also be raising funds to share in the costs of this program. I certify that neither I nor my spouse has any financial interest in this project.

Bill Number: FY 2009 Omnibus.

Account: Airport Improvement Projects.

Legal Name of Requesting Entity: City of San Antonio.

Address of Requesting Entity: P.O. Box 839966, San Antonio, Texas 78283.

Description of Request: I have secured \$1,187,500 for the City of San Antonio's Department of Aviation. Funding would be used for Airport Improvements including: Install shoulder areas to adjoining movement area pavements; Airfield Pavement Improvements and Airfield Electrical System Upgrade. The San Antonio International Airport receives Airport Improvement Program funds allocated to major capital improvement projects such as the current runway and taxiway extension work under design. \$650,000 in airport self-generated funds will be allocated for matching. I certify that neither I nor my spouse has any financial interest in this project.

Bill Number: FY 2009 Omnibus.

Account: DOJ; COPS Law Enforcement Technology Account.

Legal Name of Requesting Entity: City of Austin.

Address of Requesting Entity: 301 West 2nd Street, Austin, Texas 78701.

Description of Request: I have secured \$350,000 for the Austin Police Department. The funding would be used to purchase surveillance cameras and deploy them in high crime areas in Austin. The project will provide the Austin Police Department with the capability to monitor violent crime hotspots from a central location. The City of Austin will provide the required match. I certify that neither I nor

my spouse has any financial interest in this project.

Bill Number: FY 2009 Omnibus.

Account: STAG Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Project.

Legal Name of Requesting Entity: City of Austin, TX.

Address of Requesting Entity: 301 W. 2nd Street, 2nd Floor, Austin, Texas 78701.

Description of Request: I have secured \$300,000 for the Sanitary Sewer Overflow Prevention in Austin, TX. The funding would be used to construct a non-structural sanitary sewer overflow prevention project. It will prevent sanitary sewer overflows that threaten public health, property, surface waters and the ecologically fragile Edwards Aquifer. The project will help the City of Austin meet federal clean water mandates and it will help protect a regional aquifer that is vital to public and environmental health. It is my understanding that the City of Austin will be matching 45% of the cost of the project through the city sewer rates. I certify that neither I nor my spouse has any financial interest in this project.

Bill Number: FY 2009 Omnibus.

Account: U.S. Department of Energy; Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy account.

Legal Name of Requesting Entity: Bexar County, Texas.

Address of Requesting Entity: 100 Dolorosa, San Antonio, Texas 78205.

Description of Request: I have secured \$475,750 for Bexar County. Funding would be used for materials and labor for the installation of photovoltaic panels at the new Bexar County Parking Garage for the purpose of re-charging plug-in hybrid vehicles. The project will promote the use of renewable energy while minimizing the impact of vehicle emissions. It is my understanding that Bexar County will be contributing \$326,000 towards this project. I certify that neither I nor my spouse has any financial interest in this project.

Bill Number: FY 2009 Omnibus.

Account: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; Operations & Maintenance Civil Works Projects.

Legal Name of Requesting Entity: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Address of Requesting Entity: P.O. Box 17300, Fort Worth, TX 76102.

Description of Request: I have secured \$3,422,000 for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers at Canyon Lake, Texas. Funding for this project would be used for operations and maintenance in Canyon Lake, Texas and to repair conduit liner, service and emergency flood gates. I certify that neither I nor my spouse has any financial interest in this project.

Bill Number: FY 2009 Omnibus.

Account: National Park Service—Historic Preservation Fund—Save America's Treasures.

Legal Name of Requesting Entity: City of New Braunfels.

Address of Requesting Entity: 150 North Seguin, New Braunfels, Texas 78130.

Description of Request: I have secured \$150,000 for the Comal County Courthouse Restoration. Funding for this project will preserve and rehabilitate the historic Comal County Courthouse. The restorative work includes improving fire safety and accessibility to persons with disabilities by replacing outdated and hazardous building systems and restoring and reconstructing architectural elements that have been removed or concealed