

the old Meyer Elementary School site, the Shaw Junior High School recreational fields, and the southwest library site. Each of these small parcels will allow the District to develop play fields, encourage new development, and improve livability in the District of Columbia.

Also transferred is full ownership to the southwest waterfront, another important effort in the continuing revitalization of undervalued and underused areas, burdened by Federal ownership, which the Federal Government has no interest in using. The District of Columbia has created a new vision for the southwest waterfront that will draw visitors down 10th Street from the National Mall to the waterfront area. However, for reasons largely forgotten from the time of the original transfer of land to the District of Columbia from the NPS in 1960, the original law restricts the use of the land along the waterfront to lease-only arrangements, effectively cutting the city off from building any multi-use structures on the site and driving down its useful value. The restriction on the land, allowing the District only to lease the land, cuts off the District from moving ahead with residential plans that are necessary for badly needed taxpayer growth. Neither the NPS nor the Federal Government has any interest in the waterfront land, nor does it have interest in the future of the southwest waterfront parcels, other than the Maine Lobsterman Memorial and the Titanic Memorial, which have been carved out of the transfer.

An issue integral to the southwest waterfront development is the authorization to narrow the Washington Channel. This bill would narrow the Washington Channel from its current 400 feet to 200 feet, allowing the District to build new piers out into the Washington Channel, to repair existing piers, and to facilitate the redevelopment of water-based activities on the waterfront. The Army Corps of Engineers is supportive of the change, but cannot make this change administratively, and the Coast Guard has indicated that there are no safety concerns in the proposed changes.

In addition to the land transfers, the bill makes several small, noncontroversial statutory changes that also are of no importance to the Federal Government, but will help the District run more smoothly and effectively. For instance, section two of the bill would eliminate the unnecessary restriction on the sale and advertising of lottery tickets in the "federal enclave" and in the Shipstead Luce area, which both include areas of downtown D.C. The current prohibition has a tremendous fiscal impact on the District and on private businesses.

Section three of the bill will allow the District to spend unanticipated local revenue that comes in after the District has submitted its budget to Congress, and will give the District authority to take money out of its cash reserve fund for cash-flow management, not to exceed 50 percent of the balance of the fund. Congress has approved these measures in the past, and this legislation simply seeks to make them permanent.

Section seven would exempt bonds issued by the District of Columbia from Federal, state, and local taxation. Currently, tax-exempt bonds issued by the District of Columbia are exempt from taxation only by the District and by the Federal Government. In contrast, bonds issued by Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Virgin Islands are exempt from taxation by each of the 50 States. This change is necessary to

avoid disadvantage to the District in the sale of its bonds because this tax-exempt status will increase the demand for the District's bonds and, lower the interest rates that the District bonds pays on its bonds.

Section eight amends the D.C. Code to give the D.C. courts necessary authority and flexibility to operate efficiently and effectively. First, section eight eliminates the District's statutory requirement to hold judicial conferences on an annual basis. Given how accessible literature and information are through the internet, and specifically from the D.C. courts' websites, annual conferences are an unnecessary and time-consuming expense. This section simply gives the D.C. courts the discretion to hold judicial conferences either annually or biennially. In addition, this section gives the D.C. courts authority to delay or toll judicial proceedings in an emergency. The D.C. courts recognize the need to prepare for a catastrophic event, such as a terrorist attack or an act of nature. The D.C. courts already have authority to conduct sessions outside of the District if emergency conditions within the city prohibit normal operations. However, in emergency situations, conditions may impede the transfer of operations to outside of the District for a period of time. In these situations, the D.C. courts must have the authority to delay or toll proceedings. Similar bills have been introduced here in Congress regarding the Federal court system, and several States have enacted similar legislation. Finally, this section will give the D.C. courts authority to offer voluntary separation incentive payments or buyouts. These buyouts will allow the courts to respond to their future administrative and budget needs. Currently, Federal agencies and the Federal courts have the authority to offer buyouts.

Section nine of our bill makes minor changes to the District's Home Rule Charter. This section would permit an increase to the salary of the District's Chief Financial Officer, CFO, currently set at level I of the Executive Schedule. The charter mandates that the District's CFO "shall be paid at an annual rate equal to the rate of basic pay payable for level I of the Executive Schedule". The current law does not allow deviations either below or above that level. The District must have the authority to offer a higher annual salary to allow the District to compete with other jurisdictions to hire and retain the most qualified CFO. This section also reduced the timing for special elections for ward council members in the District from 114 days to 70 days to reduce the lapse in local representation, which is necessary and important to the citizens of the District. Current law already permits appointments for vacancies in the office of the Mayor, city council chair, and at-large council seats. This provision simply fills a necessary gap. Further, this section would amend the Home Rule Charter to allow the District to spend from its contingency reserve and emergency reserve funds when they exceed the minimum required balance as set by the charter. The District will continue to be required to replenish the funds if they fall below the minimum required balances.

We ask that the House pass this bill in a bipartisan manner, as it always has done for the D.C. omnibus authorization bills.

HONORING DAVE WILSON
NURSERY

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH
OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 3, 2009

Mr. RADANOVICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend and congratulate Dave Wilson Nursery upon being named a "Legend of Agriculture" by the Ag Hall of Fame. Mr. Wilson was honored on Thursday, November 12, 2009 at the twelfth annual Ag Hall of Fame Dinner in Turlock, California.

Mr. Dave Wilson began his career working at Kirkman Nursery, a prominent tree nursery. It was at Kirkman Nursery that Mr. Wilson had the opportunity to grow and develop Junebudded orchard trees. After fourteen years, Mr. Wilson departed from Kirkman Nursery and established his own nursery in 1938. During the late 1930s and early 1940s, he and his wife, Isabel, along with his wife's sister and brother-in-law, Pearle and Walter Mann, operated Empire Nursery, a garden center located east of Modesto, California. The nursery was renamed to Dave Wilson Nursery in the early 1940s. At this time, Mr. Wilson's son-in-law, John Wynne, joined the family business.

Mr. Wilson and Mr. Wynne grew commercial orchard trees in a partnership until the company was incorporated in 1957. Mr. Wynne became president of the nursery in 1962 and five years later purchased the new headquarters for the nursery along the Tuolumne River east of Hickman, California, where the headquarters remains today. In the mid 1960s, the nursery established a sales and distribution facility in Hughson, California. In 1966, Dave Wilson Nursery introduced the first tree fruit varieties developed by Floyd Zaiger, and the nursery remains the primary propagator and exclusive licensor of Mr. Zaiger varieties, with annual sales of over a million trees of patented varieties and rootstocks. In 1986 the sales and distribution facility was relocated to the nursery's growing grounds in Hickman to better facilitate management of the operation. In 1979, an office, test orchard and sales yard was established in Selma, California, which was later relocated to Reedley, California in 1995.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend and congratulate Dave Wilson Nursery upon being named as a "Legends of Agriculture." I invite my colleagues to join me in wishing Dave Wilson Nursery many years of continued success.

CONGRESSIONAL COMMENDATION
FOR THE LIFE OF ISIAH JESSIE
WILLIAMS, III

HON. CORRINE BROWN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 3, 2009

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida. Madam Speaker, this communication is forwarded on behalf of the constituents of the Third Congressional District of Florida and myself as we pay tribute to the life of Isiah Jessie "Ike" Williams, III.

We are deeply and profoundly saddened by the loss of our dear friend, mentor and brother