

Chairman ROYCE and Ranking Member ENGEL deserve great credit for passing a complementary bill in the House, and it is because they have already acted on this that I am optimistic we will be able to together reach our end goal.

What exactly does that bill do? Let me briefly say, it requires a strategy, it authorizes an interagency approach to working with the governments of many countries affected by wildlife trafficking, and it produces recommendations on how to address those threats in coordination with non-governmental organizations. It authorizes the Secretary of State and the Administrator of USAID to support efforts to combat poaching and wildlife trafficking and to encourage community conservation programs—an initiative, a direction, that Senator FLAKE and I have seen in person on the ground in southern Africa.

It also includes strategic regular reviews to monitor progress being made, and it gives prosecutors more tools to go after individuals involved in high-value wildlife crime. Last, but not least, it encourages diplomatic efforts around the world to try and reduce the demand for wildlife trafficking and for the markets that consume so much of this illicit traffic, whether in China, Vietnam, Malaysia, or elsewhere. Finally, it requires an annual report back to us in Congress to let us know how any taxpayer dollars appropriated in this fight against wildlife trafficking are being spent.

This bill isn't just good policy. In a Congress that is all too often paralyzed by division and by dysfunction, the passage of this act is an important example of what it can look like when we put good policy before partisan politics.

I want to briefly thank the staff of Senators CORKER and CARDIN; my own staff, including Lisa Jones, who spent a great deal of time on this; the staff of Senator FLAKE, Colleen Donnelly and Sarah Towles; and three terrific people, all of them AAAS fellows who have helped bring this bill to passage: Rosa Mutiso, Allie Schwier, and Leah Rubin Shen, who has moved from being an AAAS fellow to my office and has done a terrific job getting us to the finish line today.

I am so grateful for all of the work of the dedicated folks in Congress and in the executive branch who have made this possible.

Thank you very much.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

WRDA

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, I rise to applaud the Senate for passing earlier today the Water Resources Development Act of 2016, better known as WRDA. It is important to pause for a moment and appreciate the fact that we were able to come together in such a bipartisan way on such an important

and substantive matter. Today, WRDA passed by an overwhelming majority of 95 to 3.

Today we took a critical step toward making real investments in our Nation's waterways, ports, harbors, ecosystems, and the infrastructure we rely on for our drinking water. We also made a statement that when a group of people are suffering, our country must pull together to help.

Delivering assistance to Flint, MI, and other communities suffering from poor drinking water quality is, frankly, quite overdue. We should have provided funding to fix Flint's water infrastructure long ago, but today we have taken a meaningful step toward the future, where the people of Flint, as well as communities all across America, can turn on their taps and trust that it is safe to use the water that comes out of them.

We cannot forget that right now the people of Flint are still living in this crisis. People are still depending on bottled water and filters for everyday water needs. The health effects will last for decades to come.

Over the past year, I have regularly heard from Flint families about their ongoing struggles. Just this week, I heard from Flint residents who came to Washington. They came to share their stories and to keep up the fight for the Federal support their community needs. These Americans continue to endure unimaginable circumstances with both grace and dignity.

The breadth and severity of the hardships these families have faced are breathtaking, but I continue to hear news stories that would shock all of us in this Chamber and push Congress to finish our work to get this package signed into law.

This week I heard from one Flint mother who told me a story about her 10-year-old daughter with aching bones and teeth. Lead and calcium compete for the same locations in the body and are stored in bone tissue. This is one of the many reasons lead exposure is especially devastating to growing children.

Try to imagine the horror of seeing your daughter's teeth crumble while biting into a sandwich. This is what the people of Flint are living with. The girl's blood lead levels, even recently, were up and down, and she takes large supplements to improve her bone strength. As these Flint residents continue to tell their stories, we must not let their reality fade from the minds of this Nation. As a nation, we can do better than this. We must take care of our own.

As we pause to recognize the weight of our actions today, we must recognize and remember the people who have been fighting for a very long time.

I would like to recognize Dr. Mona Hanna-Attisha, Dr. Marc Edwards, and Miguel Del Toral for their tireless work to identify and shine a light on the crisis of Flint last year, as well as for all of their advocacy and work since then.

I would also like to recognize the grassroots leaders in Flint who realized there was a serious problem way before anyone else. LeeAnne Walters, Melissa Mays, the Concerned Pastors of Flint, and many others. Despite being repeatedly dismissed and ignored, they kept talking and marching and battling to let the world know about the injustice.

Senator STABENOW and her team have worked tirelessly with us on this effort and to advance our package helping Flint and other countries across the country. She and I underwent weeks of negotiations to carefully craft a bipartisan agreement, and we have a number of Senators who were willing to work with us and truly wanted to find a solution.

Senator STABENOW's staff, particularly Matt VanKuiken and Aaron Suntag, deserve a lot of credit for late nights drafting legislative language and making calls to negotiate a deal.

Senators INHOFE and BOXER deserve special gratitude for their creative ideas and steadfast determination.

I would also like to thank the Environment and Public Works Committee staff, including Alex Herrgott, Jason Albritton, Bettina Poirier, and Susan Bodine, among others. Your long hours and commitment were critical to the bill's passage.

I should also recognize the cosponsors of our bipartisan legislation, including Senators BROWN, PORTMAN, KIRK, REED, BURR, DURBIN, MIKULSKI, CAPITO, and BALDWIN.

I would like to recognize Senators MURKOWSKI and CANTWELL and their staff who worked for weeks to help us find a path forward on a bipartisan energy bill. While this did not come to fruition, we kept working hard to find a path forward. We didn't let one roadblock stand in the way. We kept on fighting for Flint, just like the families in Flint keep on fighting.

So while I am pleased the Senate finally passed this bipartisan, fully paid-for legislation to provide much needed support for Flint families, we now need to redouble our efforts to get it done and get it over the finish line.

I urge my colleagues in the House to swiftly pass similar assistance to Flint and other communities across the country. This bill is the best way for us to help them make critical investments in their aging water infrastructure.

I thank my colleague Congressman KILDEE, who has been Flint's most steadfast champion in the U.S. House. He has worked with Senator STABENOW and me to secure Federal resources for Flint families, and I know he is working hard with his House colleagues to pass legislation to aid Flint.

Local elected officials, such as State Senator Jim Ananich, State Representative Sheldon Neeley, and Mayor Karen Weaver continue to battle for their constituents, secure resources to fix problems, and shine a light on all of the many positive aspects of the city of Flint.

I know other Members of the Michigan delegation and of other States are committed, but now is the time to step up to the plate and show that we will follow through on our responsibilities as representatives of the people.

Finally, if we are to solve this crisis, the State of Michigan must step up with substantial long-term support for the people of Flint and help them fully recover in the years and decades ahead. This disaster happened on their watch, and it is an immense failure on the part of the State of Michigan to protect the health and safety of its city's residents.

Despite the grim facts of this tragedy, some day in the future I hope we will look back at today and say it was a milestone and a turning point. I am optimistic that we will. This is not the end of our efforts for Flint. This is the beginning of making things right.

We won't stop fighting for what is best for Flint families. I urge all of my colleagues to continue working to invest in critical water infrastructure so that we never, ever see a crisis like this again anywhere in our country.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PUERTO RICAN TASK FORCE'S INTERIM REPORT

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, pursuant to section 409 of the Puerto Rico Oversight, Management, and Economic Stability Act, or PROMESA, P.L. 114-187, the bipartisan Congressional Task Force on Economic Growth in Puerto Rico has been charged with compiling a report by December 31, 2016, that identifies impediments to growth and recommends changes to promote long-term economic growth and stability, spur new job creation, reduce child poverty, and attract investment in the territory.

The statute also requires submission of an interim report on the status of the task force's efforts to the House and Senate. As chairman of the task force and after having submitted this report to leadership of both parties in the Senate and the House, I ask unanimous consent that the report be printed in the RECORD.

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

CONGRESSIONAL TASK FORCE ON ECONOMIC GROWTH IN PUERTO RICO

STATUS UPDATE TO THE HOUSE AND SENATE

Background:

On June 30, 2016, the "Puerto Rico Oversight, Management, and Economic Stability Act," or "PROMESA," was signed into law (Public Law 114-187). Section 409 of

PROMESA establishes an eight-member Congressional Task Force on Economic Growth in Puerto Rico (hereafter, "Task Force").

The Task Force has two basic charges:

1. To issue, between September 1, 2016 and September 15, 2016, a status update to the House and Senate that includes—

a. information the Task Force has collected; and

b. a discussion on matters the chairman of the Task Force deems urgent for consideration by Congress.

2. To issue, not later than December 31, 2016, a report of Task Force findings to the House and Senate regarding—

a. impediments in current Federal law and programs to economic growth in Puerto Rico including equitable access to Federal health care programs;

b. recommended changes to Federal law and programs that, if adopted, would serve to spur sustainable long-term economic growth, job creation, reduce child poverty, and attract investment in Puerto Rico;

c. the economic effect of Administrative Order No. 346 of the Department of Health of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico (relating to natural products, natural supplements, and dietary supplements) or any successor or substantially similar order, rule, or guidance of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico; and

d. additional information the Task Force deems appropriate.

Further, PROMESA urges the Task Force's final report to reflect the shared views of all eight members "to the greatest extent practicable." PROMESA also directs the Task Force to consult with the Puerto Rico Legislative Assembly, the Puerto Rico Department of Economic Development and Commerce, and the private sector of Puerto Rico.

Task Force Members were selected in July in accordance with specifications in PROMESA, and are as follows: Senator Orrin Hatch, (R-UT); Senator Robert Menendez (D-NJ); Senator Marco Rubio (R-FL); Senator Bill Nelson (D-FL); Representative Tom MacArthur (R-NJ); Resident Commissioner Pedro Pierluisi (PR); Representative Sean Duffy (R-WI); Representative Nydia Velázquez (D-NY).

This report provides the status update pursuant to the Task Force's first basic charge, highlighting information the Task Force has collected and outlining the Task Force's ongoing activities related to information gathering, analysis of policy options, and communication with stakeholders.

Residents of Puerto Rico and their families face numerous challenges to economic growth along many dimensions affected by Federal law and programs, including health care, government finances, economic stagnation, population loss, and sectoral inefficiencies. In addition, Puerto Rico is confronting challenges shared with several states related to the Zika virus and faces the highest number of confirmed cases of any U.S. jurisdiction. Task Force Members are actively working to arrive at a consensus in order to provide Congress with findings and recommendations as called for under PROMESA.

Information the Task Force has collected:

Data

Task Force staff convened a meeting with researchers from the Federal Reserve Bank of New York to discuss sources of data on Puerto Rico's economy and financial activities. The Federal Reserve Bank of New York oversees the Second District of the Federal Reserve System, which includes Puerto Rico. Researchers and analysts at the Federal Reserve Bank of New York have a long history of monitoring economic and financial developments in Puerto Rico and provided useful information to Task Force staff on available

data to assist the Task Force in analyzing the economic and financial environment in the territory.

Task Force staff have also been in contact with entities within Puerto Rico, including the Puerto Rico Institute of Statistics (Instituto de Estadísticas de Puerto Rico), to obtain the best available information about Puerto Rico's economic and fiscal situation.

Like other observers, the Task Force is concerned about the relative lack of reliable data pertaining to certain aspects of the economic, financial, and fiscal situation in Puerto Rico, which are necessary for productive analyses that may lead to sound public policy recommendations.

Therefore, the Task Force intends to analyze the extent to which Federal statistical products that measure economic and financial activity in the states might also provide equivalent information for Puerto Rico and other territories, and the Task Force intends to explore ways in which any such data gaps can be responsibly closed.

Task Force Email Portal

The Task Force established an email portal—prtaskforce@mail.house.gov—and issued press releases calling on stakeholders to submit their input to this portal. These written submissions, from both the public and private sectors, will be useful to the Task Force as it works to arrive at bipartisan recommendations. All submissions will be considered part of the public record and the Task Force intends to publish them prior to or along with its final report. To date, the Task Force has received approximately 335 submissions to the email portal from individuals and organizations representing a wide variety of interests. Task Force staff have begun analyzing these submissions and will continue to do so as the year progresses.

The Task Force initially announced a deadline for submission to the email portal of September 2, 2016. The Task Force has since extended the deadline until October 14, 2016 in order to cast the widest net possible and to ensure that stakeholders have ample opportunity to provide input.

Federal Agencies

As a U.S. jurisdiction, Puerto Rico is affected by Federal laws enacted by Congress and administered by Federal agencies. Accordingly, the Task Force, in order to fulfill its charges under PROMESA, will require input and cooperation from various Federal agencies and offices Task Force staff have begun, and will continue, to contact congressional liaisons from Federal agencies and offices to schedule briefings and facilitate information sharing.

Thus far, Task Force staff have contacted officials at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, including the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, to open a dialogue regarding Federal health policy and its impact on Puerto Rico. Task Force staff have also contacted officials at the U.S. Department of Commerce, the U.S. Department of Labor, and the Federal Housing Finance Agency to discuss a range of topics, including the inclusion, or lack thereof, of Puerto Rico in economic measures commonly used to gauge economic and financial activities in states. The U.S. Department of Energy, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the U.S. Small Business Administration, and the U.S. Department of the Treasury have also been contacted to discuss critical energy, environmental, health, and economic issues. Task Force staff expect to contact officials at additional Federal agencies to obtain pertinent information.

Task Force Members urge all Federal agencies and offices contacted by Task Force staff to recognize the relatively brief time period in which the Task Force is required to