

to go to the Chief Administrative Office to see if I could just get an exception so I didn't have to send out this mail. I tried to go through the House Administration Committee to see if there was some sort of dispensation so that I could opt out of this system. I tried to go through the Office of the Speaker to see if my MRA could be spent in a different way so I didn't have to perpetuate this. Again, it is a practice that is, apparently, so hideous it is outlawed for 180 days out of the year; but I couldn't get any of those things done.

Now it has come down to us to pass that simple line of code. It is a bipartisan bill—ROB WOODALL, TAMMY DUCKWORTH, a host of other cosponsors. I invite you to join me to abolish the franking privilege. You are welcome to use our hashtag of “Stop the Frank” any time you feel like you can move that forward. We are not going to reestablish trust overnight, but with one little accountability action at a time, we can do it. Let's do this little one today. Let's show up again and do another one and tomorrow and do another one and the next day and do another one and the next day and do another one. Then we are going to wake up a year from now or a month from now or a week from now, and we are going to find out that we have really made a difference together.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX), my friend from the Rules Committee.

SKILLS GAP

Ms. FOXX. I thank my colleague from Georgia.

Mr. Speaker, I frequently hear from employers who are struggling to find employees with the right experience and technical skills to meet workforce needs.

The passage of the bipartisan Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act was an important step for the millions of Americans who are looking for work and for the employers who have 5 million-plus job opportunities that remain unfilled due to the skills gap. However, great jobs are still going unfilled. Americans are still missing out on rewarding careers, and many businesses are still suffering.

For example, in the AED Foundation's 2016 Workforce Survey Report, more than 50 percent of equipment distributors indicated that the skills gap hindered company growth and increased costs and inefficiencies while nearly 75 percent said the lack of skilled technicians made it difficult to meet customer demand.

It is imperative that the Department of Labor finalizes regulations for WIOA and that Congress strengthens the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act.

I appreciate very much my friend from Georgia and my colleague on the Rules Committee for yielding to me in order to discuss this important issue to so many of us.

Mr. WOODALL. If my colleagues don't know, one is used to seeing the gentlewoman from North Carolina leading on the Education and the Workforce Committee. All day today, she has been leading on the Rules Committee—chairing those actions that are going on up there. I hoped she was here to file a rule to tell us that that process had been moved right along, but we will have to wait for that.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

□ 1915

FLOODING IN THE STATE OF TEXAS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. AL GREEN) for 30 minutes.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on the subject of my Special Order. That subject, Mr. Speaker, will be flooding in the State of Texas.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I and a good many of my colleagues will speak tonight about circumstances that are occurring in Texas more often than we would care to see. In a sense, Mr. Speaker, this is a continuation of a mission of mercy that we embarked upon earlier this year when we were having flooding in Houston, Texas.

These floods that we are having across the length and breadth of our State are causing great property damage, and that is worthy of a lot of consideration and it is worthy of being addressed on the floor of the House of Representatives. But we also have a good many lives that have been lost across the length and breadth of our State, and these, of course, are of paramount importance to us. So while we may make some references to the property damages and there will be some things said about possible solutions, I believe that we will say a good deal about the lives that have been lost.

At this time, Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas' 27th Congressional District (Mr. FARENTHOLD) to give his comments.

Mr. FARENTHOLD has experienced some flooding, and I am honored to have him appear and tell us about what is happening to his constituents in the 27th Congressional District.

Mr. FARENTHOLD. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor and a privilege to be here.

A little over a year ago, there were some horrible floods just outside the district I represent in Wimberley, Texas, that took the lives of several constituents vacationing there in Cor-

pus Christi, Texas. In fact, some of the bodies of the young children who perished in that horrible flood have yet to be recovered. My family's prayers and the prayers of the Nation go to those grieving families and the survivors and for the repose of the souls of those who passed.

There has been a lot of flooding in Texas over the past year or so, just as recently as last week. I represent Wharton, Texas. The river in Wharton rose just as it had gotten repairs from the previous flood a few months earlier. All the Sheetrock was newly installed and ready to go; and sure enough, another flood comes and the damage to the property continues.

Unfortunately, the floods of last week and the previous weeks did not result in loss of life in the district that I represent. Thank the Lord for that.

I tell you, in the past 14 months, another county I represent, Bastrop, has experienced the worst flooding it has seen in 35 years. It is currently dealing with \$2.5 million in damaged infrastructure, and 20 roads still remain closed today. Of the 100-plus homes damaged in the past 14 months, more than half were determined to be unlivable, and four families still remain in temporary housing.

Earlier, in Wharton County, more than 1,000 people were evacuated and 150 homes flooded. It has really been tough.

I was driving through and visited with the emergency management folks in Wharton. You look at the fields of green. I posted on Instagram the picture of a milo field. It said, “Amber waves of flooded grain.” Cotton fields are under water as well.

In addition to the property damage, I think our farmers in Texas may suffer from an overabundance of water. As I grew up in a farming family, our complaint was it either rained too much, too little, or at the wrong time. I will tell you that these floods have just been horrible in Texas.

I do want to thank the folks from FEMA, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, for their quick response.

What it has told us is that we are taking way too much time for projects to stem the flooding, levees and the like, to get approved by the Army Corps of Engineers and the other Federal agencies. The funding for it is difficult to come by.

We end up spending all this money with FEMA. If some of that money were redirected to preventive maintenance or preventing these floods, we might save lives and certainly save property as well. I think it is something that this Congress should look at: preventing problems rather than just reacting to them.

I also want to commend the first responders and the emergency management personnel throughout Texas who have done so much. I also want to offer my thoughts and prayers to those brave servicemen who perished in Texas in the training exercises as well.

It has been a tough few months here back in Texas. But you know what? We are Texans, and we will survive. We will mourn those we have lost, and we will rebuild, and we will continue to reflect that which is the greatest of the American spirit: perseverance through adversity.

I thank Mr. AL GREEN for the opportunity to speak.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. FARENTHOLD) for the unity that is engendered by his being here tonight.

It is important for people to know that this is not a time for Democrats or a time for Republicans. This is a time for Texans to come together and to talk about some of the concerns that we have and to remember those who have lost their lives in these floods.

At this time, I am honored to yield to a neighbor who is from the 22nd Congressional District of Texas. He is south of me. Of course, I speak of the Honorable PETE OLSON. We are honored to have him with us tonight, and we welcome your commentary about some of the concerns in your district and, indeed, across the State.

I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. OLSON).

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend and neighbor to the east, Mr. AL GREEN, for holding this very Special Order about floods we have had in Texas.

It has been a rough year in Texas' 22nd Congressional District. Last Memorial Day, we had the 100-year flood and lost one life, one who drove into a flooded small creek and died in their vehicle.

Tax day 2016, there was lots of street flooding. I had to move my pickup truck off my street before it was taken over by the water.

The worst came 2 weeks ago, the 500-year flood. The Brazos River came out of its banks like never before. That river cuts through the heart of my district. It first hit Simonton, a small town in the northwest part of Fort Bend County. They had a mandatory evacuation on May 29. Every home, except for 12, left. Almost all the homes have been flooded.

Next, was Richmond and Rosenberg. Two days after Simonton, they, too, had mandatory evacuations and had homes north of the railroad track flooded.

Next came my hometown of Sugar Land. We had to cancel our Memorial Day celebration because our park was flooded.

Next came Missouri City, Sienna Plantation, floods there. It crossed over Brazoria County and went down to Rosharon, and that place was flooded out as well. Luckily, God willing, we lost no lives these past couple of weeks.

I saw the greatest in Texans this past week. I put 500 miles on my pickup truck in 8 days. At our Fort Bend emergency command operations cen-

ter, people from all over the region had taken pizza, Chick-fil-A, coffee, Shipley Do-Nuts, kolaches, making sure these people who were working 24/7 are fed.

I saw an old-fashioned cattle drive. Sheriff Troy Nehls led other sheriffs on a cattle drive, moving some cattle down flooded 90, away from the threat of floods.

But the best, my friend, was 2 days ago. My wife, Nancy, and I drove over the river and went down to Rosenberg, Texas, to be with B.F. Terry High School. There was a recovery center giving out goods to people in need. This effort was started by what is called The Church, Second Mile Ministry, and Lamar Consolidated Independent School District, who opened up B.F. Terry High School. Every single day they said, "We need more rooms. We have to have more space," and they got it.

Nancy and I were assigned to stuffing small bags with one roll of toilet paper, a toothbrush, some toothpaste, some shampoo, some soap, and a razor. We were supervised by three young ladies: Rachel, Isabella, and Layla. They were a true team of Texans, my friend. I called Rachel "the skipper" because, man, she was in charge. I called Isabella "the executive officer" because she was number two in making sure everything worked well. And Layla was "the weapons officer." Don't mess with Layla. I failed my inspection the first two times. I could not get the bag closed. They got on my back and made sure that I closed that bag so people could have all they needed in times of crisis.

That is what makes Texas so great, my friend: not waiting for D.C., but neighbors helping neighbors in need. Those ladies know what the Bible says: love thy neighbor more than thyself.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for not only what he has said tonight, but for what he has been doing in his district to help persons in times of need. It is greatly appreciated by his constituents, and I greatly appreciate you coming to the floor tonight to let people know that we in Texas are standing together, and we are going to work together and we will get through this, but it won't hurt if we can get a little bit of help.

I am honored to have another colleague, who has a district that is in Houston. Of course, he has been in Congress for many years, and I consider him a very dear friend, the Honorable GENE GREEN, from the 29th Congressional District in Houston, Texas.

I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GENE GREEN).

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague and namesake from Houston, Congressman AL GREEN. I appreciate his effort, both on the legislation that we are cosponsors of, but also setting up these Special Orders. It is great to have bipartisan support.

As we found out in Houston, it doesn't matter if you are a Democrat

or a Republican. If your house gets flooded, your cars get flooded, in some cases, the lives of your family and your neighbors are in jeopardy, as Texans, we work together.

I have watched this over the years because we have had some terrible floods over the years, whether it be Tropical Storm Allison in 2001, Hurricane Ike in 2008, or what we are seeing now in May of 2015, which we called the Memorial Day flooding that was devastating and included more than 11 inches of rain and \$3 billion in damage. But in April of 2016, this year, Houston and areas experienced what we call the devastating tax day flooding on April 18 that claimed lives and caused hundreds of millions of dollars in damage.

In the last 3 weeks, just before Memorial Day, we also have seen historic rainfalls and subsequent flooding. The rain in the Houston area has ceased, but downstream in Brazoria County is my colleague from Fort Bend, just southwest of Houston, the flooding has continued. An estimated 200,000 residents, nearly two-thirds of the population of Brazoria County, have been affected by the flooding. Once again, I stand before this body while southeast Texas is under water.

Once again, I stand with my Houston colleagues and ask the House of Representatives to give our constituents the resources we need to protect lives and property in the future.

I have worked with my colleague, AL GREEN, on H.R. 5025, to appropriate \$311 million to complete our bayou system. These projects are not imaginary. They are ideas that would help, and these projects during the process would save lives. These are projects that the Corps of Engineers have said that they have approved. We just don't have the money to complete them.

In the Houston area, we have a number of bayou systems that actually start in Congressman OLSON's, Congressman AL GREEN's, Congressman CULBERSON's, and Congressman MCCAUL's districts. But it runs through my area because I have the eastern side of Harris County, where Buffalo Bayou and the Houston Ship Channel are located. We are downstream from those, and we see that flooding ourselves. I ask the House to bring our bill to the floor and to help mitigate the suffering of these thousands of Texans.

Earlier this month, our office received early notification that the United States is entering hurricane season as of June 1. Once again, the problem could be expanded. Like I said earlier, in 2001, Tropical Storm Allison hit the Texas Gulf Coast and devastated my area of east and north Houston. In 2008, Hurricane Ike caused citywide flooding and hundreds of millions of dollars in damage. Again, it came over our district in east Harris County.

Now we face another hurricane season with the possibility of extended damage and no protection for our vulnerable citizens. Houstonians continue

to suffer the effects of Mother Nature, and we have the ability to help them. The President has declared Houston a disaster area a number of times.

Again, with hurricane season upon us, we would like to see that Congress responds and acts on H.R. 5025 as the best option now.

□ 1930

Again, these are flood control projects that have been approved. We just don't have the money. Of course, in Houston, Harris County, we have a flood control district that we pay our property tax to. They have to come up with a match for the Federal funding, so it is not all Federal funding taking care of our problems. It is actually local folks also paying up to be able to keep our houses and homes from flooding and our families and neighbors from drowning.

Again, I ask my colleagues to support H.R. 5025. I want to thank my colleague, AL GREEN, for his leadership on this. We will continue to ask our colleagues to help even through this hurricane season. It doesn't end until typically the end of October. Again, I thank the gentleman for yielding to me.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. I thank my colleague for coming to the floor. I know a good many of his constituents—he and I are often in each other's districts. I know that they are exceedingly pleased that he has taken up this cause. My hope is that he and I will continue with this mission of mercy, if you will, such that we will bring to fruition some solutions for the problems that we encounter not only in Houston, but also across the length and breadth of our State.

I am honored to yield, Mr. Speaker, to the gentleman from the 20th Congressional District of Texas (Mr. CASTRO), who is in Congress not as a neophyte. I believe he has been here now into his second term. He has done an outstanding job since he arrived in Congress. We are honored to hear from him about some of his concerns and his constituents.

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman GREEN for yielding me this time and for organizing tonight's discussion on the devastation our State has seen in recent weeks and months. I know that his city of Houston has experienced truly horrific flooding and destruction, and I offer my condolences to him and to the entire Houston community.

These storms have been severe and deadly. We all mourn the loss of nine soldiers training at Fort Hood whose lives were taken way too soon in floodwaters last week. Six other people across Texas have also died as a result of the storms as well. My prayers are with the families and loved ones of all those whose lives were claimed by this terrible flooding.

Some of the most destructive weather that my hometown, San Antonio, experienced was back in April when

three hailstorms struck our city. The Insurance Council of Texas estimates that those storms caused more than \$2 billion in damage, and the Council projects \$1.93 billion in losses from auto and homeowner claims.

It is not unusual for San Antonio to get a foot of rain by early June each year, but rainfall totals are already double that amount so far in 2016. All of this precipitation is a major economic hit to our city, and it poses a real threat to people's well-being.

I urge folks in San Antonio and across Texas to educate themselves on storm and flood safety. I also encourage Texans who have questions about what help the Federal Government can provide during this trying time to reach out to their Members of Congress. You see a number of us here on the House floor tonight drawing attention to this issue, specifically the issue of flooding in Texas. We are deeply concerned, and we are here to offer any assistance that we can.

I would also say to Congressman GREEN that in addition to what has been the tragic loss of life and the obvious property destruction wrought by these floods, there is also an untold cost in the flooding. I grew up in a few neighborhoods in San Antonio where we didn't have sidewalks, for example.

Often in lower income areas or even in middle-income areas, older parts of the city that don't have sidewalks and don't have the proper infrastructure to deal with even mid-level flooding. People's basements or garages will flood, ruining a lot of property. These are folks who oftentimes are renters or don't have insurance, and so there is really no recourse for them. They end up just paying the price.

It really speaks to the importance of the work that we do, the States do, and the local governments do in making sure that infrastructure is properly built, that it is built across cities and counties, and that flooding is prevented everywhere it can be.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I greatly appreciate the gentleman sharing time with us on the floor tonight. He has spoken very eloquently about some of the concerns that go beyond the visible property damages.

Ostensibly things happen, but there are some other things that are happening that we don't always uncover. When these things happen to poor people, the damages can exceed far more than the eye can see. I am grateful that he has called some of these things to our attention. Thank you very much.

At this time, I am going to call upon another colleague. All of these are dear friends. These are persons who have come to the floor tonight, quite frankly, not in a bipartisan effort, but more in a nonpartisan effort. There is no partisanship associated with what we do. We work together on these issues.

I am honored to yield to the gentleman from the 14th Congressional District, the Honorable RANDY WEBER.

He is one of my neighbors as well. I welcome you, and I yield to him, my dear friend.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. I thank my good friend, Congressman GREEN from Houston, for yielding to me. I appreciate that. He is the consummate gentleman. I appreciate him lining this up and helping us to draw attention to it.

Mr. Speaker, all the recent rains in Texas have devastated parts of up to 31 counties in our beloved State. Governor Greg Abbott has declared them a disaster area. I happen to represent the lower half of Brazoria County, from the south side of Alvin going south, and it has been the recipient of a lot of flooding.

On Monday, I toured the Emergency Management Office Command Center in Angleton, Texas, which is the county seat for Brazoria County. I was privileged to meet with County Judge Matt Sebesta and others as I was introduced to the Brazoria County first responders working night and day to take care of our citizens, our citizens' animals and their livestock, and their property as much as we could.

I was also privileged, Mr. Speaker, to go up in a Texas DPS helicopter with two of our great Department of Public Safety pilots. Wow. What devastation, Congressman GREEN, in Brazoria County. I have pictures on my iPhone. I mean, it is just unbelievable the flooded areas. The devastation and destruction is astounding. Waters from the Brazos River, the San Bernard, and other creeks and bayous are out of their banks and wreaking havoc in our area.

Mr. Speaker, I want my constituents to know that our office is already on the ground in the area, already working to ensure that FEMA is in gear, and that our constituents are taken care of. I would like to give a shout out to my great staff, Ms. Dodie Armstrong, Ms. Carmen Galvan, and Jed Webb, who have been on the ground there at the Emergency Management Center monitoring this almost night and day and interfacing with the county to provide them any assistance needed. We have assured Brazoria County that anything we can do, as my good friend JOAQUIN CASTRO was saying, from our end to assist, we would be glad to do that.

Let me just add that we, too, mourn the loss of the Fort Hood soldiers. Our thoughts and prayers go out to them and their families.

Mr. Speaker, we will bounce back from this. Our great Brazoria County first responders are on top of the situation, and our great Brazoria County folks are resilient. I have to say that about Congressman GREEN's Houston constituents as well, our Texas people.

I have lived on the Gulf Coast of Texas almost 63 years. In fact, it will be 63 years this July 2nd coming up. I have seen nothing quite of this magnitude in flooding in our area, but I have seen a lot of hurricanes, a lot of disasters. Texans are a resilient people.

They are going to need our help. They are going to need our prayers. They are going to need some time to heal and get back to business as usual.

I want to say, again, thank you to my good friend, AL GREEN from Houston, for setting this up in a very bipartisan way. We just appreciate that.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank the Honorable RANDY WEBER. I especially thank him for signing on early to the legislation that Congressman GENE GREEN called to our attention. I appreciate it greatly. We look forward to working with the gentleman. I thank him for the outstanding effort.

Mr. Speaker, you heard one of our Members mention that we were having 100-year and 500-year floods. This is debatable, I suppose, whether they are 100-year floods or 500-year floods, but there is one fact that is beyond dispute. It is beyond reproach. The fact is this: We are having billion dollar floods. Billion dollar floods, Mr. Speaker, in Houston, Texas.

Within the last year, a little more than a year now, but within a 12-month period of time, Houston, Texas, has been declared a disaster area twice. Twice. Over the last 20 years, billions of dollars spent, and we have had 4 to 5 days of flooding each year over the last 20 years.

This flooding is causing great harm to property. There are people who have just moved back into their homes, Mr. Speaker, and they find themselves now being evicted by floodwaters again, waters that they cannot extricate themselves from. Their homes are stationary and fixed. They have to cope with these floods. They have to cope with their life after the floods. We are here tonight to let the country know that we in Houston, Texas, are tough. We are Texas tough. But there is something that we can do to help the people in Houston, Texas.

I don't want to talk about that right now, to be quite candid with you. After losing the lives of our military persons in Fort Hood, Texas, I believe it is very important for us to make some special reference to them. These are people who have served this country, who were prepared to live and die for the country. They are persons who were in training, and they were among the finest that we have. I regret that we have lost them.

All lives are precious. All lives are special. I came to the floor earlier, and I recited the names of persons who had lost their lives, some 16 persons in the Memorial Day flood and the tax day flood. At this time, I believe it necessary and appropriate to mention the persons who lost their lives in Fort Hood, nine soldiers.

Mr. Speaker, we had a staff sergeant lose his life, Staff Sergeant Miguel Angel Colonvazquez, 38 years of age. Mr. Speaker, he served with honor. He received five Army Commendation Medals and Army Achievement Medals, three Army Good Conduct Medals, two

Korea Defense Service Medals, the Army Service Ribbon, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization Medal, and other honors as well.

Specialist Yingming Sun, age 25, from California. He received the National Defense Service Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Medal, the Korea Defense Service Medal, the Army Service Ribbon, the Overseas Service Ribbon.

Specialist Christine Faith Armstrong, age 27, from California. She received the National Defense Service Medal, Global War on Terrorism Medal, Korea Defense Service Medal, Army Service Ribbon, and the Overseas Service Ribbon.

Private First Class Brandon Austin Banner, 22 years of age. He received the National Defense Service Medal, Global War on Terrorism Medal, Korea Defense Service Medal, Army Service Ribbon, Overseas Service Ribbon, Marksmanship Qualification Badge.

Private First Class Zachery Nathaniel Fuller, age 23, Floridian. He received the National Defense Service Medal, Global War on Terrorism Medal, Army Service Ribbon.

Private Isaac Lee Deleon, age 19. He received the National Defense Service Medal, Global War on Terrorism Medal, Army Service Ribbon.

Private Eddy Gates, age 20, North Carolina. She received the National Defense Service Medal, Global War on Terrorism Medal, Army Service Ribbon.

Private Tysheena James, age 21. She received the National Defense Service Medal, Global War on Terrorism Medal, Army Service Ribbon.

Finally, Cadet Mitchell Alexander Winey, age 21. He was majoring in Engineering Management at West Point.

Mr. Speaker, I am grateful for the time, and I would like to close with this, if you will allow. All of these people were meeting the measure of life that Ruth Smeltzer called to our attention: Some measure their lives by days and years, others by heartthrobs, passions and tears; but the surest measure under God's sun is what for others in your lifetime have you done.

□ 1945

These were persons who were committed to doing for others in this great country; and they were committed to doing it to the extent that, unfortunately, with all of their honors, they lost their lives in circumstances from which they could not extricate themselves under adverse weather conditions.

I believe that they are worthy of a moment of a silence. They are worthy of much more, to be quite candid with you, but I believe that tonight this House should recognize all of them and all of those who have lost their lives with a moment of silence. And I shall ask that we engage in such at this time.

Mr. Speaker, I would have the families of all of them note that they may

be gone physically, but they will never be forgotten. We want the record to show that they served their country with distinction and with honor.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in recognition of the ongoing flooding in my home state of Texas. Texas has experienced numerous incidences of heavy rain and extreme weather events since last summer, which have resulted in extensive flooding, property damage, and tragic loss of life.

Flooding and heavy rain has affected much of our vast state this spring. Flood warnings continue throughout Dallas County along the Trinity River this week, while my district has been the focus of flash flooding and severe weather for the better part of this year. Further throughout Texas, rain gauges at the Austin-Bergstrom International Airport, College Station-Bryan, and San Angelo have recorded the wettest spring seasons on record for these areas.

Recent flooding in Texas has so far claimed the lives of 16 individuals and has resulted in significant costs associated with property damage. Even more alarming is the fact that these catastrophic floods seem to be occurring with greater severity and frequency over time. More than ever, we need to recognize the effects of climate change on our normal weather systems. Before we can begin to seriously address these severe acts of nature, we must trace these events back to their root cause. Climate change is undeniably a significant contributing factor of the increase in frequency and severity of these storms.

The State of Texas has fostered a strong relationship with our federal partners, such as the Department of Homeland Security, to deliver critical funding and emergency response for rescue and clean-up efforts. As long as these floods continue, we need to continue to build on our cooperation and work over the past year by not only improving our response to current events, but also by taking deliberate steps to mitigate future risks.

Mr. Speaker, the extreme weather events that we are experiencing in Texas are emblematic of the potentially devastating consequences of climate change—and this is only the beginning. As we continue our efforts to assist the people of Texas, I urge for more federal assistance in our fight to address the recent rain and flooding while also mitigating future flooding concerns throughout the state.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, on April 17–18, 2016 Houston experienced a historic flood event that claimed the lives of eight people; damaged over 1,150 households; disrupted hundreds of businesses; closed community centers, schools, and places of worship due to flood waters.

On Monday, April 25, I led a tour and held a press conference with the Army Corps of Engineers, local and state elected officials to focus on the damage caused by the flood and to refocus our efforts on reducing the damage and frequency of flooding in the Houston area.

On April 25, President Obama granted the request for federal Individual Assistance for Harris County residences and business owners who were affected by severe weather and flooding. I would like to thank all the local, state and federal officials who helped in making this possible.

On May 3, 2016, I held a town hall for the residents of Houston, which includes my constituents in the 18th Congressional District so that they could learn from FEMA what resources were available to assist them with recovery.

Unfortunately, that was not the end of the story of flooding in Houston for 2016—in early June another record setting rainfall led to catastrophic flooding throughout the Houston area.

At the beginning of this month Houston once again was flooded and another Disaster Assistance request was submitted to the White House.

I am grateful to the President and the great work of those at the Department of Homeland Security who worked tirelessly to help people after both events.

I spoke on the House Floor several times over the last six weeks about the floods and the suffering caused by the waters that came through our communities—damaging homes, our schools, places of business, and our places of worship.

I am gratified that the House approved my amendments to The Energy and Water Appropriations Act which will help facilitate the \$3 million needed to fund the Army Corps of Engineers' Houston Regional Watershed Assessment flood risk management feasibility study.

The Energy and Water Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2017 (H.R. 5055) provides that the Secretary of the Army may initiate up to six new study starts during fiscal year 2017, and that five of those studies are to consist of studies where the majority of the benefits are derived from flood and storm damage reduction or from navigation transportation savings.

My discussion on the House floor about Jackson Lee Amendment with Chairman SIMPSON and Ranking Member KAPTUR of the Energy and Water Appropriations Subcommittee made a compelling case and legislative record that the Houston Regional Watershed Assessment Flood Risk Management Feasibility study is most deserving to be selected by the Secretary of the Army as one of the new study starts.

The Energy and Water Appropriations Act is still under consideration in the House, and I continue to work with my colleagues in moving this important effort forward.

The Houston Regional Watershed Assessment study is critically needed given the frequency and severity of historic-level flood events in recent years in and around the Houston metropolitan area.

The purpose of the Houston Regional Watershed Assessment is to identify risk reduction measures and optimize performance from a multi-objective systems performance perspective of the regional network of nested and intermingled watersheds, reservoir dams, flood flow conveyance channels, storm water detention basins, and related Flood Risk Management (FRM) infrastructure.

Special emphasis of the study, which covers 22 primary watersheds within Harris County's 1,756 square miles, will be placed on extreme flood events that exceed the system capacity resulting in impacts to asset conditions/functions and loss of life.

The Federal government should not run every aspect of our lives—but it is an umbrella

on a rainy day—it is a shelter in a powerful storm.

The Federal government is help when no other source of help can meet the challenges we may be facing is sufficient.

It takes all sectors of a community to effectively prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate against any disaster.

We come together as community—we come together as Houstonians—we come together as Texans and yes—we come together as Americans to provide support, help and assistance to each other during difficult times.

This is a difficult time for many in our city of Houston.

Some of those who were hit hard by the flood are here tonight, but there are many others who suffered losses who were not able to be here.

I ask that you take material with you to share with your neighbors, friends, family, and co-workers who had flood damage or economic impacts due to the flood, but were not able to join us tonight so that they can get the help they may need to recover from the historic flooding.

You may qualify for FEMA Individual Assistance grants of up to \$33,000 from the federal government, and low-interest disaster loans from the U.S. Small Business Administration.

An estimated 240 billion gallons of water fell in the Houston area over a 12 hour period, which resulted in several areas exceeding the 100 to 500 year flood event record.

The records on floods are based upon the time period of rain fall, the location of the rain fall, and the duration of the event over a watershed.

The areas that experienced these historic rain falls in April were west of 1–45, north of 1–10, and Greens Bayou.

An estimated 140 billion gallons of water fell over the Cypress Creek, Spring Creek, and Addicks watershed in just 14 hours.

The flooding problems in the Houston area are frequent, widespread, and severe, with projects to reduce flood risks in place that are valued at several billion dollars.

Recent historical flooding in the region was documented in 1979, 1980, 1983, 1989, 1993, 1994, 1997, 2001 (Tropical Storm Allison), 2006, 2007, and 2008 (Hurricane Ike).

In 2015, the Houston and surrounding area experienced widespread historic flooding; and again two weeks ago we saw significant flooding damage and loss of life during the 12 hour flood event from April 17–18, 2016.

On June 6, 2016, I held a tour of the flood damage in Houston, Texas with the President and CEO of The American Red Cross Gail McGovern:

Following the flooding in April I worked with FEMA and the city of Houston to provide housing to those left homeless by the flooding in April.

Organized a Houston area delegation letter to appropriators to fund a study.

Sent letters to appropriators on the impact of flooding on the region and requested that a similar effort to deal with storm surge be undertaken for the upper Texas Gulf Coast.

On March 10, 2016, I held what is likely one of the first Congressional events to raise pub-

lic awareness regarding Zika Virus and to ascertain the needs of local and state agencies who would be responsible for responding to the threat.

On June 1, 2016, CDC reports are there are 1,732 confirmed Zika cases in the continental United States and U.S. Territories.

Cases of the Zika Virus have been reported in every state in the United States except Alaska; Idaho; North Dakota; South Dakota; and Wisconsin.

At that meeting I called for the following directives to happen:

1. Establish a national task force to discuss the Zika virus;

The First meeting of the Task Force occurred on Tuesday, June 7, 2016.

Other objectives that I outlined included:

2. Creation of public service messages explaining what the word DEET means and why it is important to protect yourself with insect repellent;

3. We must make sure that untreated mosquito bed netting is available to women and girls in high risk areas;

4. Post posters in all public hospitals highlighting the dangers of the Zika virus and how one can protect themselves from the Zika virus;

5. Hold a MAJOR briefing in Houston with officials from the CDC regarding the Zika virus;

6. Conduct a Houston/Harris County Public service campaign to inform the community about traveling to Zika Virus mosquito borne infected regions around the world; and

7. We must secure public and private funds to cleanup illegally dumped tires and other debris where mosquitos may breed near people.

We must also rethink how testing is conducted for the Zika Virus.

Dr. Peter Hotez, Dean of the School of Tropical Medicine at Baylor College of Medicine recommends that an aggressive testing and disease surveillance approach be adopted for areas of greatest risk along the Gulf Coast like the city of Houston.

Sub-tropical climate;

Areas of Extreme Poverty;

Presence of the most threatening Zika Virus carrying mosquitoes the *Aedes Aegypti*;

Mosquito breeding conditions that are supportive of spread of the disease from travelers who come to the Houston area with the illness.

The CDC guidance for persons who seek testing for the disease should allow for greater testing in areas that have these conditions along the Gulf Coast from Texas to Florida.

Mosquito surveillance along the Gulf Coast is not even nor as well-resourced as it once was due to budget cuts and a lack of concern regarding mosquito borne disease, which has greatly reduced capacity and competence in this critical area.

The mosquito that carries Zika Virus is known as the greatest killer of people—it is also known as the yellow fever mosquito.

This *Aedes* mosquito is the real threat and it must be battled from the neighborhood level up to the county or parish level.

President Obama's request for \$1.9 Billion in Zika Virus Emergency Response Funding.

The Senate passed a Zika Virus Appropriations of \$1.1 billion, but unfortunately the House only provided \$622 million.

The Senate has called for a conference to reconcile the differences between the two bills.

The CDC reported on May 30, 2016, that it has confirmed cases of the Zika Virus include 279 pregnant women in the United States or U.S. Territories.

This number is double the number of cases reported the previous week.

The CDC is reporting all pregnant women who have "any laboratory evidence" of possible infection, no matter what.

The CDC made the change after seeing reports of asymptomatic pregnant women—women with no symptoms who delivered children with known Zika Virus birth defects.

These are sobering and troubling numbers this early in our mosquito season.

These cases of Zika Virus include both travel related and those that were contracted from mosquito bites.

The 13 Local Cases of the Zika Virus are all travel related thus far.

Seven cases of the Zika Virus recorded by Harris County Public Health Environmental Services.

Six reported by the City of Houston Public Health Department Reported cases of the Zika Virus.

We know that 4 in 5 people who contract the Zika Virus have no symptoms.

This is especially problematic for pregnant women who may become infected with the Zika Virus and have no symptoms.

Although the contracting of the disease is most associated with mosquitoes it has been transmitted sexually.

This presents other challenges to Zika Virus public education and preparedness.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 7 o'clock and 46 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 2203

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. BYRNE) at 10 o'clock and 3 minutes p.m.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 5278, PUERTO RICO OVERSIGHT, MANAGEMENT, AND ECONOMIC STABILITY ACT

Mr. WOODALL, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 114-610) on the resolution (H. Res. 770) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 5278) to establish an Oversight Board to assist the Government of Puerto Rico, including instrumentalities, in managing its public finances, and for other purposes, which

was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 5325, LEGISLATIVE BRANCH APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2017

Mr. WOODALL, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 114-611) on the resolution (H. Res. 771) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 5325) making appropriations for the Legislative Branch for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2017, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. HARDY (at the request of Mr. MCCARTHY) for today and the balance of the week on account of a death in the family.

Mr. JEFFRIES (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for June 7 and today.

Mr. PAYNE (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of being in district.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 4 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, June 9, 2016, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

5627. A letter from the Assistant General Counsel for Regulations, Office of the Secretary, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting the Department's final rule — Removal of the Equal Employment Opportunity; Policy, Procedures and Programs Regulation [Docket No.: FR-5645-F-01] (RIN: 2501-AD78) received June 7, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Financial Services.

5628. A letter from the Secretary, Division of Corporation Finance, Securities and Exchange Commission, transmitting the Commission's interim final rule — Form 10-K Summary [Release No.: 34-77969; File No.: S7-09-16] (RIN: 3235-AL89) received June 3, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Financial Services.

5629. A letter from the Chief Counsel, National Telecommunications and Information Administration, Department of Commerce, transmitting the Department's final rule — Revision to the Manual of Regulations and

Procedures for Federal Radio Frequency Management [Docket No.: 160523450-6450-01] (RIN: 0660-AA32) received June 7, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

5630. A letter from the Deputy Director, Regulations Policy and Management Staff, FDA, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — Food Additives Permitted in Feed and Drinking Water of Animals; Chromium Propionate [Docket No.: FDA-2014-F-0232] received June 7, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

5631. A letter from the Director, Regulations Policy and Management Staff, FDA, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's Major final rule — Food Labeling: Revision of the Nutrition and Supplement Facts Labels [Docket No.: FDA-2012-N-1210] (RIN: 0910-AF22) received June 7, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

5632. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting the Department's final rule — Revisions to Definitions in the Export Administration Regulations [Docket No.: 141016858-6004-02] (RIN: 0694-AG32) received June 3, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5633. A letter from the Senior Procurement Executive, Office of Acquisition Policy, General Services Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — General Services Administration Acquisition Regulation (GSAR); Rewrite of GSAR Part 515, Contracting by Negotiation [GSAR Case 2008-G506; Docket 2008-0007; Sequence 14] (RIN: 3090-AI76) received June 7, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5634. A letter from the Senior Procurement Executive, Office of Acquisition Policy, General Services Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — General Services Administration Acquisition Regulation (GSAR); Rewrite of GSAR Part 517, Special Contracting Methods [GSAR Change 71; GSAR Case 2007-G500; Docket No.: 2008-0007; Sequence No.: 3] (RIN: 3090-AI51) received June 7, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5635. A letter from the Senior Procurement Executive, Office of Acquisition Policy, General Services Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — General Services Administration Acquisition Regulation (GSAR); Purchasing by Non-Federal Entities [GSAR Change 73; GSAR Case 2010-G511; Docket No.: 2014-0008; Sequence No.: 1] (RIN: 3090-AJ43) received June 7, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5636. A letter from the Acting Chief, Unified Listing Team, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting the Department's final rule — Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Designation of Critical Habitat for the Zuni Bluehead Sucker [Docket No.: FWS-R2-ES-2013-0002; 4500030114] (RIN: 1018-AZ23) received June 7, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.