

implement an appropriate solution to the outfall canal and pumping challenges which would be constructed under this authority. Evacuating storm water to the Mississippi River, rather than into the outfall canals, should be considered as part of any comprehensive plan constructed under this authority.

The conference agreement also includes bill language that authorizes the replacement or modification of non-Federal levees in Plaquemines Parish. The conferees urge the Secretary to expedite efforts that will supplement or compliment existing Federal protection adjacent to the Mississippi River banks associated with the New Orleans to Venice project.

Section 7012(b) clarifies that all work authorized pursuant to sections 7012(a)(2) through 7012(a)(9) and Section 7013 shall be performed at full Federal expense.

Section 7013 authorizes the closure and restoration of the Mississippi River gulf outlet ecosystem. It is the intent that the full restoration of the area be included as part of the program. The Secretary should progress with the closure as soon as possible and should consider using funds and authorization provided in Public Law 109-148 and Public Law 109-234 immediately upon enactment of this act.

Section 7014 requires the Secretary to submit actual project recommendations as part of the Louisiana coastal protection and restoration analysis and design. Despite several communications, the Secretary has continued down a course that is entirely inconsistent with congressional intent in regard to this analysis and design. It remains very concerning that the Secretary considers expending \$20 million to develop a document that will provide little guidance and not advance future protection efforts a wise use of taxpayer funds. Further, it is inexcusable that the Congress was forced to include this directive in statute to refocus this analysis and design on the intent of Congress. The original intent of the authorization was clear that Corps was to provide actual project recommendations, design, and a technical report. The intentional mismanagement of this effort by the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works is concerning, will cause delays in protection improvements, and may result in additional loss of life and property. Further, it is noteworthy that the statute requiring the development of this document placed the requirement upon the Chief of Engineers to provide this information to Congress. Yet the interim report was signed only by the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works. I commend GEN Carl Strock for the integrity he apparently demonstrated in this case.

LOUISIANA WWII VETERANS

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I would like to take a moment to pay

tribute to a group of 96 World War II veterans from the Acadiana region of Louisiana that is making their way to Washington this weekend. Here they will visit the World War II, Korea, Vietnam and Marine Corps memorials as well as Arlington National Cemetery to lay a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknowns.

The trip to the Nation's Capital this Saturday is being paid for by group in Lafayette, LA, called Louisiana HonorAir. The organization is honoring each surviving Louisiana veteran by giving them a chance to see the memorials dedicated to their service. So far this year, there have been two trips to these Washington memorials and three more are planned, including this one.

World War II was the deadliest conflict in our history. More than 60 million people worldwide were killed, including 40 million civilians, and more than 400,000 American servicemembers were slain during the long war.

In Louisiana, there remain today about 44,000 living WWII veterans, and every one of them has their own heroic tale of their experience in achieving a noble victory of freedom over tyranny.

Mervin Harmon from Lafayette was one of the Tuskegee Airmen, our country's first African American pilots. While serving his country, he had to endure the racism that was prevalent in our society during that era. Mervin, who is 80 now, joined the service at 18, becoming a mechanic and crew chief at the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama. He oversaw the P-51 Mustang fighters the Airmen flew during the war, ensuring that planes were safe for battle. When Mervin trained at Ft. Smith in Arkansas, he remembers German prisoners of war eating in restaurants while black MPs guarding them were not allowed to be served.

Mervin and the other Tuskegee airmen helped our country bridge the racial divide. He went on to serve in Lafayette Parish government for 14 years and had an upholstery business in the city.

I ask the Senate to join me in honoring Mervin Harmon, the other 95 Louisiana heroes we welcome to Washington this weekend, and Louisiana HonorAir for making these trips a reality.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

IDAHO'S ANGELS IN ADOPTION

• Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, I am privileged today to honor an Idaho couple, Rick and Tina Betzer, who have been blessed with a heart and gift to minister to children. Rick and Tina are being honored today as Angels in Adoption by the Congressional Adoption Coalition. God grants each of us gifts; some of us use them, others don't, and the world is worse off for that neglect. Today I will share a different story—it is about two people who have chosen to use their gift to make an extraordinary

difference in the lives of others. Rick and Tina tell their story better than anyone. With the permission of the Chair, I will include their personal family statement as part of the RECORD. This is text from Rick and Tina Betzer's personal testimony:

We met in Jr. High and have been best friends since. We just celebrated our 30th wedding anniversary. We are privileged to be called mom and dad by 16 wonderful children. Our oldest 5 are biological and the youngest 11 have been adopted over the last 10 years. Our first born is Eric. He is now 31 years old married and has 2 step sons and 2 beautiful little girls. He owns his own tree-trimming business, and they raise quarter horses on their small farm in Chester Idaho. Next is our daughter Gina, who is now 30 years old. She is married to Zac Clawson and they have 3 sons. Zac works for the Federal Government in Washington D.C. They live in Dumfries Virginia. Next is our daughter Amber. She is 28 years old. At this time she is living with us in Shelley and she works for Eastern Idaho Special services and is a transportation specialist for the homeless shelter in Idaho Falls. Our daughter Jessica is 22 years old and is married to Jacob Hackman. They live in Boise and are expecting their first child in June. Our daughter Brittney is 20 years old, graduated High School with honors, and is attending BYU Hawaii. We moved to Shelley in August 2004, from Ashton where we had been living for the past 15 years. While in Ashton, both Rick and I worked for the State of Idaho Department of Juvenile Corrections as a Nurse and as a Therapy Technician. It was at the Juvenile correction center that we became aware of the need for committed foster parents. In the fall of 1990, we became licensed foster parents. Over the next 10 years, we fostered 38 children. On December 12, 1993, a case worker knocked on our door with a beautiful 2 year old boy in his arms. At first sight, we knew this little guy belonged to us. This was the first day of the rest of our lives. We adopted Shallon 3 years later. We thought we were a complete family, then, several years later, we were prompted to call LDS services to apply to adopt a special needs baby. A few months later we did not have a baby, but 3 active little kids. Breann, Daniel, and Courtney joined our family at the ages of 5, 6, and 7. At that point we were sure our family was complete. Again, several years went by and we could not get the thought out of our minds that someone was missing from our family. I talked Rick into another home study, and 1½ months later we were headed to Florida to pick up our 9-week-old daughter, Zoe. At this point, we started to joke that we would stop at 12 kids, not ever intending to go that far, then someone introduced us to the Internet. Thousands of foster children in the United States that are awaiting adoption are listed there. Three little children pulled me in and I contacted their case workers. One was in Texas, one was in Ohio and one in Missouri. We were hoping to be able to adopt one of the three. During this time, Tazier came home for good—he had been our foster son 4 years earlier. A month after his arrival, we brought D'Asia home from Ohio then, 3 months after that, we brought Isabelle home from Missouri, but no word from Texas. Again, we thought we are done. Then, a year later, a phone call from Georgia: Were we interested in one more child? We hesitated and the case worker read us his profile off the Internet. Half way through we stopped her and said "that's Dakota; he lives in Texas." She almost dropped the phone, and asked how we knew that—there were thousands of kids on the Net. We explained that his picture had been on our