

lumber and other building materials that were needed for repairs and reconstruction after the hurricanes. This also impacted access to the Navy submarine base and Port Canaveral.

I thank the chairman for including these important provisions in this legislation and I look forward to passage of this legislation in the Senate.

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Chairman, let me offer my congratulations to Chairman YOUNG and Ranking Member OBERSTAR, and Subcommittee Chairman DUNCAN and Congresswoman JOHNSON, for shepherding this Water Resources bill to the House floor.

After 5 long years, we know this bill is well overdue.

The bipartisan nature of this WRDA bill, and of the operation of our committee in general, should be a model for the entire Congress. It is a credit to this committee that the work of the Corps translates into a better economy, a cleaner environment, and improved livability for the people of this Nation.

The Corps has a record of accomplishment that has enhanced communities across America.

Every year, billions of tons of commerce move over the navigable waterways the Corps maintains. This creates jobs and assures our leadership in the global economy. We know that maritime transportation will become even more critical in the years to come as we grow and expand our congested intermodal system.

Another key element of the Corps mission is flood control. Death and displacement due to severe flooding has reoccurred throughout our Nation's history. Today, many of our major cities in the United States are protected by Corps of Engineers flood control structures. Flood protection on average prevents \$16 billion in damages each year, saving us \$6 for every \$1 invested.

The Passaic River Flood Basin is located smack in the middle of my Congressional District. People in my district are up in arms about what is too often a matter of life and death. Like along the Acid Brook in Pompton Lakes, New Jersey, it is important that the Corps has adequate authority to address and mitigate flooding issues.

We know that Corps projects are sometimes described as pork barrel spending. Those who downplay the Corps' importance do not see the tangible benefit neighborhood by neighborhood. Members of Congress know their districts, we know what needs to be done, and by voting for this bill, we will reject the "pork barrel" label.

That we have worked out bipartisan compromise on Corps reform, that we have agreed upon what the Corps needs to focus on in the years ahead, and that we are on the floor today is a huge victory for the American people.

I would like to again thank the Committee leadership, especially the always fair-minded Chairman DUNCAN, for their strong and untiring effort to bring this bill to the floor.

Let us urge the other body to complete its work as well, so we might finally renew our water resources program.

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Chairman, I rise to express my concerns with the Water Resource Development Act of 2005.

I would like to begin by thanking the committee for authorizing projects that are important to my district in their bill. Water and infrastructure are important issues to the sprawl-

ing, populated area that I represent. Each of these projects is important to the residents of central New Jersey and will enhance the quality of life in my district.

Although I am pleased that this legislation includes important civil works projects that will better our nation, I am disappointed that this legislation does not include stronger reforms of the Army Corps of Engineers. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is charged with an important mission—operating our Nation's water resources and civil works projects. The projects they undertake provide our communities with clean drinking water, electric power production, river transportation, ecosystem restoration, and flood protection. Regrettably, the Army Corps has been plagued by mismanagement that has resulted in significant delays and distress to the communities that are in need of these projects.

Although Congress specifically authorizes projects, the Army Corps has repeatedly ignored these guidelines and set their own priorities. For years, I have personally been frustrated with the Army Corps handling of projects in the 12th Congressional District. The most egregious example of the Army Corps disregard for authorized projects in my district is the environmental restoration of Grover's Mill Pond. Located at the site made famous by Orson Well's "War of the Worlds" radio broadcast, Grover's Mill is not only a historic site, but it is a recreation destination and the pond is a vital link to stream corridors. Years of sediment build-up and runoff from the watershed have caused the pond to become overrun with aquatic weeds and algae.

In fiscal year 2003, Congress specifically designated \$500,000 in funding for this project, but only a fraction of this amount has been spent by the Corps on Grover's Mill pond. This pond in its current condition is not only an eyesore for the community and the residents who live near it, but gives off an unpleasant smell in the summer. Completion of this project is long overdue and is just one example of how the Army Corps fiscal irresponsibility impacts projects across the Nation.

The Army Corps should be a leading environmental organization, but too often environmental protection seems to be a secondary consideration. One large deficiency is their dependence on a planning policy that was created by the Water Resources Council in 1983. More than 20 years later, these policies have seen little revision. In addition, I am concerned with provisions of this bill that would give the Army Corps new authority to limit dramatically the alternatives it will consider during project planning and the National Environmental Policy Act, NEPA, review process. This will undermine NEPA and allow the Army Corps to proceed with projects before evaluating a full range of reasonable alternatives.

The proposed plan for the Upper Mississippi River-Illinois Waterway is another disconcerting provision in the bill. H.R. 2648 would allow the Army Corps to spend \$1.8 billion to improve the water route and ease travel time. The Army Corps claims that this large project is necessary due to its projections that traffic will increase. However, both the National Academy of Sciences and the Congressional Research Service dispute this finding. Investing nearly 10 percent of total Corps spending into a project based on faulty predictions is simply unacceptable. I will support the amendment being offered by Representa-

tive BLUMENAUER and Representative FLAKE that will ensure that this project is economically justified by authorizing it only if the Army Corps meets their lowest projected traffic scenario.

Although I have strong concerns that this bill does not go far enough in reforming the Army Corps, I believe that the projects and programs in this bill are important and need to be reauthorized. Therefore, I will reluctantly vote in favor of this legislation. I hope in the future that Congress will be able to enact reformative measure to address the Army Corps fiscal, environmental, and logistical oversights.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong support of the Water Resources Development Act, which authorizes flood protection and environmental restoration projects to be undertaken by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in order to reduce flood damage and improve environmental restoration. The House would not be considering this bill were it not for the hard work and leadership of Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman DON YOUNG, and Water Resources and Environment Subcommittee Chairman JOHN DUNCAN.

In our ongoing efforts to manage our water supplies, this bill provides the critical partnership of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to assist local water agencies in drought-proofing our region and improving our water infrastructure.

Specifically, the bill authorizes \$20 million for the cities of Arcadia and Sierra Madre, for their Water Environmental Infrastructure Program. This program will improve the water infrastructure that both cities rely upon, which is at risk due to deterioration from age and from the potential impact from a major seismic event in the region.

The bill also authorizes \$13 million for the city of Upland's storm drainage project for the Upland Basin to provide greater flood control retention and groundwater aquifer recharge capacities. This project will provide the opportunity to recharge 1326 acre-feet per year of storm flows that would otherwise be conveyed outside of the Chino Groundwater Basin. Additionally, the project will provide the opportunity to recharge approximately 2300 acre-feet per year of excess imported water supplies or potentially recycled water for future groundwater extraction and use during dry drought periods. Completion of the project will increase water conservation and increase water reliability for local water producers by utilizing the Chino Groundwater Basin for water storage, reducing the dependence on imported water during peak demands or drought periods.

Additionally, the bill authorizes \$5 million for the Raymond Basin Management Board's Southern California Foothill Communities Water Supply Reliability Program. The Raymond Basin Management Board encompasses the cities of La Canada, Sierra Madre, Pasadena, Arcadia and Alhambra, six water companies, three water districts, and three associations, and has brought together the communities along the San Gabriel mountain range and four groundwater basins in meeting the water needs in this region. The authorization will help in their planning, design and construction of groundwater quality and supply projects throughout the San Gabriel Mountain foothill region including the Six Basins, Chino, San Gabriel and Raymond groundwater basins.