

## EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

CONGRATULATING CASEY BRIAN OTTEN FOR THE RANK OF EAGLE SCOUT

**HON. SANDY ADAMS**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, August 16, 2011*

Mrs. ADAMS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate Casey Brian Otten for achieving the rank of Eagle Scout.

Throughout the history of the Boy Scouts of America, the rank of Eagle Scout has only been attained through dedication to concepts such as honor, duty, country, and charity. For his Eagle Scout project, Casey led a construction team and created a habitat for birds in South Daytona, Florida. By applying these concepts to daily life, Casey has proven his true and complete understanding of their meanings, and thereby deserves this honor.

I offer my congratulations on a job well done and best wishes for the future.

HONORING THE LIFE AND SERVICE OF MS. MARGIE MEARES

**HON. HEATH SHULER**

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, August 16, 2011*

Mr. SHULER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Ms. Margie Meares who dedicated her professional career to conserving our environment and improving energy efficiency. Few individuals have had as dramatic an impact on protecting our environment as Ms. Meares.

After graduating from Duke University Ms. Meares took a job with the North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources working to improve and protect the quality of our water. As a founding member of the Clean Air Community Trust, she worked tirelessly to improve the quality of our air. Her efforts helped lead to the passing of the state's Clean Smokestacks Act. Enacted in 2002, this Act requires North Carolina power companies to reduce their smog and haze-forming emissions by approximately three-fourths by 2012.

Her service to our state was mirrored in her work on behalf of her local community, where she helped to found Evergreen Charter School and served on its Board of Directors. As an elected member of the Woodfin Water Board, she helped to protect the quality of local water resources. She was a founding member of the Community Energy Advisory Council in Asheville, where she worked to engage the community in shaping the programs and policies of its electric utilities.

Ms. Meares focused on improving the energy efficiency of homes and buildings, both at home in North Carolina and across the country. She worked tirelessly to help develop North Carolina's new Energy Conservation Code, improving the minimum efficiency of

buildings. She developed educational materials for building officials and spent three years conducting classes helping them to better understand and enforce the energy efficiency rules governing buildings.

Nationally, Ms. Meares worked with building officials across the country to reduce the energy consumption of our buildings by at least 30 percent. She also developed one of the nation's first programs to educate realtors about the value of energy efficient and environmentally friendly real estate.

The quality of our nation's air and water has been improved due to the robust efforts of Ms. Meares. Her work to conserve and protect our environment and resources will have a long lasting impact. I ask my colleagues to join me today in recognizing the exceptional life of Ms. Margie Meares, whose work and service will not soon be forgotten.

FY 2012 DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR APPROPRIATIONS

**HON. GWEN MOORE**

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, August 16, 2011*

Ms. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the FY 2012 Department of Interior Appropriations bill, H.R. 2584. An appropriate short title for this legislation would be the "Let's Leave our Air and Water Dirtier Act of 2011."

This bill leaves no stone unturned in the majority's relentless attack on our environment. National parks are slashed. Even in the midst of the economic downturn, Americans have continued to visit our national parks and we need to continue to ensure that their experience is a safe and reflective one.

Wildlife refuge funding is cut. The bill also targets the only program (the State and Tribal Wildlife Grant program) that helps us help conserve wildlife and their habitat before they become endangered or threatened. This represents a whopping 64 percent cut for this state-based conservation program.

The bill reduces funding for land acquisition funded by the Land and Water Conservation Fund—which does not use taxpayer dollars but oil revenues—to \$66 million, a 78 percent reduction from FY11, the lowest level of funding in the history of the program.

The bill also targets grants that help keep pollution out of our Nation's waters, including the Great Lakes. Keeping that body of water clean is absolutely critical to my region's economy. Businesses don't set up shop next to polluted bodies of water. Tourists don't go to visit or fish in polluted bodies of water. We know what happens when we ignore the state of our natural resources. Do we really need to have our lakes catch fire for some on the other side to understand the importance of this funding?

According to the Great Lakes Metro Chambers Coalition, the region's twelve states ac-

count for 33 percent of the Nation's population, 32 percent of its GDP, 30 percent of its merchandise exports, and 28 percent of its patents.

Local governments in the region on both sides of the border contribute an estimated \$10 billion in annual investments in wastewater systems to keep pollution out of the Great Lakes. Is it too much to ask the Federal Government to adequately support this effort as well? I think not.

Yet, H.R. 2584 slashes the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) by \$50 million compared to current levels and by \$100 million compared to the President's request. If this level is approved, the funding levels for this initiative will have been slashed in half in the two appropriations bills that the new House majority has brought to the floor this year.

The GLRI is critical to the Great Lakes which contains some 20 percent of the world's freshwater and 84 percent of the surface water supply in North America. Because this body of water is so vast, there is a perception that these waters are inexhaustible. In reality, this water resource—that millions of Americans and businesses rely on every day—is finite, intensely used, and ecologically fragile. The initiative is guided by sound science and an action plan with performance measures and accountability standards. Over 300 restoration projects are already underway and demand for funding continues to outpace supply. Just approaching halfway in this 5-year initiative, now is not the time to start pulling back.

The Great Lakes Metro Chambers of Commerce Coalition estimates that every \$1 in federal investments generates some \$6 in other funds for restoration efforts.

This cut endangers efforts to remove contaminated sediments like PCB's from the Great Lakes. I don't know how allowing these poisons to linger in the Great Lakes somehow advances our national interests.

GLRI provides funds that are also a vital and active part of current efforts to keep the Asian Carp out of the Great Lakes. The Asian Carp have the potential to devastate the Great Lakes. Asian Carp could kill a billion dollar industry, cost jobs, and cost taxpayer money at all levels of government to "manage" this invasive species if it were to somehow get into the Great Lakes. The Administration's Asian Carp Control Strategy Framework directs \$26 million in FY 2011 GLRI funds to fighting the Carp. These ongoing efforts will require continued support.

Restoration of the Great Lakes can be one of the great environmental success stories of our time. We still have a way to go and unwise cuts now will harm the region's environment and economic outlook.

My colleagues from the region—both Republican and Democratic—recognize the shortsightedness of the funding cuts for the GLRI in this bill and have offered amendments to restore funding levels for the GLRI. I am pleased to support those amendments, including the LaTourette amendment which restored

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Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

funding to the FY 2011 levels, which was approved by the House recently. However, I am concerned that this amendment reduced funding for climate change programs to restore GLRI funding even as climate change will have an enormous impact on the Great Lakes, and the citizens and industries that live, work, and recreate in the region. We must continue to work together to keep these waters "Great."

I also note the provisions in the bill that would undermine the work done since passage of the Clean Air and Clean Water Acts to get and keep pollution out of our air and water, and as a result, out of our bodies.

The bill also included a provision that would cease listings of species for protection under the Endangered Species, a radical proposal that would do much harm. The majority is declaring "open season" on endangered species across our country. I was glad to vote to remove that harmful provision.

We have a responsibility to help get our Nation's finances in order. But we also have a responsibility to maintain our Nation's irreplaceable resources. What we don't keep clean today will cost us much more to clean up tomorrow. That's what the brownfields and Superfund sites we still are cleaning up today tell me.

We don't want to leave our children and grandchildren a legacy of debt or deficits. Good. But let's also not leave those same children and grandchildren a legacy of closed beach and no swimming signs, of "code red" poor air quality days, and of increasing sewage overflows into local bodies of water. I oppose this bill and will vote no on it.

HONORING SAM LESANTE, SR.

**HON. LOU BARLETTA**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, August 16, 2011*

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor Sam Lesante, Sr., the CEO of Sam-Son Productions, for his continued dedication to charitable causes throughout Northeastern Pennsylvania. A philanthropist, Lesante has been a pivotal part of securing funding for charities such as the United Way, Hazleton Blind Association, URS, and many others.

Sam Lesante has been shining the television spotlight on these worthy causes for

more than 30 years. Having chaired many telethons for research related organizations including the Muscular Dystrophy Foundation and the Children's Miracle Network, he developed a sense for how to best portray the true needs of these groups. Sixteen years ago Lesante began his own production company, Sam-Son Productions. Through "The Sam Lesante Show" and other programs, he has continued to bring much-needed attention to lesser-known—and therefore lesser-funded—local charities, in addition to the larger foundations.

Today, Sam Lesante is furthering his efforts once again by partnering with the Hazleton Standard-Speaker to host Media Night in Hazleton. The focus of Media Night is to bring awareness to local organizations that are working to make the Hazleton Area and its surroundings a better place to call home. It is because of the tireless efforts of people like Sam Lesante that charities are able to thrive in an otherwise struggling economy. He has a special way of bringing out the best of an organization and making people excited about it.

CONGRATULATING STEPHEN MICHAEL SCHELLING JR. FOR THE RANK OF EAGLE SCOUT

**HON. SANDY ADAMS**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, August 16, 2011*

Mrs. ADAMS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate Stephen Michael Schelling Jr. for achieving the rank of Eagle Scout.

Throughout the history of the Boy Scouts of America, the rank of Eagle Scout has only been attained through dedication to concepts such as honor, duty, country, and charity. By applying these concepts to daily life, Stephen has proven his true and complete understanding of their meanings, and thereby deserves this honor.

I offer my congratulations on a job well done and best wishes for the future.

COMMENDING THE SERVICE OF GARY JOHNSON TO THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**HON. HEATH SHULER**

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, August 16, 2011*

Mr. SHULER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Gary Johnson who recently retired from the National Park Service with 36 years of outstanding service to our mountain community.

After four years of service to our country in the U.S. Air Force, Mr. Johnson took a summer job in 1975 with the National Park Service with the Blue Ridge Parkway in Asheville, North Carolina. One year later, he graduated from the landscape architecture program at Virginia Tech with a BLA degree and was rehired by the Parkway. In addition to working with the Blue Ridge Parkway, Mr. Johnson has worked on planning and construction projects in other parks such as Natchez Trace Parkway, Big Bend National Park and Guilford Courthouse. Mr. Johnson has also written and lectured on the subjects of scenery conservation, cultural landscape management, historical parkway preservation, goal-driven and strategic planning and tourism planning.

Mr. Johnson brought unmatched passion and expertise during his many years as a skilled planner with the Blue Ridge Parkway. Mr. Johnson authored the Guidebook for the Blue Ridge Parkway Scenery Conservation System that outlined his plan to preserve the Parkway. He also developed the Blue Ridge Parkway's project management and computerized tracking system. The system proved to be so effective that it was adopted by the National Park Service. On March 17, 2011, Mr. Johnson was awarded one of the four Appleman-Judd-Lewis Awards for Excellence in Cultural Resource Management from the National Park Service Director.

Mr. Johnson has shown extraordinary dedication to our community and has had an indelible impact on the Blue Ridge Parkway. The service that Mr. Johnson has contributed to Western North Carolina and the National Park System is truly inspiring and I am proud to represent him. I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the exceptional career and service of Mr. Gary Johnson.