

this House, led by Congresswoman ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, a Republican from Florida, and LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD, a Democrat from California, instead of going through the provisions of that bill that could bring relief for 800,000 young people who otherwise would be potentially deported—they are larger than any of the congressional districts that any one of us may represent in this House. Instead of looking at the provisions of that, rolling up our sleeves and coming here this week to discuss how we bring relief to 800,000 young people who are working, going to school, and are members of our Armed Forces, he chose to engage in distraction.

Instead of looking at a real humanitarian crisis about to ensue in Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and some of our neighboring countries of Barbuda, Dominica, the Dominican Republic, and the Caribbean, as well as the challenges of Florida and Houston, instead of taking a look at a potential humanitarian crisis that may ensue in Puerto Rico and bringing about relief for those 3.5 million Americans, he chose to look the other way.

We remember how a President hovered in his airplane over New Orleans and Louisiana as people drowned and died without getting the help they needed. This could be our modern-day Katrina, and yet our President chose to look the other way.

□ 1645

He could have engaged in bringing about results. Today, I join Congresswoman NYDIA VELÁZQUEZ and Congressman ADAM SMITH in signing on to a letter asking the Department of Defense to step it up in Puerto Rico.

We ask for a senior general to be appointed to work with FEMA to manage the crisis in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands the same way it was done for Katrina. We ask for Department of Defense engineers and aviation assets to be deployed to Puerto Rico, as many of the municipalities up in the mountains are still cut off from the general population and have not been heard of for nearly a week.

We ask for technicians and experts to bring restoration of power and to work with telecommunications on the island because people are still disconnected from government, from hospitals, from the police department. There is no cell service; there is no energy on the island; and we ask for that as well.

We ask, in this letter, for the USNS Comfort, an offshore medical treatment facility, to be deployed to the island of Puerto Rico. Puerto Rico only has two hospitals that have been able to restore power, yet the President looked this weekend the other way.

For three major pieces and issues that confront the American people: healthcare, as it pertains to close to maybe 30 million people that may lose their services if this failed attempt to repeal and replace ObamaCare goes through; DACA, impacting over close

to a million young people who go to school, who work, who are part of our future economic recovery, who are members of the Armed Forces; and the humanitarian crisis, a new-day Katrina that is about to ensue in Puerto Rico—for those three issues of great importance to America, our President looked the other way.

He chose to engage in tweets; he chose to insult our local athletes in an un-Presidential manner; he chose to turn his back on the American people.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. ESPAILLAT very much for bringing to our attention the possibilities.

The U.S. military is awesome. I am very thankful that ADAM SMITH, the ranking member of the House Armed Services Committee, together with you and other colleagues, have called upon the President to deploy to Puerto Rico a military task force. The military is the most organized of all of our Federal organizations. They have the ability, they have the resources, and they certainly have the capability of addressing at least the immediate needs of Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, and even other islands that have been devastated in the Caribbean.

Ultimately, the task falls to those of us who are elected to represent the American people in the office of the Presidency, the House of Representatives, or in the Senate. And the questions we must ask ourselves: Are we meeting our responsibilities; are we deploying the resources of this Nation to assist in these devastated communities; are we providing the funding necessary to carry out these tasks; or are we engaged in legislation that would create a healthcare disaster on top of the natural disasters?

Well, thankfully, it appears as though four Senators have stopped a Republican effort in the Senate that is a repetition of an effort made here in the House of Representatives months ago, to stop the creation of a healthcare crisis in America.

There is more out there that will be brought forward. Tomorrow, my colleagues on the Republican side will meet to discuss tax reform. By all appearances, it appears that tax reform is likely to turn out—at least their version of it, is likely to turn out to be serious tax cuts for the superwealthy and for corporations with a hope and a prayer some day that it might create jobs.

There is precious little economic history to indicate that that would happen, but there is a lot of economic history and studies that indicate you continue to cut taxes for the superwealthy and we will have even a more serious inequality of wealth in the United States. That is a discussion for tomorrow and beyond.

Today, now, the discussion must focus on our American citizens who are not in harm's way, they are being harmed.

My plea to my colleagues here is to put aside these other issues, to focus

the great power and empathy of the American people on meeting the needs of our American citizens in Houston, Florida, the Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, and then to reach out beyond to others who have been hurt, wherever they may be—Mexico City, other islands in the Caribbean.

Finally, a plea to our President. Mr. Speaker, a plea to our President: Tone it down. This is not a schoolyard for bombast and for belligerent talk. This is extraordinarily serious. It has been said by people who have followed these issues over the decades that we are closer to nuclear war now than we have been since the Cuban Missile Crisis.

Mr. President, Mr. Speaker, please tone it down. Speak softly; tweet softly; don't worry about our big stick that we have. Go to the negotiation table; be humble; be firm; no nukes on the Caribbean peninsula. We can do that. We can do it.

This is my prayer.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the President.

HURRICANES' DESTRUCTION AND COST

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. WEBER) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, in all my years, I have seen a lot of storms, a lot of hurricanes, a lot of floods, a lot of tropical depressions, a lot of rains in Texas. We have a whole variety of weather in Texas and a lot of just about every calamity weather-wise you can think of. I have seen nothing come close to Hurricane Harvey. In 24 hours, we went from Tropical Storm Harvey to Category 4 Hurricane Harvey.

As with most hurricanes, there was no rhyme or reason for the destruction and the ensuing devastation. Harvey's bands of rains sat on southeast Texas with a vengeance and for days on end, and the situation turned quickly from bad to worse.

Mr. Speaker, we got 51 to 53 inches of rain in 3 to 4 days. That part of Texas' annual rainfall is about 53 inches a year. We got a whole year's worth of rainfall in under a week's time. Our great first responders, our volunteers, risked their lives time and time again to save others.

When the Nation saw that we needed help, the boats and the people just kept coming. We got the Cajun Navy from Louisiana; 100 guys with their own boats came to help us. They did things we didn't think were possible, so I coined a new phrase, "Cajuneering." They came in and really helped us. We saw neighbors and strangers alike step up to help each other. That is the Texas way.

When the Nation saw that we needed help, people came pouring in. More

than that, it is not just the Texas way, it is the American way. No matter our creed, our color, our religion or background, we are all united and we work together. Harvey may have brought the downpour, but Texans and Americans brought the outpour.

Texas 14 is arguably ground zero for flooding and devastation. My district, from Brazoria County to Jefferson County, the enormity and the severity of Harvey, sadly, is on full display.

Entire neighborhoods were underwater. How do you recover from that? Your family and your house is underwater, your cars are underwater, your furniture, and, sadly, even some of your most prized and precious heirlooms, family photos and pictures and albums, how do you overcome that?

Well, I will tell you, by working together. Everyone back home in our great State knows someone who needs help, and everyone back home is doing their part to help that person in need.

In all the devastation and destruction, the hope and determination shared among Texans was absolutely remarkable. Harvey may have deluged our State with rain and with water, but he certainly did not dampen our spirit.

One month ago today, Harvey made landfall between Port Aransas and Port O'Connor, the eye of the hurricane. A few days later, Harvey swung back into the Gulf and made landfall just west of Cameron, Louisiana. We literally had a 3-day weather event. Harvey came on shore there by Rockport-Corpus Christi. We got the bands of rain coming up in the hurricane as he came ashore. He then went up north and stayed around for a day or two dumping rain on all of our rivers and streams upstream from us and our watersheds. Then he came back down to southeast Texas, down on the coast, and he worked right over, as I said, in Louisiana. Then after Harvey came Hurricane Irma; after Irma came Jose; and after Jose came Maria. It has been a historic time.

As of Sunday, September 24—let this sink in—817,758 people are registered for disaster assistance. FEMA has distributed \$502.6 million in housing assistance and \$160.2 million in other assistance. In the one month since Harvey, the first of a series of hurricanes, FEMA has completed 239,612 inspections. Almost 22,000 people are living in hotels because they have no home to return to. That number doesn't even include those who are staying with family and friends.

The Small Business Administration has approved \$509.4 million. Homeowners have received, to date, \$467.3 million in loans. Businesses have received \$42 million in loans. Earlier this month, we passed out of this Chamber, with overwhelming bipartisan support, a \$15 billion relief bill. Two or three more of those bills, at a minimum, are expected.

Folks, the monetary damages are adding up to over \$150 billion, with a "B."

□ 1700

There are five business recovery centers in Texas. There are 41 disaster recovery centers. Over 30-something Texas counties were named in the disaster declaration.

Folks, these are just numbers. They are mind-boggling. You can see the pictures here beside me. Those numbers don't really tell the whole story. Let me tell you: behind those numbers are people; behind those numbers are families; behind those numbers are homes, livelihoods, and businesses. The lives of our great Texans are behind those numbers. Our people are hurting, but they will not let a hurricane keep them down.

Wrapped up in all of the devastation is a bunch of heroes and first responders. I have already talked about the Cajun Navy. I can talk about the States that sent firefighters and first responders from all over this great country of ours. So behind the devastation is a bunch of American heroes. Behind that devastation is a bunch of love, people doing things for others that just makes your heart feel good. Behind that devastation is a bunch of hope that we really are one Nation under God, with liberty and justice and help and mercy for all. Behind that devastation is a bunch of Americans.

Hurricane Harvey reminded us of our deepest, truest American values. United we can accomplish just about anything.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to open up the floor for some of my colleagues. As I said earlier, our great 14th Congressional District is, arguably, ground zero for flooding and devastation, but I have a lot more colleagues here on the floor with us that all have a story to tell.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. MCCAUL), the distinguished chairman of the House Committee on Homeland Security. Chairman MCCAUL has worked closely with FEMA and many of our first responders. His district saw quite a bit of water as well, and I appreciate his direct involvement and his willingness to be there.

Mr. MCCAUL. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman WEBER for holding this Special Order and his leadership on this issue. My condolences to the people in his district. I know Beaumont, particularly, was hit the hardest. We were hit hard all around, but I know Beaumont was hit very hard. That is why we need to pass the supplemental in October, to help the great people in the great State of Texas.

I am chairman of the Homeland Security Committee. One of my responsibilities is overseeing the response efforts of FEMA—Federal, State, and local—to see is this working or not. I have seen what happened in Katrina and Rita and other disasters. I can tell you that this was the most impressive response effort Federal, State, and local.

I commend the President for signing an advanced disaster declaration at the

request of my Governor, Governor Abbott, who enabled us to mobilize in advance and preposition assets to have, I think, one of the best responses I have seen in one of the most tragic storms that Texas has ever weathered.

By way of history, personally, my grandfather survived the 1900 Galveston hurricane. They rescued him from a treetop. He was 8 years old. Sadly, 10,000 people were killed in that tragic event.

In this case, we saved almost 20,000 lives, thanks to the good work of the people in this picture that I had the great privilege to see right after the storm hit. It was one of the most compassionate humanitarian responses I think I have ever witnessed.

This particular photo, I think, really captured what Houston looked like at the time—the first floor under water. It almost looks like the Iwo Jima of Harvey. You have DPS—Department of Public Safety—the American flag, a marine, Coast Guard, and National Guard. These people came together.

But do you know who else came together?

You talked about the Cajun Navy, who came together from Louisiana to help Texans. A lot of Texans saved Texans in this storm. But to see that process was really a shining light in a very dark time.

There are so many untold stories of heroic bravery that took place. I call it Operation Dunkirk. Many of us know or read about that battle, or many of us have seen the movie, of all of the private boats that came out to save the British in that battle.

We saw hundreds of private boats coming out, working in unison with Federal, State, and local responders, saving lives. Again, there were 20,000 lives saved in the process.

Katy High School—Katy is in my district—became the forward operating base for the Texas Guard, the Active Duty servicemembers, and all of the first responders. This is where they launched their efforts to the Beaumont area after they took care of all of the crises and the flooding in the Houston area. I saw these guys going out in boats and helicopters and saving lives. This is the best side of mankind in one of the darkest chapters that our State has really seen. I had an opportunity to bring Speaker RYAN and Chairman SHUSTER of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee down to look at this. A remarkable story in, again, a really awful time, but we saw the resiliency of Texans helping other Texans.

But I also want to credit the entire Nation for responding in a very compassionate way. I went to the shelters and the churches and I saw all of the food coming in, and people calling me from other States asking: What can I do to help?

The firefighters I saw coming from Nebraska, Pennsylvania, and Ohio were all converging on the State. Indeed, the eyes of the Nation were on the State of Texas during this devastating hurricane that continued to rain for days.

Lastly, I do want to talk about what we can do moving forward. This is a 1940 map flood control plan that was built by the Civilian Conservation Corps under President Roosevelt, back in the forties. And you see here the Addicks Reservoir and Barker Reservoir that were built in the 1940s. This is the Buffalo Bayou, and this is downtown Houston.

But they had another plan at the time, and it was on Cypress Creek. That is in my district. In Katy is where these guys were. This is where it all started. This is the third flood in 2 years in this area, all starting at Cypress Creek. This is all developed now. It is not rice fields anymore. It was a watershed event into these reservoirs that then had a controlled release at 1 in the morning into these neighborhoods below, flooding the Buffalo Bayou, and then flooding Houston.

Mr. Speaker, as we look at the supplemental and other projects, this is the prevention that I think we can be doing in Congress that makes a lot of sense to provide infrastructure at key points to stop this flooding from ever happening again.

I know, as Texans, we are all going to come together as a delegation. I know this entire Congress would come together to not only save lives, as we did, and help with FEMA assistance to get people back up on their feet, but then do smart projects like this one to stop this kind of flooding from ever happening again. That is smart prevention that, at the end of the day, is going to save money and save human lives in the process.

In closing, I just want to say that I have never been prouder to call myself a Texan. I have seen a lot. It is my seventh term. Judge POE and I came in together, and we have seen a lot in the seven terms we have been in Congress. I have never seen our State rally like this at a time of need, and the Nation rallying behind the State of Texas. I want to thank all of those who made it possible in our great State, and also in our great country, the United States of America.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman MCCAUL for his remarks. I certainly appreciate him and his involvement.

My next friend, BETO O'ROURKE, from across the aisle, has seen plenty of Texas action here. Earlier this year, he had a bipartisan trip with WILL HURD. On Facebook, we got to watch that and participate in that. I thank him for doing that. That was a great event. And even though his district may not have seen any water as a result of Harvey—in fact, we would have loved to send him some to El Paso, quite frankly—he is a Texan, he gets it, and he has been there working with us every step of the way.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. O'ROURKE), my good friend.

Mr. O'ROURKE. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Congressman WEBER for

bringing us today. I also want to extend my condolences for the loss of life and the devastation that was visited on the communities that he represents. I know that he is doing his best to unite those communities in every way possible to ensure that they get back on their feet, they rebuild, and are bigger and better than ever. Party difference doesn't mean anything at this moment. It is all of us as Texans. I join Chairman MCCAUL in agreeing that we cannot have a better moment as a State. I am grateful to him for bringing us all together today.

As he said, I have really had an opportunity to spend some time traveling Texas, and especially southeast Texas, starting around the time that Harvey hit. I will tell you, Mr. Speaker, that in Austin, Texas, on the 25th of August, I was there as the first evacuees were leaving southeast Texas, coming from Victoria and Corpus Christi and other places that were under mandatory evacuation orders. They were arriving at Red Cross shelters that were staffed both by the professionals and the volunteers.

I was told by the head of Red Cross in Austin that they had never seen a greater turnout of volunteers on the first day of a disaster. In fact, I met a young man named Luis Zamora, who at the time was a rising junior at Tarleton State University and a member of the National Guard, and who was so disappointed that his colleagues in the Guard were called up, but he was not. He drove himself down to the Red Cross headquarters so that he could sign up, volunteer, and help staff one of these shelters, welcome those who were fleeing this storm, and help try to make their lives a little bit better.

It reminded me of visiting some of the shelters in San Antonio, where I had a chance to see their great Mayor Ron Nirenberg in action personally welcoming people coming from other parts of the State. To every one of them, his message was: We are so glad you are here. Stay as long as you need to. We are going to make things better for you. You focus on you. We will do our best to take care of you.

That really was the message we heard everywhere that we went.

When we found ourselves in Victoria helping to transport some medical supplies for two of those hospitals, we met an extraordinary young woman named Lisa Price, who had been up for the last 72 hours, as many of the people working in those hospitals were, trying to coordinate care for those in need, coordinate the evacuation of those who were no longer able to be cared for in hospitals that only had backup generator power and did not have reliable water and could not keep those medicines and vaccines chilled.

There were volunteer ambulance corps from all over the State of Texas who had driven down to Victoria to help transport these patients out. Lisa and others were helping to coordinate that. Her husband, Jason, a Depart-

ment of Public Safety Trooper was out on those roads that had no streetlights, that had no working traffic signals, trying to ensure the safety of his fellow Texans. Two extraordinary heroes who exemplify the way that Texas met this challenge.

I certainly spent some time in Houston, where we heard tale of all of the first responders, certainly folks who were working under the great fire chief there, Chief Pena. But also first responders who came from across the State. El Paso sent folks from the El Paso Police Department and the El Paso Fire Department. They made over 100 rescues not just in the Houston area, but also in the greater Beaumont area, including rescuing a 1-month-old child from chest-high waters. Again, we saw that both from first responders and everyday citizens who risked their own lives to save the lives of fellow Texans.

We were in a parking lot in Victoria, where we were picking up supplies to take to Rockport. We knew, however, that Rockport was under a mandatory curfew, enforced by DPS. So I approached two DPS cruisers that were in the parking lot at Walmart, where we were going in to buy ice and water and diapers and other supplies that they might need in Rockport. I wanted to ask these two DPS officers if they could help us to get into Rockport under the curfew. As they were rolling down their window and I began to introduce myself, they said: I know exactly who you are. You are BETO O'ROURKE. We are from El Paso. We were one of the first volunteers from the Department of Public Safety in El Paso to come out to Victoria, and we have been working this community, communities like Cuero, Port Lavaca, Rockport, and other places.

□ 1715

They wanted to be where the action was. They wanted to be out there saving lives. And it made me so extraordinarily proud of El Paso and Texas once again. It is like the 90 soldiers from Fort Bliss from one of the aviation brigades who were in southeast Texas as well trying to facilitate the rescue of their fellow Texans, being where the need was at its moment of greatest importance, again, making us so proud.

Congressman WEBER, I will conclude by telling you that, as we came in to Rockport and were able to successfully get in under curfew to make our delivery, we were blown away and inspired by the volunteer fire department, 20 people strong, 8 of whom had lost their homes and literally everything in their homes but had not lost a minute's service to their fellow community out of that Rockport fire station.

They were living in the fire station because they had nowhere else to live. They were responding to triple or quadruple the service calls. The rains had now ended. The fires had begun. There was some question about the viability

of those structures, and they wanted to be there to save lives.

That fire chief, Steve Sims, and the men and women who serve under him are the absolute best of us as Texans. I am so glad that you and every one of our colleagues from Texas, Republican or Democrat, House Member or Senator, are focused on making Chief Sims, the members of that fire department, and every Texan affected by Harvey whole again. We have got to use their inspiration and their example to do the important work that is here before us.

So I thank you once again for bringing us together, allowing me to join you and work with you and our colleagues to make sure that Texans fully recover from Hurricane Harvey bigger and better than ever. Thank you.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Thank you, Congressman O'ROURKE. And, by the way, happy birthday.

Mr. O'ROURKE. Thank you. I cannot think of a better way to spend it than to be here with you.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. At this time, I recognize my good friend, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BABIN).

Mr. BABIN. Thank you very much for yielding. I would like to thank my colleague, RANDY WEBER, my neighbor. I represent the 36th District in Texas and he represents the 14th, and he also represents my hometown of Beaumont, Texas, for this Special Order. I really appreciate that.

It was about a month ago that Hurricane Harvey began wreaking havoc on southeast Texas, dumping record amounts of rainfall across our region, upending the lives of thousands of families, businesses, and communities. Across our congressional district, the 36th District of Texas, we saw anywhere between 20 and 50 inches of rain, setting a new record for the United States. In fact, unofficially, ranchers in Liberty County, which I also represent, measured over 60 inches of rain.

Our entire district, from Houston to the Louisiana border, turned into, essentially, one gigantic lake, as thousands of homes that had never flooded before succumbed to Harvey's floodwaters. The impact was devastating and widespread.

No one was spared. People from all walks of life and socioeconomic situations, with the majority never having been displaced before, were baffled and desperate in their situations.

Each of the nine counties that I have the privilege of representing have been declared Federal disaster areas. The devastation is simply overwhelming, and the vast lake now is a vast debris field. But in the midst of this devastation, there were, and still continue to be, incredible stories of goodness. Let me share just a few examples.

In Orange, Texas, a young couple canceled their wedding to help their friends and neighbors clean up and begin the process of rebuilding. These newlyweds have now welcomed nearly a dozen family members into their non-flooded home.

A volunteer fire department in Buna, Texas, became a big staging area, like many, many schools and volunteer fire departments all across this area.

In Cleveland, a constable organized a flotilla of boats to deliver shelter and supplies.

Dozens and dozens of churches immediately marshaled their congregations and good Christian people for food, supplies, and shelters to be delivered.

In Deer Park, church members sprang into action immediately and began cooking and sharing meals with evacuees from Houston.

In Silsbee, a church opened a community shelter after the county's only other shelter was cut off by floodwaters.

In Rose City, a really good friend and neighbor rescued nearly everyone in his entire neighborhood on his airboat, even as his own home was flooded. His name was Dennis Landry.

Since the flood, neighbors have organized mucking crews, where they help neighbors remove furniture, appliances, Sheetrock, carpets from one another's flooded homes.

This has happened all across the Texas Gulf Coast, and the stories go on and on: neighbors helping neighbors, communities helping communities, strangers helping strangers. Churches, first responders, private citizens, businesses, people from out of State all around our district are helping one another. But that is what we do in east Texas. When times get tough, we pull together and we get to work.

No one waits around to be told what to do. We are people of action, and we act when we see a need. And, quite frankly, this is what makes east Texas so special. Our communities are strong. And through our faith in God, we take care of one another in times of need regardless of our own means. It is our shared value for our fellow man that makes the difference.

In that same east Texas spirit, our office has been doing everything possible that we can do to help. From the very start, we have been working overtime to help people get back on their feet. We are blessed with a professional and dedicated staff that is second to none. And despite some of our own staff being flooded themselves, we have worked tirelessly to help our east Texas neighbors and friends get the information and resources they need to recover and build.

We are extremely grateful for their service, and I would like to personally recognize some of our staff: Lanie Brown, Lauren Jones, Rachel Iglesias, Sarah Blacksher, Beverly Ferguson, Will Carter, Jeannie Kranz, Joyce Morgan, Kelly Waterman, Beth Barber, Sarah Reese, Steve Janushkowsky, Lauren Ziegler.

These individuals have spent the past month doing everything they can to help the people of District 36. These are often the unsung heroes who go the extra mile each and every day, and lately, on weekends and evenings, to

serve the needs of our constituents. It has not gone unnoticed and is part of the incredible good that has come out of a tragic hurricane. We are extremely proud and very grateful to them and their families and everyone who has pitched in.

I would also like to recognize our friends from Louisiana, and specifically my colleague, Congressman GARRET GRAVES, and his staff, Paul Sawyer and David Cavell.

Everywhere we went, we saw folks from Louisiana coming over and helping in the recovery, and we would tell them: Thank you so much. And we said: This is payback because of Katrina.

Countless churches and individuals and neighbors from our neighboring State of Louisiana came out to help. Thank God for the Cajun Airlift, the Cajun Navy, the Cajun Special Forces, and the Cajun Gravy.

And lastly, I would like to thank our first responders. The death toll would have been much higher if it had not been for these brave men and women. And for our game wardens, our police departments, our DPS officers, sheriff's deputies, all the way to our U.S. Coast Guard and Texas and other States' National Guardsmen, we thank you for everything that you did, and we remember those who gave their lives in the line of service.

As we push forward, we have a long road ahead. People are still very much in need of assistance and resources as they work to put their lives back together. In fact, the fact that over 800 folks showed up for our Disaster Recovery Town Hall Meetings over the past several days demonstrates that there are still many in need.

Last Thursday night in Lumberton, Texas, we had over 200 people come out. In Orange, Texas, we saw that 77 percent of all homes in that county were impacted. We had over 500 people come out to meet with FEMA, State officials, and my staff on a Friday night, and that is big, because that is football night in Texas.

It is our goal to help folks cut through the bureaucracy and the red tape to get the answers and help that they need. We have been spreading staff out across our nine counties, setting up mobile offices to provide constituents with one-on-one assistance in applying for help and ensuring they have access to a computer or to complete the application. And this is not unusual. My colleagues and all of the other counties, up to 38 counties, I believe, were involved in this thing and have been doing the exact same thing.

This will be a long road to our recovery, but together, we will recover, and we will rebuild and come back stronger than ever.

Congressman WEBER, I want to thank you, and God bless.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. I thank you, Dr. BABIN. The enormity of this storm and the debt of gratitude that we owe our first responders cannot be overstated.

My good friend, Judge TED POE, saw plenty of it up in his district, but he took it in stride, as he always does with any challenge because he is a Texan and he is a fighter. And, Judge, that is just the way it is.

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

Mr. POE of Texas. I thank the gentleman for yielding. I appreciate it, Congressman WEBER, for allowing us to talk a little bit about Hurricane Harvey and what folks did down in the Texas area.

While it was still raining hard, I get a phone call, and I looked at the area code on my cell phone and I said: I think that is Massachusetts.

And sure enough, it was Representative KENNEDY from Boston, Massachusetts, calling me saying he would do whatever he could to get Bostonian's first responders down to Texas to help out. And that is what happened, as has already been mentioned by all of my colleagues tonight: both sides of Members of Congress working on this issue to help in Harvey. BETO O'ROURKE is from El Paso. You are from Beaumont.

People may not realize that there is a sign in Beaumont. I used to represent Beaumont, as you know. As you are driving in from Louisiana, there is a sign that says: El Paso, Texas, 876 miles away.

That is how far it is from Beaumont to El Paso, and yet BETO O'ROURKE made his way all the way to the Houston-Galveston area to help out as well. The whole State helped with what was taking place.

The magnitude of the devastation—not just the weather, but the devastation—if you take the State of New Jersey and turn it on its side and set it down on the Gulf Coast, that is how much devastation there was in the State of Texas. That was the area that was hit where disaster occurred. They got rain as far as Dallas and San Antonio, and, of course, we know that it went all the way up to Kentucky a thousand miles away. Still, they were getting rain days later.

I want to talk about one of the people involved in the rescue. Dr. BABIN talked about a lot of folks who helped out. Here is another guy who helped out. You have probably never heard of him: Steven Perez, Houston police officer, 34-year veteran of the Houston Police Department, married, two kids. The rains are coming down. It is in the middle of the night. It is his time to go on shift at the Houston Police Department. His wife is saying: Don't go; it is too bad. And he said: I am going to work. It is my duty.

And he did. He left home. He couldn't get to the downtown Houston Police Department, so he is headed in a different direction, my understanding is, up to Kingwood, where I represent—that is about 25 miles away from downtown Houston—where he was going to do what he could to help folks out there. He took a bad turn, got under an underpass, and his patrol car was sub-

merged and he drowned. He was out doing what he wanted to do: to protect and serve.

He is a symbol of all the first responders, of all the badges that they wear from all over the country who came down there to do their duty, to help people in need. We regret his loss. We are with his family and our prayers are with his family, his wife and his two kids, for their future.

At his funeral, of course, in Houston that I had the opportunity to attend, there were a lot of police officers from all over the country showing their respects to another first responder.

With this hurricane that came through the Houston area, I have kind of an unusual district, so I got hit several places. People got flooded.

Michael McCall showed, earlier, a map of the Houston area, that there are two reservoirs that are supposed to protect the city from flooding. Water filled up those reservoirs, and people whom I represent are on the downstream of that reservoir. They got flooded when water came over it.

□ 1730

But I also represent people upstream, and they got flooded because the reservoir overflowed up in the northwestern direction. People also got flooded in the middle of the night after they thought the storm was over with because Conroe—and, Mr. Speaker, I know you don't know where that is, but it is just northwest of Houston. They have a lake up in Conroe. They started letting water out of Lake Conroe because it was too full. Water came rushing down the San Jacinto River into Humble, Texas, and Kingwood, Cypress Creek. All that overflowed, and people got flooded in all of that area as well—thousands of people. Their homes are devastated. In fact, two of those people who have lost their home, they are still staying with us, friends of ours. We do take care of each other.

One thing that I want to mention is we need to get a regional plan to prevent these disasters in the future. It would be a whole lot cheaper, in fact, to prevent these floods than try to continue to pay for the damage of these floods. No question about it, we have to do recovery now for those people who have lost everything they have, do what we can here in Congress, and we are going to do that in a bipartisan way. But we need to have a plan for the future as well.

I have introduced legislation for the Corps of Engineers to come up with, in 90 days of our legislation being signed by the President, to evaluate all the conditions in the flood plain area that was flooded and come up with a long-term plan, whether it is building one more reservoir, two more reservoirs, making the ones that we have bigger, desilting the channel to Buffalo Bayou, San Jacinto River, whatever it is. We need to come as a united area from Mr. WEBER's district all the way up to Mr. MCCAUL's district and everybody in be-

tween on what we are going to do to solve the long-term flooding problem.

Because, you see, September comes around every September. Mr. MCCAUL talked about the flood of 1900. That happened in September, almost to the same day. Here this flood happened at the end of August, near the beginning of September.

I hope we can do that. I think that we can, and I do want to reiterate what has been said about people who just helped each other. They didn't know each other. It wasn't just neighbors helping neighbors. It was people who didn't know each other. Some of them who were flooded out themselves were doing everything they could to help other people.

There were a lot of bass boats. They weren't all from Louisiana. There were a lot from Louisiana, but I think it is every young boy's dream in Texas to own two things: a pickup truck and a bass boat. You saw all of those pickup trucks and bass boats on the road and in the water—because a lot of them are pretty high—rescuing people. People they did not know, Mr. Speaker. They were just looking to help other individuals. It is remarkable.

I have been through a lot of hurricanes. I grew up in the Houston area. I remember Hurricane Carla in 1961, before most of you all were even around. We have had a lot of hurricanes since then. Nothing like Harvey. It was the granddaddy of all of them. It hammered the Houston area, but we are using this as an opportunity to fix things because this Hurricane is not going to defeat the spirit of Texans. It is not. We will resolve to overcome whatever the difficulties are now and to fix things in the future so that we can have a response when the rains of September come.

The rains have stopped, the flood waters have gone down, the rainbow is out, the kids are playing in the parks again, but we are still at work solving the problem of what took place and moving on because, as I said, Harvey will not defeat the Texas spirit. And that is just the way it is.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank Judge POE. He is exactly correct. Harvey cannot dampen our spirit or those of our neighbors and all of our first responders, those who came and helped.

Texas saw the first of four hurricanes this month. Think about that. Puerto Rico has seen the last two hurricanes. Maria did a number on the island. They are in need of so many things, but one thing is certain that they are not in need of: they have a leader here in Washington, D.C. She has got their back, and I am proud to yield to my good friend, Congresswoman JENNIFER GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN.

Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN of Puerto Rico. Thank you, Mr. WEBER, for allowing me to speak in these Special Orders, and actually speaking about hurricanes.

Mr. Speaker and Members, last week, Hurricane Maria hit Puerto Rico, and

it is by far the worst hurricane to do so in the last century. It came at a time when Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands and most of the Caribbean were beginning to recover from the impact of Hurricane Irma just 10 days earlier.

Keep in mind, also, that even before the winds and waves of Irma and Maria began to lash at the shores, Puerto Rico was already in a dire economic shape. We are still engaged in life-saving operations, searching for and helping people who are in the greatest danger.

Maria snapped the island's communication towers, and gathering information from many communities has been nearly impossible at this time, especially in the rural center of the island, where the winds were ferocious and landslides have occurred.

This hurricane has been a disaster of unprecedented proportions. The images that you have been seeing on TV are dramatic but don't even begin to tell the magnitude of this catastrophe and the human suffering that you can only truly experience by being on the ground. In every way, Maria is on the same level of Hurricanes Katrina, Sandy, Harvey, but with one major difference: Puerto Rico is an island, which makes it almost impossible to get aid and disaster relief resources in, as they can only come by sea or air. The people are basically stuck there with no place to go.

Currently, Puerto Rico's electric grid is completely down. Roads and bridges have been washed away, leaving many communities without communication. A crucial dam has burst, forcing the evacuation of thousands of people. Hospitals are crippled and operating on power generators, but the logistics of transporting the diesel needed to run them is extremely difficult. Thousands of homes, buildings, and businesses have been destroyed. Water and food are in short supply. People are waiting in line for up to 6 hours just to purchase \$20 worth of gasoline. Commercial flights to and from the island are almost nonexistent, with thousands of people on airline wait-lists just to leave. Most banks cannot operate, and people don't have easy access to cash, which they need desperately because credit cards are not being used on the island because we don't have power.

Maria flattened 80 percent of the island's agriculture, and Puerto Rico's tourism industry has been crushed. For most of the island's residents, the hurricane can best be described as apocalyptic. Congress must approve an aid package that is proportional with the level of devastation. We need tangible relief that addresses the island's immediate needs. Without help, there will be a massive exodus to the U.S. mainland, and the ongoing humanitarian crisis will only get worse.

The residents of Puerto Rico are American citizens. They are not different from every person sitting in this Chamber. But unlike everyone else, Congress has 100 percent control over

the land where we live. This is a job for the Federal Government, particularly this Congress, to authorize and appropriate the money needed to rebuild the island. This is a dire time for the island, and, therefore, our Nation. The U.S. has an abiding national interest in the recovery and prosperity of Puerto Rico and its 3.4 million U.S. citizens who are facing very tough economic times, even before this latest blow.

I have heard from many of you, many of my colleagues, even the Vice President today, and I am deeply grateful for all the prayers and support.

I also want to thank the Trump administration for their unwavering collaboration with the Puerto Rico National Guard. More than 10,000 people were deployed helping the island to restore the power grid. It will take more than 6 months to get power on the island again.

I hope this House can keep us in your prayers, but also to approve the package that is going to be needed in October, and I know we will respond. That was the claim that President Trump made today, and the Vice President. I was just in a meeting with them. I want to thank the Speaker of the House for his leadership allowing the waiver to the cost sharing of FEMA on the island.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congresswoman GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN for her remarks.

My good friend from the Southwest, BLAKE FARENTHOLD, is going to come and address us. Blake represents the area where Harvey actually made landfall and brought Category 4 winds and storm surges. As Congressman FARENTHOLD knows, I understand the devastation that that brings. My heart goes out to them, and, Blake, please come share with us.

Mr. FARENTHOLD. Mr. Speaker, I am here to talk a couple minutes about the best and the worst that I saw during Hurricane Harvey in the 27th District of Texas that I represent.

The worst was dished out by nature and high winds. The best was the spirit of the Texans who rose to the challenge. It was neighbor helping neighbor, friend helping friend, and stranger helping stranger.

I live in Corpus Christi. It is a relatively large community of almost 400,000 in the metropolitan area. We were spared the brunt of Harvey. It missed us by about 20 miles. But just across the bay, communities like Port Aransas, Aransas Pass, Ingleside, Rockport, Refugio, Tivoli, and many more took horrible winds. Ninety-some-odd percent of the homes in the resort town of Port Aransas are uninhabitable right now. The brand new school in Refugio they just turned the keys over had the roof blown off and was severely water damaged, and it will be weeks before they are fully operational again in that school.

Rockport, with their beautiful oak trees, had limbs and branches strewn all over the streets, and houses' second

stories are gone. They looked great from the front, but then you would look in the back, and there would be no back.

In Port Aransas, boats having risen and moved inland, an oil drilling platform loose in the ship channel, completely changing the skyline of the city.

But rather than sitting around and moping and crying, Texans came together, helped each other clear the debris, and are slowly but surely getting on with their lives.

The recovery period is going to be tough, though. There is just so much debris. They are picking it up and stacking it at transfer stations, but it will be months before the process is finished. It is tough driving down the streets of the places you love seeing debris stacked, smelling the rotting mold. But you know it is going to come back.

We are struggling right now to find homes for people, places for them to stay. People have been staying with friends and relatives. FEMA has been helping out with hotels. I have to say, I am really impressed with the way local, State, and Federal folks are working hard to give people a hand up. We have had leaders from President Trump down to Members of Congress and all throughout the country come to see what is going on, and all have pledged their help. And it is going to be a Herculean effort to come back, but come back we will.

I suspect in a year, certainly in 2 years, towns like Rockport and Port Aransas, where many folks vacation, are going to have their doors open again and inviting people to come visit. In fact, the goal is to be ready by spring break of this year, and I suspect it is going to be worth visiting.

You need to help the businesses out, need to help the people out by not forgetting us, by keeping us in your prayers, and by supporting us here in Congress as we give the people the help they need to rebuild their lives. I want to thank my colleagues from Texas, my colleagues from the rest of the country, for the support. It is a shame that this has been such a tough season, but we are seeing not just the resilience of Texas but of all the American people with what is going on in Florida. And we are going to get reports, I think, of people helping people in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands and other areas so damaged by the storms we faced this year.

□ 1745

But I am proud to be an American. I am proud we are all helping out, and I look forward to continuing the recovery effort in all of the areas of this country that have been so devastated by natural disasters this year.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman FARENTHOLD for his comments. The 27th District of Texas is blessed to have him.

A little background: On Friday, August 25, some of the outer bands of Harvey were beginning to brush the Gulf

Coast. Texans do what we always do to prepare for a storm. We bought the essentials. We prepped the house. We tightened things up. We watched the news. We were as ready for the rain, we thought, as we would ever be.

But what happened, in my 64 years on God's green Earth, is unlike anything I have ever seen before like this. And I am no stranger to the area. I have lived in a 20-mile radius almost my entire life. I hope I have got a lot more to go yet.

We didn't see the sun for 4 days. Over 50 inches of rain, as reported by the weather forecasters on TV news, fell from the sky. Actually, it was about 60 inches in District 4—7, rather, in Jefferson County.

Evacuation orders, mandatory and voluntary, were posted. City after city started posting the notices. Roads were flooded. Some of them had hip-deep water, some of them more.

Now, I am a Texan, kind of like Judge POE said. Two things apply to me, especially apply to me as a Texan: number one, I am stubborn, and, number two, I have one of those pickup trucks he talked about; although, I don't have a half-ton truck. I have got a Ford F-350 4-wheel drive truck, and I can go through almost waist-deep water.

Starting Saturday, my bride and I began traveling Texas 14, checking on people. We went first to Brazoria County and met with their EOC, emergency operations center. We went to the Hitchcock shelter. We met with volunteers in those shelters. We met with people from the La Marque Police Department, all over, our first responders.

Our first responders worked endless hours and hours. I tell you what, it was heartwarming; and I tell you what, Mr. Speaker, you have never seen anything like that.

From Bay Area Church to the families from League City and Dickinson that sought shelter, we were there with them. At Victory Lakes, we saw much of the same thing in the school there at Victory Lakes and League City.

At Friendswood High School, I met with evacuees, responders, doctors who had come in from other States to be there to help. These are just a handful of the shelters that popped up. These shelters and the volunteers provided a dry place with warm food and warm, friendly smiles, understanding smiles, to hundreds of families in need. That is no exaggeration.

Homes that never came close to flooding were taking on water. Roads turned into rivers. Evacuations and rescues were happening everywhere you looked around.

Mr. Speaker, may I inquire how much time I have left?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FASO). The gentleman has 6½ minutes remaining.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. FARENTHOLD).

Mr. FARENTHOLD. Mr. Speaker, I did want to add that, though Texans are helping people and people are helping each other, volunteer organizations like Mr. WEBER is talking about, the Federal Government, also, is helping with FEMA and SBA loans.

Some people have gotten denial letters from FEMA. If you read them carefully, they are not always denial letters. You should follow up with FEMA. It may be you are just missing some paperwork.

All Congressmen have folks in their office, caseworkers or red tape cutters, who can help if you are having problems getting the help you need from FEMA or the SBA. We can't get them to bend or break the rules, but if you are having trouble communicating or you feel like you are not being treated right, please call your Member of Congress' office because we are here to help in more ways than just sitting up here in Washington making laws.

One of the best parts of the job is helping folks out on a one-on-one basis, and we are doing that throughout the district I represent, from Wharton, Bay City, Victoria, down to Corpus Christi, Rockport, and to all the other communities that I represent.

So I just want to make sure folks knew that your congressional office is a resource.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. I thank the gentleman for that.

You know, we were moving throughout our district, as I was describing. Folks, the sound of a helicopter will never be the same for us. We saw Coast Guard helicopters. We saw Army, Marine helicopters. The Marines arrived in Friendswood.

The sun made a brief appearance on Tuesday evening. I found myself on I-45 in Dickinson passing out water on the overpass there, where the water was about 4 feet deep in the intersection.

Things kept turning from bad to worse. I was honored to meet with EOC leaders from Brazoria, Dickinson, Galveston, and Beaumont.

On Tuesday, August 29, in Friendswood, Texas, the Marines arrived. Thank God for our great Marines.

On Friday, August 31, Beaumont lost water. My bride and I drove almost 7 hours, having to take back road after back road to deliver three pallets of bottled water. My good friend Dwight Sullivan and his wife, Misty, accompanied us with another pallet of water.

We got to Beaumont. I want to give Mayor Becky Ames of Beaumont a shout-out. She never wavered. She was a stalwart.

Will Crenshaw from Beaumont, Dragon Products, they got in gear and they put a workaround on the water system, laid temporary pipes, got them power, got pumps and got Beaumont some water.

That is just the short version of the first week of Harvey.

The sun finally started to shine again, but the water did not recede

overnight. We took many flyovers to assess the damage. President Trump came in. Senator CORNYN, Senator CRUZ, Speaker RYAN, and leader KEVIN MCCARTHY were among the many who visited.

Help came from far and wide: New York, Massachusetts, Minnesota. I could go down the list of State after State after State, all Americans, all wanting to help. And, of course, Louisiana and the Cajun Navy we talked about.

Between the Cajun Navy, our Texans, our fellow Americans, there were many countless heroes who haven't been named and many haven't even been thanked at all. So to all of them, I want to say thank you. Thank you from the bottom of my heart for the lives you have saved. I witnessed some of the evacuations. Thank you for your heroism. I just can't tell you enough, thank you on behalf of us.

We saw doctors send supplies. We saw hospitals pay for things that normally they would charge for. We saw cattle and horses wading through water. We saw businesses open up their doors and help people. We saw a mother and daughter who took hundreds of evacuees into a Texas City hotel for a home-cooked meal of spaghetti, salad, fresh fruit, and dessert.

You were heroes, Lakewood Church, who did open their doors and provided transportation for the congregants of Beth Yeshurun synagogue.

You heroes were the citizens who saw the incredible effort of your local officials, and you raised money for them to begin recovering for their own homes and their belongings.

The heroes were the young men, hoping to attend the Naval Academy one day, who jumped in that jon boat and went door to door to help.

You were the people who were scared to death in the face of disaster, and yet you put on a brave face and you waded in, unabashed.

You were the people who lost everything, and your first thought was: I need to get back to help my community.

You heroes were the first responders who worked around the clock. Beaumont, alone, received 12,022 911 calls. Let that sink in. That's one city, 12,000 911 calls.

Well, we are going to have more meetings. We are going to be meeting with city officials, State officials. We will be meeting with Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner, who, by the way, tomorrow is his birthday. We want to thank Mayor Sylvester Turner, County Judge Ed Emmett, County Judge Matt Sebesta, County Judge Mark Henry, all great heroes.

God bless our heroes. God bless Texas, our great Nation, and all of those who went beyond and above.

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

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3823, DISASTER TAX RELIEF AND AIRPORT AND AIRWAY EXTENSION ACT OF 2017, AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF MOTIONS TO SUSPEND THE RULES

Mr. SESSIONS (during the Special Order of Mr. WEBER of Texas), from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 115-333) on the resolution (H. Res. 538) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3823) to amend title 49, United States Code, to extend authorizations for the airport improvement program, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the funding and expenditure authority of the Airport and Airway Trust Fund, to provide disaster tax relief, and for other purposes, and providing for consideration of motions to suspend the rules, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

HONORING THE LIFE AND SERVICE OF DR. JAMES DURELL TUBERVILLE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. JOHNSON) for 30 minutes.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, it is with profound sadness that I rise today to recognize the life and dedicated service of one of the Lord's most humble and outstanding servants, Dr. James Durell Tuberville. He made it his life's work to help others during difficult times, and he was a beacon of light and a towering figure in the life of countless many people, including my own family. His lasting influence on our community cannot be expressed enough, and I am humbled to rise and pay tribute to his life today, his faithful stewardship, and his unwavering commitment to the people of our region in northwest Louisiana.

James Durell Tuberville was born on October 25, 1958, in Shreveport, Louisiana, and on Sunday, August 13, 2017, he left this world to be with our Lord.

After graduating from Southwood High School in Shreveport, Dr. Tuberville continued his education at Grawood Christian School and Southwestern Assemblies of God College. He majored in pastoral ministry at Southwestern University, and received a master of arts in counseling from Louisiana Tech University.

He did all things for the glory of God, Mr. Speaker, and he brought care and compassion to multitudes. Dr. Tuberville served his early ministry as a youth pastor in Luna and then in Natchitoches, Louisiana. He later served as pastor of the Bethel Assembly of God in Shreveport for more than 11 years, before becoming counselor on the pastoral staff at Shreveport Community Church and president of Personal Solutions, Inc.

He selflessly aided those suffering through some of the largest disasters of our lifetime, including the horrific earthquake in Haiti, the Oklahoma City bombing, and the great tragedy on September 11, 2001.

Known and loved by all, Dr. Tuberville also served selflessly as chaplain for the Caddo Parish Sheriff's Office, Caddo Fire District 3, and as national chaplain of the firefighters Brother's Keepers Motorcycle Club.

It is difficult to imagine our community without the leadership and the larger-than-life presence, always encouraging, of Dr. Tuberville. His legacy and example are an enduring lesson for all of us, and we are comforted to know he has been received by the Lord with that ultimate affirmation: "Well done, good and faithful servant."

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, it is a privilege to honor Dr. James Durell Tuberville today and to celebrate a life exceptionally well lived.

My wife, Kelly, and I extend our continued prayers and sincerest condolences to his wife and soulmate, Susan, and their two sons, Joshua Durell and Dustin Bruce, to the entire Tuberville family, and to all those whose lives were changed by this true giant of a man.

RECOGNIZING THE SERVICE AND ACHIEVEMENT OF MAJOR GENERAL JOANNE SHERIDAN

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a hero from my home State, Major General Joanne Sheridan, for her steadfast service to the safety and security of the people of the State of Louisiana in the Louisiana National Guard.

Five years ago, Major General Sheridan became the first female general in the Louisiana National Guard's history, and today I would like to commend her for raising the bar once again and becoming the first female two-star general in the history of our Louisiana National Guard.

Originally from Maine, Major General Sheridan moved to Leesville, Louisiana, when the Army stationed her father, Command Sergeant Major Joe S. Fernald, at Fort Polk. There, she attended Leesville High School, and she went on to earn her bachelor of arts degree in sociology at Northeast Louisiana University in Monroe, Louisiana, where she received her commission through her Reserve Officers' Training Corps in May 1983. Later, she received a master's degree in strategic studies from the prestigious U.S. Army War College.

A true soldier for her community and in our country, Major General Sheridan began her impressive military career as an Active-Duty servicemember in the U.S. Army in February 1984 at Fort Polk Army Base. Throughout her 33-year career, in both her Active-Duty and National Guard service, her leadership has earned her the respect of her peers and included many major accomplishments.

□ 1800

She became the first female to command a battalion leading the 415th Military Intelligence Battalion, commander of the 199th Regiment Regional Training Institute, and the first female to helm a major command when she led the 61st Troop Command.

Currently, she serves as the assist general for the Louisiana National Guard and is responsible, as the principal military adviser to the adjunct general, in assisting in the deployment and coordination of programs, policies, and plans for the Louisiana Army and Air National Guard.

The National Guard is unique in defending Louisiana both at home and abroad. Major General Sheridan served as a citizen soldier through Hurricane Katrina. She was deployed to Baghdad in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2008, and led rescue and recovery efforts in the historic Louisiana flooding of 2016.

She previously served as president of the National Guard Association of Louisiana, and she now serves as the secretary of the National Guard Association of the entire United States.

Her dedication to the National Guard extends way beyond what is required of anyone. Twice—and this is even more inspiring—Major General Sheridan has battled breast cancer, and with her last round of treatment in August, she has again prevailed in that battle. Her incredible strength and courage serve as a beacon of hope for countless many others.

Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to honor Major General Sheridan's many accomplishments and to recognize her honorable service to the State of Louisiana and to our great Nation. She has set a tremendous example, and I hope her accomplishments inspire others to aspire to her level of excellence.

My wife, Kelly, and I thank Major General Sheridan for all she does to defend our community and country, and we wish her continued success.

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

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today and the balance of the week on account of family illness.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled a bill of the House of the following title, which was thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 3110. An act to amend the Financial Stability Act of 2010 to modify the term of the independent member of the Financial Stability Oversight Council.