

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING MATHEMATICS, ENGINEERING, SCIENCE ACHIEVEMENT (MESA)

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 12, 2002

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor MESA for receiving the prestigious 2001 Innovations in American Government Award. MESA has been successful in assisting educationally disadvantaged students excel in math, engineering and science.

MESA has touched over 30,800 students' lives, via the outreach programs in 440 schools, 35 community colleges, and 23 universities across the nation. Through participation in MESA 85 percent of graduating high school seniors advance to college. MESA promotes its participants by establishing an atmosphere of diverse partnerships among students who support each other's academic success. MESA is one out of five programs in the nation to receive the award, and the only program from California to be honored with the award this year.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate MESA for receiving the 2001 Innovation in American Government Award. I invite my colleagues to join me in thanking MESA for its outstanding service to the community and wishing MESA many more years of continued success.

CONCERN FOR NEW FLOOD CONTROL RULES

HON. STEPHEN HORN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 12, 2002

Mr. HORN. Mr. Speaker, the goal of improving our environment and providing cleaner air and water for future generations is an essential one.

Cleansing our national waterways has been a top priority for me throughout my time in public service. At the same time, however, I have recognized that we must undertake these efforts in ways that achieve important objectives without placing unduly onerous burdens on the communities responsible for implementing environmental regulations.

The cities that share Los Angeles County are now facing precisely this challenge as a result of a recent interpretation of storm water runoff regulations. As Don Waldie, a city official in Lakewood, wrote in an article printed in the February 4, 2002, Los Angeles Times, cities throughout Los Angeles County are, "about to be hit with a 'storm water tax' of up to \$53 billion over the next 10 years to attempt what may be impossible—to make the waters of the Los Angeles River fishable, swimmable and potentially drinkable."

The Coalition for Practical Regulation, comprised of 42 cities directly affected by these

regulations, has been formed to seek sensible solutions to the storm water runoff issue. I am pleased to be working with these cities in an effort to secure federal funding for a pilot program aimed at finding solutions. We must find solutions that will not force cities to choose between cutting essential services or drastically increasing local taxes.

I urge my colleagues to review Mr. Waldie's article, which follows my remarks. What is happening to the cities in my district and in those of several other Members representing the cities of Los Angeles County, may be coming to your area soon. Sensible, affordable solutions must be found so that communities throughout the nation do not soon find themselves placed in the untenable position now confronting the communities of Los Angeles County.

[From the Los Angeles Times, Feb. 4, 2002]

NEW FLOOD CONTROL RULES MUDDY THE LOCAL WATERS

(By D.J. Waldie)

Neither good science nor good technology exists today to test for or remove all the possible contaminants flowing into the county-operated flood control system from lawn watering and cars driving on city streets.

Yet cities throughout Los Angeles County are about to be hit with a "storm water tax" of up to \$53 billion over the next 10 years to attempt what may be impossible—to make the waters of the Los Angeles River fishable, swimmable and potentially drinkable.

But should they be? What if the cost means less money for parks, police, housing and community services?

What if the cost of turning the Los Angeles River into a mountain stream means severely degrading the quality of life in the small cities along the river's banks?

Neither the voters nor their elected city and county representatives had the opportunity to have those questions answered because the nine members of the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board, all appointed by the governor, decided that these questions don't matter.

The board unanimously adopted in December a revised storm water permit for most of the county's 84 cities that contains 44 new quality standards.

Meeting just one of them—a "total maximum daily load" for trash in the flood control channel of "zero" by 2012—will cost county taxpayers an estimated \$1 billion.

The cost for meeting this standard—and all the others—will be covered by new city fees and user charges for property owners or will be taken from municipal funds needed to maintain streets, pay for police or keep community centers open.

Some of the hardest-pressed cities in the state must remake their budgets to become the Los Angeles regional board's enforcement arm.

Maywood has a general fund budget of about \$6 million. What part of law enforcement in Maywood does the regional board consider appropriate to cut in order to police storm drains?

In Bell Gardens, enforcement efforts would be equal to 100% of the city's recreation budget. In Huntington Park, it's at least 75%.

Even worse, these cities face a grinding round of citizen lawsuits under the federal Clean Water Act and fines of up to \$27,500 a day if they fail to comply with the board's mandates.

Cities and the county can be sued even if they make good-faith efforts to clean up storm water or if the experimental technologies they use don't work.

These costs didn't impress the members of the Los Angeles regional board.

One member waved off concerns, saying cities would find the money somehow.

In response to such indifference, the county, the city of Los Angeles and most of the county's other cities have appealed the regional board's storm water permit to the State Water Resources Control Board.

It may be too late, however, to rescue workable storm water regulation from a future of unnecessary conflict and the expense of the inevitable court cases.

All this could have been avoided.

We already have a model for negotiating environmental goals into the operation of the flood control system.

Five years ago, when the small cities of the southeast area of the country were faced with the catastrophic failure of the local flood control system, everyone—the county Public Works Department, the cities, federal agencies and skeptical environmental organizations—sat down (after initial conflict) to work out solutions that restored flood protection and began the environmental revival of the wastelands along the rivers' edge.

With realistic goals, everyone at the table became an advocate for both the efficient operation of the flood control system and the riverside environment.

The open space and recreation projects that came out of this process are an integral part of the \$100-million, state-funded revitalization of the entire Los Angeles River.

The give and take of negotiation won't satisfy environmental absolutists, who are intolerant of less-than-perfect solutions, but the State Water Resources Control Board should at least try.

The state water board should halt the imposition of the regional board's storm water tax and assert its leadership by joining with the cities, the county and the environmental community in a collaborative review of realistic, scientifically sound and environmentally just goals for storm water quality.

TRIBUTE TO MR. BOON SWAN FOO

HON. SOLOMON P. ORTIZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 12, 2002

Mr. ORTIZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay special tribute to a gentleman I have come to know and respect in recent years as we have worked on defense and economic development-related opportunities for South Texas.

I want to commend Mr. Boon Swan Foo, the former Deputy Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Singapore Technologies, for winning the title of Outstanding CEO for 2000. The award is one of several Singapore Business Awards administered by the Business Times and DHL Worldwide Express.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

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