

Her work was first exhibited in 1916 at the avant-garde gallery, 291, of Alfred Stieglitz. Initially, the famous gallery included only ten of Georgia O'Keeffe's charcoal abstractions, but within a year the gallery stopped showing any other artists and was devoted to exhibiting all of O'Keeffe's works. Not long after Georgia O'Keeffe moved to New York, she and Alfred Stieglitz fell in love and then married in 1924.

Georgia O'Keeffe wanted her art to express as she said "the wideness and wonder of the world as I live in it." Today, everyone can instantly recognize the paintings with intensely colorful large-scale flowers, sun-bleached animal bones, and the dramatic landscapes of the Southwest as Sun Prairie's own Georgia O'Keeffe. She became the most famous American woman artist and an influential modernist, receiving many awards, including medals from two U.S. presidents and ten honorary doctorates.

As a historical marker is dedicated on the spot where Georgia O'Keeffe spent her formative years, I join Sun Prairie in its celebration of the life and contributions of the pioneering artist Georgia O'Keeffe.

#### INTRODUCTION OF READICALL NATIONAL EMERGENCY ALERT SYSTEM

**HON. KENDRICK B. MEEK**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 22, 2003*

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am today introducing a bill that will greatly improve the federal government's ability to communicate with our citizens when there is a terrorist attack or other serious emergency at the national, regional or local levels.

My bill will require the Department of Homeland Security to set up an emergency alert system which can contact virtually every telephone subscriber in the United States within minutes, to convey to them vital information about what's happening and what they should do.

Up until now, we have been somewhat less targeted in our approach to emergency warning systems, because we have relied on the mass media.

Until now, we have used 20th century technology—television, radio, cable TV—to communicate with our people in times of emergency. It works fine if you are near a TV. But if the electricity goes out, most TVs and radios don't work.

I don't want to eliminate the existing early warning system; I want to improve it and build on it.

What I propose to do is establish a national emergency communications system based on 19th century technology, the telephone, which virtually every American has nearby, both at home and at work, and which usually works even when the lights go out.

According to the Federal Communications Commission, roughly 104 million households out of 109 million have landline telephone service—over 95%. Another roughly 1.2 million have only wireless telephone services. Further, nearly every business in the United States has phone service and almost 141 million of us have cellular phones. There are few options for dissemination of information better

than our telephone system, which is widely considered the best in the entire world.

The system I am proposing would make it possible for the government to let people know of imminent threats, transmit official warnings, provide accurate information about an attack and also provide instructions to people in the affected areas.

The system I propose today has an additional advantage over the present emergency warning system, because it could be activated at the block, neighborhood, city, county, state or national levels, as needed.

I would envision perhaps a special ring on the phone, so people would know that an alert call is not an ordinary call. Cell phones could be included in the system.

The system would be activated by order of the Secretary of Homeland Security, so there would be accountability in its use.

And once a message is approved, it could go out in a very short period of time, by live operators or by taped message. Because the system I propose is based on technology and techniques that have already been perfected by the teleservices industry.

I want to harness this technology to improve our homeland security.

Emergency information is critical to all of us. When an emergency situation happens, you want to know who is in charge; who can, and will, give you accurate, reliable information; and what you should do, if anything, to protect yourself.

Officials from local, county, state, federal and volunteer agencies work together during emergency situations. That means information may be available from a number of sources—different people know about different parts of the response effort.

Protecting the health and safety of our fellow Americans is the primary goal of everyone working on the situation. Part of that effort focuses on giving you accurate, coordinated information about the emergency and what you should do to protect yourself.

The existing National Emergency Alert System was set up several decades ago to allow for public notification of emergency situations. The system was designed to provide immediate access to the public for the President in times of crisis. The U.S. leadership requires a reliable means for communicating with the American public on short notice during periods of national crisis or major emergency to provide reassurance and direction regarding response and recovery.

But the EAS system was developed to provide the ability to address the Nation on AM and FM radio, as well as television and cable television audio. In addition, the President or other official must be able to address the Nation on live television, audio and video, upon arrival at a designated television studio.

Today, emergency officials rely on mass media because they have the technology, communications equipment, trained staff, proven ability and commitment to get information to the public in an emergency. Indeed, television reaches 98% of the homes in the United States of America. But, that is part of the problem that this bill hopes to fix. Television reaches 98% of the HOMES in the U.S. If we were all sitting at home, with our televisions on, tuned to a channel with a direct link to the Department of Homeland Security, we could all feel secure that we would know what to do in the event of another horrible tragedy like the 9/11 attacks.

This bill seeks to develop and implement an emergency telephone alert system so that, in the event of a terrorist attack, all telephone subscribers within the affected areas or, if need be, within the entire United States, can receive from the Department of Homeland Security immediate official warnings, accurate information, notifications of an attack and instructions on what to do.

The technology currently exists that would allow the Department of Homeland Security to notify every telephone subscriber in the United States within a few hours or states, cities or communities within minutes, giving potentially life-saving information to our citizens.

The Secretary would collaborate with other government agencies and with the private sector to use existing telephone technology and infrastructure to relay official information to all telephone subscribers within an endangered area within the United States—ideally with a distinct ring so that the receiver of the call will instantly be aware of its nature and importance.

The aim of this legislation is to keep our citizens informed in the terrible event that there is a national, regional or local terrorist emergency and present sources of communication are not simply available. Minutes can make a huge difference in an attack or disaster; accurate information pin-pointed to the affected area can make all the difference.

#### TRIBUTE TO CHIEF LEN SMITH

**HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY**

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 22, 2003*

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, at a time when crime concerns are on every citizen's mind, those who have dedicated their lives to law enforcement are to be commended. I would like to make a special commendation to Chief Len Smith, a devoted law enforcement officer from Indiana's First Congressional District. Chief Smith will be retiring on June 1, 2003, after having served the people of Porter for 34 years. Chief Smith will be honored by his family, friends, and members of the Porter Police Department at an open house on Sunday, May 25, 2003 at the Porter Community Building.

Len Smith, a native of Porter County and a resident of the Town of Porter for 42 years, has always been a man of compassion. He began his adult life by serving in the United States Army from 1966–1968. Upon his return to Northwest Indiana, Chief Smith thought that he would be a school teacher, having degrees in both biology and anthropology. He began police work because it afforded him the opportunity to work afternoons and midnights, allowing him to spend quality time with his family.

Smith's distinguished career in law enforcement has made his community and nation a better place in which to live and work. His outstanding motivational skills and unmatched charisma helped mold him into a natural leader. For more than 34 years, Len Smith has worked for the Porter Police Department and he has served as the town's police chief from 1974 to 1993 and from 1996 to the present. In 1993, when a former Town Council appointed a new chief from outside the town, over 200 people packed the Porter municipal building to