

billion in losses and 86 fatalities. In 1998, a calm year according to experts, due to wind related storms there was more than \$5.5 billion in damages, and at least 186 fatalities.

The federal government invests \$5 million to develop and promote knowledge, practices, and policies that seek to reduce and where possible eliminate losses from wind related disasters. In contrast the federal government invests nearly \$100 million per year in reducing earthquake losses through the National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program. A federal investment in Wind Hazard Reduction will pay significant dividends in lives saved and decreased property damage.

The Wind Hazard Reduction Caucus or "Big Wind" will develop a program to reduce loss of life and property by 75% by 2010. Damage can be substantially reduced through the development and implementation of an effective National Wind Hazard Reduction Program. This program will address better: design and construction methods and practices; emergency response; use of modern technology for early-warning systems; building codes enforcement; and public education and involvement programs.

We are focused on increasing the awareness of Members of Congress about the public safety and economic loss issues associated with wind, increasing public safety and decreasing the economic losses associated with tropical storms, thunderstorms, and tornadoes.

In my own hometown of Wichita, Kansas, a tornado rated F4 intensity, plowed through the suburb of Haysville on May 3, 1999. It was responsible for 6 deaths, 150 injuries and over 140 million dollars in damage.

Tornadoes are one of nature's most violent storms. In an average year, 800 tornadoes are reported across the United States, resulting in 80 deaths and over 1,500 injuries. A tornado is a violently rotating column of air extending from a thunderstorm to the ground. The most violent tornadoes are capable of tremendous destruction with wind speeds of 250 mph or more. Damage paths can be in excess of one mile wide and 50 miles long.

Through we still can not control the weather, with this caucus we will at least be able to do something about it. Thank you for coming to the kick-off reception for the Wind Hazard Reduction Caucus. I also want to thank the American Society of Civil Engineers especially Brian Pallasch and Martin Hight for their insight into the development of this caucus along with Jim Turner, Democratic staff of the Science Committee. Legislation is not created in a vacuum; Congressman Jones and I look forward to working with all of you in the months to come.

REMARKS BY REPRESENTATIVE WALTER JONES
(D-NC)

Thank you for your warm welcome. I am pleased to be a co-chair of the Wind Hazard Reduction Caucus, also known as Big Wind. My district and many other districts in North Carolina are extremely vulnerable to the hazards presented by windstorms. The most recent string of hurricanes to sweep the Eastern seaboard is testament to the severity of these storms.

In North Carolina alone, Hurricane Floyd took 48 lives, more than twice the total number of deaths along the entire eastern coast during the 1998 hurricane season. And it is predicted that the economic damages will reach well into the billions of dollars. Still we have yet to realize the full impact of these hurricanes, both financially and environmentally. For these reasons I am pleased to be part of the Big Wind Caucus. It is vitally important to increase awareness for public safety and decrease the enormous economic loss associated with wind hazards. I

look forward to working with Congressman Moore and the members of this caucus to increase public education and the use of effective prevention measures to deal with windstorms.

On that note, I would like to introduce my distinguished colleague and co-chair, Congressman Dennis Moore. He has first hand experience dealing with the devastation of wind hazards, as he represents a district frequently struck by tornadoes. I applaud his efforts and enthusiasm to make this Caucus a reality.

REMARKS BY MR. JAMES E. DAVIS

Good evening, and welcome to the Inaugural Event of the Congressional Wind Hazard Reduction Caucus. I am Jim Davis, Executive director of the American Society of Civil Engineers, one of the sponsors of tonight's event. We are very pleased to be working with the many Members of Congress, here tonight, on reducing the hazards associated with tornadoes, thunderstorms and hurricanes.

Representatives, Walter Jones Jr., of North Carolina and Dennis Moore of Kansas have taken the lead and created the bipartisan Wind Hazard Reduction Caucus of the U.S. House of Representatives. To support the Caucus efforts, ASCE will organize and lead a Wind Hazard Reduction Coalition of related professional societies, research organizations, industry groups and individual companies to leverage research and development activities. These groups to date include the following: Structural Engineering Institute of ASCE, American Iron and Steel Institute, American Portland Cement Alliance, Anderson Window Corporation, Applied Research Associates, Clemson University, International Code Council, and Texas Tech University.

Again, thank you all for being here, and we look forward to working with all of you to increase Congressional awareness of the public safety and economic loss issues associated with tornadoes, hurricanes, tropical storms and thunderstorms, and to develop and implement an effective National Wind Hazard Reduction Program.

TRIBUTE TO THE LATE JOHN
VOELKER

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 3, 1999

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I wanted to ask that we all pause for a moment to remember a man who will live forever in the hearts of all that knew him and many that didn't. John Voelker was a man who stood out to those around him. Friends remember him as a man who gave selflessly to the community. But, most of all, he enjoyed his family and friends. His wife, Louise, and two sons brought him endless joy. He was known as a good and upright man.

People enjoyed working with him. He had many new ideas, he was willing to work hard and was regarded as a first class person in everything he did. Mr. Voelker was a civic leader. He presented new and innovative ideas for ways to make the community a better place. Recently, he had taken on a pet project which would have connected low-income residents to LEAP, a state program which helps them pay for utilities. Charity was his passion. For thirty or so years he has been involved in everything from the local civic

boards to environmental groups which fought for preservation and deregulation.

Tragically, when John Voelker was on his way to Egypt for a sightseeing trip, his plane EgyptAir flight 990 crashed just off the coast of Massachusetts.

John Voelker is someone who will be missed by many. His friends and family will miss the man that they all enjoyed spending time with. The rest of us will miss the man who exemplified the selfless dignity that so few truly possess. It is with this, Mr. Speaker, that we say goodbye to a great American. He will be greatly missed.

EMPOWERMENT ZONES/ENTERPRISE COMMUNITIES ENHANCEMENT ACT

HON. EARL POMEROY

OF NORTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 3, 1999

Mr. POMEROY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to indicate my intent to cosponsor H.R. 2170, the Empowerment Zones and Enterprise Communities Enhancement Act of 1999. The bill is an important step toward fulfilling the promise made to areas designated as Round II Empowerment Zones and Enterprise Communities.

I strongly support the concept of Empowerment Zones/Enterprise Communities. Empowerment Zones and Enterprise Communities are designed to reverse the downward economic trends in urban and rural areas alike. Through the utilization of tax credits and social service credits, designated areas are able to undertake initiatives to spur long-term economic revitalization. In my state of North Dakota, the Griggs/Steele Empowerment Zone in eastern North Dakota was designated last year as a Round II Empowerment Zone. At that time, a commitment was made by the federal government to assist this area and others in creating jobs and economic opportunity. However, Round II Empowerment Zones and Enterprise Communities have yet to be fully funded, and as a result, these designated areas have been unable to reach their fullest potential.

I believe we have the responsibility to fulfill the commitment by fully funding Round II Empowerment Zones and Enterprise Communities. Even though I have concerns about the differences in funding levels between rural and urban Empowerment Zones, I believe we must move forward to provide these areas with the needed assistance to accomplish economic revitalization. However, I hope that as this legislation moves forward we can address the differences in funding between rural and urban areas to ensure each area is provided with the resources necessary to accomplish the economic revitalization the federal government promised.

LACK OF SLEEP CAN KILL

HON. ZOE LOFGREN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 3, 1999

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, while physicians and patients now pay attention to the