EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

A PROCLAMATION RECOGNIZING JACK CHESTER

HON. ROBERT W. NEY

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 19, 2005

Mr. NEY. Mr. Speaker:

Whereas, Jack Chester has been recognized for his lifetime of exemplary service to his community and to the Republican Party; and

Whereas, Jack Chester has been acknowledged for his performance and leadership in the areas of law and hospital administration; and

Whereas, Jack Chester should be commended for his service to the United States Navy and in the Electoral College.

Therefore, I join with the residents of the entire 18th Congressional District of Ohio in honoring and congratulating Jack Chester for his outstanding accomplishments.

CHILDREN'S SAFETY ACT OF 2005

SPEECH OF

HON. JERROLD NADLER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2005

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union under consideration in bill (H.R. 3132) to make improvements to the national sex offender registration program, and for other purposes:

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Chairman, we are faced with an historic opportunity this year to pass legislation to combat violent hate crimes that continue to plague our country.

Despite the brutal killing of Matthew Shepard 7 years ago, Congress has failed to pass the Local Law Enforcement Hate Crimes Prevention Act. We have a rare opportunity today to finally pass this bill as an amendment to a crime bill, and we must not let this opportunity pass us by again.

In the years that followed Matthew Shepard's death, thousands of hate crimes have been committed and Congress has failed to protect gays, lesbians, bisexuals, and transgender individuals from these heinous crimes.

Tragically, we are all far too familiar with the violent acts of hate crime. Congress has been too slow in responding to the hate crimes that continue to threaten our communities all across America. Time after time, we hear horror stories of murderers attacking innocent people because they happen to be members of a certain community.

Remember, hate crimes are especially odious because they victimize more than just the individual victim; they also are acts of terrorism directed against an entire class of citizens. When a hate crime is committed, it sends a message to every member of the targeted group that they risk their lives simply by remaining part of that community or ascribing to that identity. Americans should never have to be afraid to live the way they choose.

The Conyers amendment would strengthen existing Federal law in two ways. First, it removes the requirement that the victim be engaged in a federally protected activity when the crime is committed. The amendment will thereby make it easier for Federal authorities to prosecute or assist local authorities in prosecuting hate crimes. Second, it expands the definition of hate crimes to include those motivated by gender, gender identity, disability, and sexual orientation.

We must all redouble our efforts to pass sensible hate crimes prevention legislation this year. We must continue our fight to protect American families from violent bigotry and vicious acts of hatred. I urge my colleagues to vote for the Conyers amendment.

H.R. 3673, SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS BILL FOR HURRICANE RELIEF

HON. LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 19, 2005

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the supplemental appropriations bill for the Hurricane Katrina disaster relief.

My heart goes out to the people of New Orleans, and to all the families affected by Katrina in States across the gulf coast. The huge path of devastation Katrina left behind has horrified us all. And we have been equally horrified by the conditions and difficulties confronting the affected families as they struggle to meet life and death challenges brought each day since the hurricane.

As I have, the entire world has been moved by the resiliency and fortitude of these stalwart Americans and their ability to pick up the pieces and move forward. I know that State and local officials in Louisiana and all the affected States take enormous pride in their people and appreciate the outpouring of assistance that has been rendered to those in need by police, emergency personnel, religious organizations, the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, the Congressional Black Caucus, our military, National Guard, and the community at large.

Tragically, this administration failed to meet its responsibilities, and the Republican leadership in Congress, which oversees our Federal agencies, must share the blame for the terribly inadequate response to Hurricane Katrina by the Federal Emergency Management Agency FEMA and the Department of Homeland Security. Repeatedly, the Republican leadership has cut critical funding and personnel for FEMA. The Federal response along the gulf coast was poorly planned, inadequately coordinated, and just plain late, leaving hundreds of thousands to endure prolonged peril.

In addition to my concern about the human welfare of the victims of Hurricane Katrina, I am also concerned that the inadequate response to this emergency has exposed weaknesses that indicate we may not be adequately prepared to meet the challenge of a terrorist attack or future national disasters. It is essential therefore, that we carefully scrutinize what went wrong. Not to point fingers or place blame, but to identify and to correct our mistakes, and fortify our weaknesses in order to assure the American public that things will be different in the future.

I support this funding bill today, because clearly it is needed. However, I am deeply disappointed in the Republican leadership's current approach to address this disaster and the weaknesses it has uncovered. With little consultation with Democrats, Congress has already given nearly $60 billion to FEMA, an agency universally recognized to have failed in its mission on the gulf coast. Rather than work in a bi-partisan way to address the weaknesses in FEMA and require accountability for the millions of appropriated dollars, the Republican leadership has unnecessarily rushed through two appropriations bills with little debate and no opportunities for amendment by the House.

Meaningful corrections to our emergency response capabilities will take time and careful consideration by both parties in Congress working together on behalf of the American people. Yet the Republican leadership, again without consulting Democrats, has moved forward with a partisan proposal for oversight hearings controlled by the very same congressional leadership responsible for lack of oversight and inadequate funding of FEMA in the first place.

If we are genuinely interested in getting to the root of the problem, a "no holds barred" analysis of FEMA's shortcomings is critical. The most effective way to meet this objective is through an investigation conducted by an outside, nonpartisan panel of experts, such as the 9–11 Commission, which shed so much light on our intelligence shortcomings. Even while we are stunned by the devastation of Katrina and know that FEMA and the administration should have done better, we should not shy away from taking a hard look at what went wrong and how we can correct it. Again, such evaluation does not constitute finger pointing—it is clearly the responsible thing to do. It is a responsible act in order to be adequately prepared for a future crisis or disaster. We owe no less to those who have suffered and lost so much during this disaster and we owe no less to the American people.

I will support this necessary funding today. In the future, however, the Appropriations Committee must be given the opportunity to perform its mission to scrutinize requests carefully. And the House must be allowed the time to debate and amend the bill as necessary.

Mr. Speaker, many have already commented that the response to this national tragedy differs significantly from the bipartisan conduct and unified feeling we had after the