

the job and thus urge you to oppose his nomination.

Thank you,
 FRED A SORAH,
Debord, KY.
 WANDA BLEVINS,
Tuscaloosa, AL.

JUNE 10, 2006.

DEAR SENATOR KENNEDY AND SENATOR ROCKEFELLER: First, thank you for your leadership and persistence in bringing the MINER Act to reality. We hope it will prevent more needless deaths in the coal mine industry and will save other coal mining families from the grief we have suffered. Of course, there is still a lot to do to further miners' safety and health. We will continue to serve as advocates for miners, as we have already traveled to speak on the subject.

Our most immediate concern today is President Bush's nominee for Assistant Secretary of MSHA: Richard Stickler. Mr. Stickler comes out of a background in mine management. At first I thought this would be a good idea, but I fear he will be yet another "fox" charged with minding the henhouse. He will be more likely to pursue "compliance" rather than aggressive enforcement of the Mine Act, though enforcement is what's needed now more than ever. We need someone to stand up for the mining community, not go along with what ever seems to please the companies.

At his nomination hearing, Mr. Stickler failed to even recognize that there's any problem at MSHA or within the industry. How will he be able to fix and improve something he thinks has no problems. This lack of awareness was startling because his hearing was held on the heels of the deadliest season of coal mining in recent history. He offered no insights about what he would do if he were to become the head of MSHA, and he showed no signs of leadership.

When it passed the Mine Act nearly 30 years ago, Congress said that miners' health and safety are supposed to be the top priorities, and MSHA is charged with pursuing that mission. Mr. Stickler said nothing at his confirmation hearing that suggests he would serve as an aggressive advocate for miners' health and safety. However, miners deserve nothing less. We believe that Mr. Stickler is not the right person for the job and thus urge you to oppose his nomination. Please help us get someone to stand up for us and many other miners and their families.

Thank you very much for your time and I hope you consider my suggestion.

Sincerely,

AMBER DAWN HELMS.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate stands in recess until 3:30 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 2:34 p.m., recessed until 3:30 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. COLEMAN).

EMERGENCY SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT FOR DEFENSE, THE GLOBAL WAR ON TERROR, AND HURRICANE RECOVERY, 2006—CONFERENCE REPORT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the conference report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The committee of conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the

amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 4939) making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2006, and for other purposes, having met, have agreed that the House recede from its disagreement to the amendment of the Senate and agree to the same with an amendment, and the Senate agree to the same, signed by a majority of the conferees on the part of both Houses.

(The conference report is printed in the House proceedings of the RECORD of June 8, 2006.)

Mr. LAUTENBERG. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(The remarks of Mr. LAUTENBERG are printed in today's RECORD under "Morning Business.")

Mr. LAUTENBERG. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to speak as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Florida is recognized.

(The remarks of Mr. NELSON of Florida are printed in the RECORD under "Morning Business.")

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, after a great deal of hard work by both bodies, I am pleased that the Senate now has under its consideration the conference report to accompany H.R. 4939, the fiscal year 2006 emergency supplemental appropriations bill.

Overall, this bill which was requested by the President has two major points of focus. First, it provides needed funding to replenish the spending accounts of the Department of Defense, the Department of State, and other agencies and departments of the Government engaged in the global war on terror through the remainder of this fiscal year. Second, this supplemental includes critical funding for continued efforts to address the damage caused by the hurricanes in the Gulf of Mexico in 2005.

The bill was adopted by the Senate on May 4, and we began discussions with our colleagues from the other body shortly thereafter. A bipartisan majority of the conferees reconciled the differences between the two bills and reached agreement on the conference report on June 8. The House approved the conference report this morning by a rollcall vote of 351 to 67.

The conference agreement provides a total of \$94.519 billion. Of this amount, over \$70 billion is provided to carry out the global war on terror and to cover the expenses of ongoing operations and reconstruction efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Title II of the conference agreement provides \$19.338 billion for hurricane-related damage and recovery costs. Title III provides \$500 million for agriculture disaster assistance to hurricane affected areas. Title IV includes \$2.3 billion for influenza pandemic preparation and response activities. Title V provides \$1.9 billion for various border security initiatives. Title VI includes \$27.6 million for the Architect of the Capitol to address health and safety concerns in the utility tunnels in the Capitol complex. Finally, title VII includes general provisions and technical corrections.

This conference agreement is the result of hard work and true compromise between the House and Senate. This bill provides critically needed funding to our troops in the field and it helps continue the recovery process on the gulf coast. The overall funding level meets the amount requested by the administration, and I hope this agreement will receive bipartisan support in the Senate.

All members have had the opportunity to review the conference agreement, and I am happy to respond to any questions Senators may have about its contents. I do hope we will not indulge in needless delay and proceed with some dispatch in the consideration and approval of this agreement.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MARTINEZ). The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 10 minutes in morning business with respect to a tribute to Senator BYRD and then make another statement with respect to the conference report.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(The remarks of Mr. REED are printed in today's RECORD under "Morning Business.")

Mr. REED. Mr. President, as indicated previously, I would like to make a short statement pertaining to the supplemental appropriations conference report before us.

It is interesting, my colleague from Florida spoke about the lessons of Hurricane Katrina. One of those lessons is we have to be prepared. In Rhode Island, we worked with Chairman COCHRAN, Ranking Member BYRD, and also with Senator HARRY REID to incorporate within the supplemental appropriations bill an appropriation to help prepare our hurricane barrier in Providence, RI. I thank the chairman, Senator BYRD, and Senator REID for this effort.

Unfortunately, this provision did not survive the conference committee, and we are not able today to tell the people of Rhode Island that we are giving