

Republicans: Frank Wolf (R-VA), Mary Bono (R-CA), Michael Castle (R-DE), John Abney Culberson (R-TX), Tom Davis (R-VA), Charles Dent (R-PA), David Dreier (R-CA), Vernon Ehlers (R-MI), Jo Ann Emerson (R-MO), Phil English (R-PA), Jeff Fortenberry (R-NE), Luis Fortuño (R-PR), Jim Gerlach (R-PA), Wayne Gilchrest (R-MD), Dean Heller (R-NV), David Hobson (R-OH), Peter Hoekstra (R-MI), Walter Jones (R-NC), Jack Kingston (R-GA), Mark Kirk (R-IL), Randy Kuhl (R-NY), Michael McCaul (R-TX), Sue Wilkins Myrick (R-NC), Jim Ramstad (R-MN), Ralph Regula (R-OH), David Reichert (R-WA), Christopher Shays (R-CT), Christopher Smith (R-NJ), Patrick Tiberi (R-OH), Fred Upton (R-MI), James Walsh (R-NY), Zach Wamp (R-TN), Ed Whitfield (R-KY), Roger Wicker (R-MS), and Don Young (R-AK).

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from California is recognized.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, could the Chair tell me what the order is this morning.

#### CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

#### WATER RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT ACT OF 2007—CONFERENCE REPORT

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to the consideration of the conference report to accompany H.R. 1495, which the clerk will 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. 1495), to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes, having met, have agreed to recommend and do recommend that the House recede from its disagreement to the amendment of the Senate and agree to the same with an amendment, signed by all conferees on the part of both Houses.

(The conference report is printed in the proceedings of the House in the RECORD of July 31, 2007)

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from California is recognized.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I am very pleased to bring to the floor today the conference report on H.R. 1495, the Water Resources Development Act of 2007. I think I can pick up on something Senator ALEXANDER said about how divided we are in this country over this Iraq war. That is very clear. No one understands more than our Senator who is sitting in the chair and presiding today how we are divided. This is a different story, so we will take a little break out of our discussions about Iraq, and we will continue to work for bipartisanship in bringing this war to an honorable close.

At this time, we take a little break from that and turn toward something

that is very important, which is building and rebuilding the water infrastructure of our Nation. Today is a day that is 7 years in the making.

I wish to start off by thanking my committee, all of the Members on my side of the aisle, and Senator INHOFE, our ranking member, and all his colleagues on the Republican side of the aisle. This is an unusual day. This is a day where we come forward united on a bill that will authorize the projects and policies of the Civil Works Program of the Army Corps of Engineers. I am so pleased we will vote today on final passage of that bill, and we will send it to the President.

I hope President Bush will reconsider his veto threat of this bill. I think colleagues will speak to how urgent this bill is. Imagine not having a water resources bill for 7 long years. That is too long to wait. If colleagues are concerned about the size of the bill—truly, if we had gone back the way we did it, every 2 years, it would be about the size that this bill is. As Senator INHOFE will say when he gets here—and, as you know, he and I don't agree on many environmental matters, but on public works matters we do agree—this is the first step in a long process—the authorizing step—and then comes the appropriations.

So every one of these projects that has gone through local governments all over this country—remember, for every one of these projects, there is a local match. These are projects that came from the bottom up, from our people who were saying to us we need help with flood control, with economic development, with dredging and we need help with wetlands restoration and in a number of areas involving the movement of water; and this country learned it when we watched after Hurricanes Rita and Katrina.

If we didn't know it then, we certainly know it now. So I say to this President, this bill is in line, in terms of the pricetag, with what we would have had if we had done this bill every 2 years. There is huge support for this bill. The votes in the House and the Senate are enormous, very one-sided.

So I hope, Mr. President, if you are listening or people in your office are listening, this is a respectful request to please join with us. We don't have to fight over every single thing. When it comes to the economy, the quality of life of our people, we should be united.

The House vote on this conference report was 381 to 40. We are hoping we will vote in that same fashion in the Senate.

Mr. President, how much time do I have, since I am Senator REID's designee?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Each of the managers has 67½ minutes. The Senator has used 3½ minutes.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, will Senator LANDRIEU be amenable to taking 10 minutes at this time, and I will reserve time later for her in the debate?

Ms. LANDRIEU. Yes.

Mrs. BOXER. I yield 10 minutes of my time to Senator LANDRIEU. I wish to say before she begins, she has been a mover behind this bill. She has worked her heart out to get this bill to the floor and, as a result of her working, of course, along with her colleague, Senator VITTER, who is on the committee, our committee came to Louisiana and held a very unique hearing. We had many colleagues—I see Senator CARDIN is on the floor. He was there. We had a very good turnout, and Senator LANDRIEU was eloquent. She has been eloquent on the floor of the Senate in the past I look forward to hearing her remarks.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Louisiana is recognized.

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from California and all of my colleagues on this particular committee who have worked so hard. The ranking member, Senator INHOFE from Oklahoma, has also worked hard. But I have to say to this chairwoman who took the chairmanship of this committee and said 7 years is enough time to wait, it is too long for the people of Louisiana, for California, or Florida, or Maryland—my good colleague from Maryland, Senator CARDIN, who serves on this committee has been so forceful—she said: I am coming to Louisiana. I want to see it for myself, particularly after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita devastated our coast.

As the chairwoman knows, we lost 267 square miles of land in south Louisiana because of the storm and the devastation of the tides, the surges, and the flooding. That is more than the whole District of Columbia, more than two and a half times the size of the 100 square miles that represent the District of Columbia. This is a huge expanse of land that was lost.

This Senator said enough. We have been waiting too long. It has been 7 long years. Today with this conference report vote that is going to take place in about 2 hours, that wait will come to an end. The last step Congress can take to send this bill off will have been taken. The conference report, hopefully, will be approved by a vast majority of Senators on both sides of the aisle. It would not have happened without Senator BOXER's leadership. I am, indeed, so grateful on behalf of the people I represent in Louisiana.

This is a small map, but it shows my colleagues the vastness of the land we are trying to protect and preserve, these great wetlands, which is the green area shown on this chart. The Mississippi River comes down, of course, through the mouth of the Mississippi River. This is the Sabine River that divides Louisiana from Texas and the Pearl River that serves as a boundary between Mississippi and Louisiana.

From east Texas, all of Louisiana, and for west Mississippi, this is an extremely important bill for our coastal regions. It is going to provide historic