

treasured public lands in harm's way. Fire seasons are getting longer and more intense due to climate change, drought, and other factors.

As a result, Federal fire suppression spending has increased substantially over the past 10 years and projections appear to indicate that this trend will continue into the foreseeable future.

The dramatic rise in these costs is eroding other nonfire programs and impacting the core mission of the Federal land management agencies. In the case of the Forest Service, for example, wildland fire suppression activities now account for approximately 48 percent of its budget. This year's alarming and irresponsible budget request from the Forest Service, which cuts over half of the funding for State and private forestry, continues the sad trend: our Forest Service is turning into the fire service.

Furthermore, both the Forest Service and the Department of the Interior have had to "Rob Peter to Pay Paul" by borrowing funds from other agency accounts to cover the escalating costs of wildland fire suppression. Last year, for example, the Forest Service spent \$741 million more than was budgeted for wildland fire suppression, and the Department of the Interior spent \$249 million more than was budgeted for wildland fire suppression. And in the case of the Forest Service, the costs of catastrophic, emergency wildland fire suppression activities account for the vast majority of suppression expenditures, as 2 percent of fires account for 80 percent of costs.

Madam Speaker, it is clear that something needs to be done to resolve this problem. That is why today I am introducing the FLAME Act.

The FLAME Act establishes a Federal FLAME fund for catastrophic, emergency wildland fire suppression activities. The FLAME fund would be separate from the budgeted and appropriated agency wildland fire suppression funding and is to be used only for catastrophic, emergency wildland fires. The Federal land management agencies will continue to fund anticipated and predicted wildland fire suppression activities within their annual budgets.

The Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of the Interior may declare catastrophic, emergency wildland fire suppression activities eligible for the FLAME fund by issuing a Suppression Emergency Declaration. The declaration will evaluate the size, severity, and threat of the individual wildland fire incident.

The FLAME Act continues our stewardship of all lands by making funds available for catastrophic, emergency wildland fire suppression activities on State and private land consistent with existing agreements. Funds will also be available for catastrophic, emergency wildland fire suppression on Indian lands.

The FLAME Act also requires that the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of the Interior submit a long-overdue report to Congress containing a cohesive wildland fire management strategy. This report will improve efforts to prevent fires on our public lands. This report will address critical fire prevention issues such as identifying a system for assessing the level of fire risk to communities, and indentifying a system to ensure that the highest priority fuels reduction projects are being funded first.

Madam Speaker, catastrophic, emergency wildland fires can cause tragic loss of life. and

property. I am proud to be joined in introducing the FLAME Act today by my colleagues Mr. NORM DICKS and Mr. RAÚL GRIJALVA. I look forward to working together to ensure that our country has the necessary tools to combat catastrophic, emergency wildland fires.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LYNN C. WOOLSEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2008

Ms. WOOLSEY. Madam Speaker, on March 4, 2008, I was unavoidably detained and was not able to record my votes for rollcall Nos. 88–90.

Had I been present I would have voted:

Rollcall No. 88—"yes"—To authorize the Secretary of the Interior to lease certain lands in Virgin Islands National Park, and for other purposes.

Rollcall No. 89—"yes"—To direct the Secretary of the Interior to convey the Alta-Hualapai Site to the city of Las Vegas, Nevada, for the development of a cancer treatment facility.

Rollcall No. 90—"yes"—To provide for the release of certain land from the Sunrise Mountain Instant Study Area in the State of Nevada and to grant a right-of-way across the released land for the construction and maintenance of a flood control project.

IN RECOGNITION OF MRS. CORA SAXON

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2008

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Madam Speaker, I would like to request the House's attention today to pay recognition to a special day in the life of a constituent of mine, Mrs. Cora Saxon.

On March 17th, Mrs. Saxon will celebrate her 100th birthday. To help commemorate this special occasion, her friends and family are surprising her with a luncheon in Anniston, Alabama on March 8th.

Mrs. Saxon was born in Clay County, Alabama and was the first daughter born into the family. She was named after each of her aunts, taking her full birth name as Susie Cora Cordia Betty Jo Marie. She later married Henry Elbert Saxon with whom she had one daughter, two grandchildren, and four great grandchildren. She is expecting great great grandchildren to be born in April.

In 1941, Mrs. Saxon and her husband bought a farm on which she later began making candies for a living. Over the years, her small enterprise grew and thrived and was later named Saxon Distributors and Candy Kitchen, Inc. From their humble beginnings, her company grew to 14 stores across Alabama, Georgia and Tennessee.

I would like to congratulate Mrs. Saxon on reaching this important milestone in her life. I wish her a happy birthday and the best in the future, and of course, thank her for so many sweet memories.

ON THE LOSS OF EVE CARSON

HON. DAVID E. PRICE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2008

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Madam Speaker, I received news today of a horrific event that has shocked and deeply saddened the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill community, which I represent.

The Chapel Hill police informed us today that UNC's student body president, Eve Carson, had been shot to death a short distance from campus yesterday morning. This senseless act of violence ended the life of a promising young leader and left a community of family, friends and admirers mourning in disbelief. The police department is sparing no effort to find the people who committed this heinous act and to bring them to justice.

Eve was originally from Athens, Georgia. Since the time she arrived in Chapel Hill in 2004, she excelled in her college career. In addition to being elected student body president, she was a Morehead Scholar, a North Carolina Fellow, a member of the Phi Beta Kappa honor society, and was double majoring in political science and biology.

Eve put a high priority on service to her community. During her college career, she mentored middle school students, taught science to elementary school students, and served as a running coach for young girls.

To Eve, service knew no borders. She spent her summers volunteering in Ecuador, Egypt and Ghana, and she co-chaired a student organization devoted to alleviating hunger around the world.

I recently met Eve at a reception hosted by UNC's Chancellor James Moeser. My wife and I were impressed with this lovely young woman who—it was clear to see—had so much potential to make a difference in the world. She expressed to me her interest in working abroad after graduating in May, perhaps in Africa. At the time of her death, my office was working to help her find a way to realize her goal.

Unfortunately, Eve will not be able to realize that goal.

Our community is deeply sad at the loss of this special person. We also regret the loss for all those who would have been touched by Eve's big heart in the future. This is truly a loss for us all.

Our thoughts and prayers are with Eve's family and friends and with the UNC community as they gather on Polk Place this afternoon to remember Eve and to grieve together.

Madam Speaker, I ask permission to include a brief biography of Eve Marie Carson at this point in the RECORD.

BIOGRAPHY OF EVE MARIE CARSON

Eve Marie Carson, 22, was elected student body president at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in February 2007. Her term would have ended in April.

A native of Athens, GA, Eve was born Nov. 19, 1985. She came to Carolina in the fall of 2004 as the recipient of a prestigious Morehead Scholarship. A member of the Phi Beta Kappa honor society, she was a pre-medicine student majoring in both political science and biology. As a North Carolina Fellow, she was part of a four-year leadership development program for undergraduates.

While at UNC-Chapel Hill, she was extremely active in both leadership and service