

Water Resources Development Act of 2000. The congressionally mandated September 2008 National Academy of Sciences report on Everglades restoration called progress on Mod Waters “dismal.” The report emphasized that Mod Waters is critical to restoration, especially for Everglades Park, and urged the Federal Government to take action to move the project along. This exchange does precisely that.

No funds will be needed for this inholding acquisition. Since so much work has already been done to identify the precise lands and interests in land to be exchanged and these lands have been subject to professional appraisals, we expect the park to be able to promptly complete the necessary administrative requirements to complete the exchange. Time is of the essence in order to facilitate Mod Waters and ensure that the exchange is executed so taxpayers are spared the multi-million dollar costs of purchasing the FPL corridor.

Prior to executing the land trade, the Park Service will prepare the appropriate National Environmental Policy Act document to fully understand the environmental impacts, if any. It is my hope that this exchange will provide a wide array of environmental benefits to the park. The exchange ensures that there will be no electric transmission lines constructed on the existing private right-of-way. The bill also provides the Service with the authority to relocate the Everglades Park boundary to ensure that the lands conveyed to FPL are outside of the park. It is intended that the utility corridor, if developed, not be within Everglades Park. Because many of the agreements have been worked out in advance between FPL and the park, I expect that the Park Service will move expeditiously to complete the land exchange authorized by this legislation.

In a similar vein, the Park Service must also make a determination that the lands and interests along the L 31 canal and levee on the edge of the park are “suitable” for exchange and conveyance to FPL. This “suitability” is already widely acknowledged and recognized by both the agency and the Congress as these peripheral lands are not in the heart of the park and not critical for Mod Waters and water flow restoration. Accordingly, I expect the Park Service to act in a timely manner to render the suitability finding.

I received a letter from Florida Department of Environmental Protection Secretary, Mike Sole, expressing his support for the land transfer. The exchange is also supported by the Department of the Interior and the Army Corps of Engineers.

I expect the Park Service and FPL to move promptly to complete the exchange. Again, the need for action on Mod Waters means that time is of the essence.

I wish to thank Chairman BINGAMAN and Ranking Member MURKOWSKI for their efforts to incorporate this impor-

tant measure in the S. 22 package. We must move expeditiously to compete Mod Waters and completion of this land exchange will help us achieve these objectives while ensuring that the taxpayers are spared the cost of purchasing a very expensive park inholding from FPL.

I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak therein for a period of up to 10 minutes each.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

80TH ANNIVERSARY OF LULAC

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I rise to call the attention of the Senate to the 80th anniversary of the League of United Latin American Citizens, LULAC. As a pioneer of the Latino civil rights movement, LULAC has long fought to better the economic condition, educational attainment, political influence, housing, health and civil rights of Americans of Latino descent.

Eighty years ago, three organizations in south Texas united to combat the rampant discrimination faced by Mexican Americans. After decades of disenfranchisement, the Latino community in south Texas created a movement for equality that has contributed greatly to enhancing the livelihood of Latinos throughout the United States. LULAC's successes and achievements are many—ranging from the desegregation of schools throughout the American Southwest to improving access to jobs and government programs.

Today, as America's oldest national Latino organization, LULAC boasts continued service to America's Latino population through more than 48 employment training centers, 16 regional centers, and employs its great knowledge of the needs of the Latino community by advising private, nonprofit, and public institutions. Moreover, its unique charter structure allows this organization to disseminate important information and provide worthwhile services via more than 600 councils throughout the United States and Puerto Rico. The need for LULAC's services has not subsided through the years and a new generation of Latinos calls upon the institutional strength that this organization can provide. The

challenges we face as a nation can only be resolved by the inclusion of all American communities and I value the sage voice of LULAC on the strategies to empower Latino communities.

The organization's early efforts for political and social inclusion created a strong base which LULAC and other organizations now utilize to improve the quality of life for all American Latinos. I congratulate and commend the League of United Latin American Citizens for their long record of service to the Latino community and wish them continued success.

TRIBUTE TO BOURBON HEIGHTS NURSING HOME

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I rise today to honor the Bourbon Heights Nursing Home, which was recently recognized as the best nursing home in the State in 2008 by the Kentucky Association of Health Care Facilities, KAHCF.

Recently, the Bourbon County Citizen in Paris, KY, published a story about the Bourbon Heights Nursing Home receiving this top honor.

Mr. President, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the work of the dedicated staff and volunteers at Bourbon Heights, whose continued commitment to the community and to those they care for is extraordinary. I further ask unanimous consent that the full article be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From Bourbon County Citizen, Dec. 19, 2008]

BOURBON HEIGHTS RECEIVES STATE AWARD

(By Paul Gibson)

The Bourbon Heights Nursing Home was the recipient of the coveted award recognizing them as the best nursing home in the state by the Kentucky Association of Health Care Facilities (KAHCF). There are 247 nursing homes in the association and each one is awarded the large trophy that signifies the top honor.

“There is an extensive application procedure,” said Glenda McKenzie, Activities Director. “And judges come at least twice during the year to personally see the facility.”

“The judges' visit is very thorough,” said Angie Forsythe, Administrator at Bourbon Heights. “They interview each department head and observe the services we provide residents.”

According to Forsythe, the judges also interview staff members, residents, and volunteers to gain better understanding of how the facility operates.

“The judges really wanted to know what makes us unique,” Forsythe said.

The judges discovered, McKenzie said, “that we are a very diverse facility offering a wide range of services to our residents.”

Currently, Bourbon Heights provides independent living in apartments, personal care, nursing care, day care and out patient rehabilitation.

“I think the judges were impressed with the way we take pride in the care we provide our residents,” Forsythe said. “We are like a family here and the staff provides a loving care for each resident.”

She added that Bourbon Heights has very little turnover in staff and that many staff