

IN RECOGNITION OF STANDARDS
DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS

HON. WILLIAM R. KEATING

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 31, 2012

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the vital contributions that independent, not-for-profit standards development organizations (SDOs) make to our nation's economy and Americans' quality of life.

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), headquartered in my district in Quincy, Massachusetts, is a leading SDO. I am familiar with the work of the NFPA and other, similar non-profit SDOs through my service on the Massachusetts Joint Committee on Public Safety, where model fire codes and sprinkler standards developed and updated by SDOs were integral to the Joint Committee's state-wide effort to promote fire safety.

SDOs and the voluntary consensus standards that they develop are crucial to preserving the quality of life that we, as Americans' enjoy. From the safety of industrial machinery to standard interfaces for audio equipment, SDOs such as, the NFPA, the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, and ASTM International, have been safeguarding our health, safety and prosperity for over a century. Additionally, standardization is essential to the health of our economy. Uniform methods, specifications, and interfaces improve efficiency and reduce uncertainties in the marketplace.

The Federal government has repeatedly affirmed the benefits of SDOs. In his first term, President Ronald Reagan directed all Federal agencies to turn to private-sector voluntary consensus standards whenever appropriate, rather than developing separate government standards. In 1995, Congress codified this policy with the passage of the National Technology Transfer Advancement Act. This legislation recognizes the expertise of private-sector specialists, and their ability to react to emerging challenges more nimbly than their government counterparts. It also recognizes the value of a stakeholder-driven process oriented towards achieving consensus.

NFPA recently demonstrated this responsiveness in the wake of the tragic explosion that occurred during the final stages of construction at Kleen Energy Plant. Six workers

died and nearly 50 others were injured in the explosion. An investigation by the U.S. Chemical Safety Board (CSB) revealed that the explosion was caused by the use of natural gas to remove construction debris from the plant's piping. After its investigation and subsequent safety recommendations, the CSB turned to the NFPA to develop a new safety standard to prevent such explosions in the future. After seeking input from numerous interested parties, the NFPA Standards Council voted in October 2010 to establish a consensus technical committee to develop new standards for gas process safety. Just 18 months after the accident, the NFPA committee issued a new industry standard to prevent future fires and explosions during gas pipe cleaning and purging. I applaud the NFPA for its prompt response to this tragedy. This is just one example of the benefits that standard development organizations provide.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the important work that not-for-profit standards development organizations contribute to developing health, safety and environmental standards that serve the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and beyond.

PRENATAL NONDISCRIMINATION
ACT (PRENDA) OF 2012

SPEECH OF

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 30, 2012

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H.R. 3541, the Prenatal Nondiscrimination Act of 2012. This is a cynical bill under the guise of preventing sex selection which would undermine a woman's right to choose.

Clearly, sex-selective abortions are offensive and unacceptable. But this bill will only interfere with the doctor-patient relationship. Are doctors supposed to interrogate women to determine their motivation for seeking an abortion? What other means must doctors take to ensure that they are not imprisoned as a result of this bill? These threats will only impede open, honest communication between women and their providers and undermine the doctor-patient relationship. Some providers will be discouraged from offering any reproductive

tests and services and as a result, women's access to access safe, legal health care will be jeopardized.

Mr. Speaker, if House Republicans truly wanted to protect women, then they would have allowed a vote on legislation to ensure the right of women to receive equal pay for equal work. Unfortunately they did not. It is for these reasons that I urge my colleagues to oppose H.R. 3541.

IN RECOGNITION OF BOURNE'S
HIGH WATER MARK SIGN

HON. WILLIAM R. KEATING

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 31, 2012

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the unveiling of the high water mark sign in Bourne, Massachusetts, commemorating the hurricane that struck the northeastern United States on September 21, 1938. This storm was among the most powerful tropical cyclones ever recorded in the region.

Striking with virtually no warning, the hurricane devastated the unprepared Northeast and resulted in over 500 deaths and over 1,700 injuries. In the upper Buzzards Bay region, the hurricane produced a storm surge of 11 to 13 feet across. This resulted in significant financial damages, including the total destruction of 2,600 boats and almost 9,000 homes, as well as severe damage to businesses, roads, and railroads. In addition to record-setting gusts and devastating floods, the hurricane severed power lines in Connecticut, sparking catastrophic fires.

The 1938 hurricane serves as a sobering reminder of the raw power of nature, and of the constant need to safeguard our coasts against these deadly storms. We must never forget the contributions and sacrifices that public safety officials make daily to protect us from disaster, and we must never forget the need to support their critical endeavors. Preparedness is every bit as necessary now as it was in 1938, and we neglect the danger posed by tropical storms at our own peril.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in remembering the lives lost on September 21, 1938, as well as reaffirming our commitment to protecting our nation from the ever-present threat of natural disasters.