

All of these projects have already been studied and authorized by the Congress. However, the funding for constructing the projects has lagged, causing a delay in addressing the needs of rural and tribal communities to have potable water delivered for their use.

In 1902, the Reclamation Fund was established by Congress, intended to be used as a funding source to construct water projects in the West. It is funded through a variety of receipts, including Federal mineral leasing receipts. However, the use of monies from the Reclamation Fund has been subject to appropriation, and therefore, large balances have remained in the Fund. The average annual surplus in the Reclamation Fund from FY 2005 through FY 2011 was \$960 million. While these monies were intended to be used for water project construction, they have not always been appropriated when needed.

The bill that is being introduced today would direct that every year \$80 million that would otherwise be deposited in the Reclamation Fund be made available without further appropriation for the construction of the authorized rural water projects—projects that Congress has already determined are in the public interest and should be built.

I would like my colleagues to note that according to Bureau of Reclamation analysis, an increase in funding for the construction of rural water projects to \$80 million per year would reduce the total Federal appropriations needed to complete the projects by more than \$1 billion, due to project costs and inflation. Therefore, this bill will have a positive fiscal impact. The bill also includes language that states that amounts may not be transferred for rural water projects pursuant to the legislation if to do so would raise the deficit.

The legislation provides that the Secretary may not expend amounts under the bill until the Secretary develops programmatic goals that would: enable completion of rural water projects as quickly as possible; reflect the goals and priorities identified in the laws authorizing the rural water projects; and reflect the goals of the Reclamation Rural Water Supply Act of 2006. The bill does not direct that a particular project receive funding, but rather provides that the Secretary develop funding prioritization criteria to serve as a formula for distributing funds consistent with considerations set forth in the bill.

This bill is important to our citizens in rural and tribal communities in the West. Adequate water supplies are fundamental to our way of life, and far too many Americans still live without safe drinking water. Congress has already determined that the rural water projects it has authorized are needed to provide water supplies to our rural and tribal communities and are in the best interests of public.

Mr. President, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this important

legislation, so that the promise of these important water projects can become an on-the-ground reality.

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE INTERNATIONAL BRIDGE

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, the International Bridge at Sault St. Marie stands as an enduring, visible reminder of the connection Michigan has with our neighbor to the north. This nearly 2-mile expanse, quite literally, brings communities in Michigan and Canada closer together, forging a mutually beneficial partnership in the process. To commemorate the construction of the bridge, a new, patriotic lighting scheme will be introduced on the American side of the bridge this week.

Thousands of vehicles cross this bridge each day. In fact, in 2007 alone, nearly 2 million cars traversed this roadway. This bridge is a pathway for commerce and trade; it is a convenient way for families separated by a short distance, but still a Nation apart to visit; and it supports recreation and tourism, which are central to the economies of many of Michigan's communities. Designed by Dr. Carl Gronquist, this sprawling structure has buoyed a number of industries important to Michigan, including steel, paper and forestry.

Before the International Bridge opened to traffic on October 31, 1962, Michiganders crossed the St. Mary's River either by car ferry or by railway. The need for a more efficient means to connect Sault Ste. Marie, MI and Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario was evident. In response, in 1940, Congress approved an international crossing in Sault Ste. Marie, and in 1955, the Canadian Parliament established the St. Mary's Bridge Company to facilitate and oversee an international crossing. The \$16 million construction project that ensued lasted nearly 2 years and gave way to the structure we enjoy today.

Connecting Sault Ste. Marie with a city of 75,000 in Ontario that also serves as an important international trade crossing in Northwestern Ontario has been very beneficial. The theme of this celebration—Celebrating 50 years of International Friendship—speaks powerfully to this point. I also would like to recognize the work of the Sault Ste. Marie Bridge Authority and the International Bridge Administration for their tremendous work and dedication. The work that is done each day to ensure an efficient and steady flow of traffic across this bridge has positively impacted the lives of Michiganders and countless businesses for the last half century. As we look toward the future, it is important to preserve and maintain the International Bridge for future generations.

TRIBUTE TO GUNNERY SERGEANT THOMAS J. BOYD, USMC

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, this Sunday, Marine Corps GySgt Thomas

Boyd, who is currently serving as a legislative fellow in my office, will receive his promotion to master gunnery sergeant at his home in Uniontown, PA, surrounded by his wife Reagan and his family. I would like to take the opportunity to recognize Tom's accomplishments and selfless service to our Nation.

Tom enlisted in the Marine Corps in 1996, following in the footsteps of his father, older brother, and great uncle. He immediately took on the very demanding occupational specialty of signals intelligence, which involves the collection and analysis of enemy communications. It is a unique and critically important specialty that accepts only the highest quality and most trustworthy marines, which tells you a lot about Tom's character.

From 2005 to 2009 Tom was stationed at Fort Meade and served at the National Security Agency. His skills were put to the test in three combat deployments, two to Iraq and one to Afghanistan, during which he supported numerous counterterrorism operations that helped make those countries and our own more secure. The Department of Defense recognized his contributions with the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, one of the highest awards the Department can bestow upon a servicemember.

Last year the Marine Corps selected Tom for its Congressional Fellowship Program, which, as my colleagues know, is highly selective. Tom is one of only two enlisted Marines selected to serve on Capitol Hill this year. While working in a Senate office is considerably less action-packed than the jobs he has had in the recent past, Tom has tackled all the tasks we have assigned to him with the overwhelming enthusiasm and tenacity we expect from our marines.

I know some of our constituents who have met Tom are sometimes surprised to come to my office and find themselves across the table from "Big Country," as Tom is affectionately known among his peers. Then they realize that not only is Tom as dedicated to serving them as any member of any Senator's staff but also that it can be a big advantage to have a man who was clearly born to be a leatherneck on their side.

To my colleagues, should you see Tom walking the halls of the Senate, I ask that you take a moment to congratulate him on his promotion and thank him and his family for their sacrifices on behalf of our country. In his personality, professionalism, and selflessness, Tom Boyd reflects the best traditions of the U.S. Marine Corps.

REMEMBERING VICE ADMIRAL WILLIAM D. HOUSER, USN

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, today I rise to honor a great naval officer and a true friend. Yesterday, VADM William "Bill" Douglas Houser, USN, Retired, was buried with full military