more than ever before, it’s egregious if we do not change this law to allow these brave men and women to fight the fires that threaten our forests, wildlife, and our homes without having to worry about forfeiting past reparations they’ve received from the government.

INTRODUCTION OF THE TERRORIST DISASTER RELIEF FOR SMALL BUSINESSES ACT

HON. JOHN J. LaFALCE
OF NEW YORK
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, September 25, 2001

Mr. LaFALCE. Mr. Speaker, the tragic events of September 11, 2001, have caused a massive disruption of businesses all over the country. The most visible of the economic scars can be found in lower Manhattan, which some 15,000 businesses called home, and in the air transport industry, which the government was forced to close. But, the economic hardships caused by the September 11th terrorist attacks reach far beyond the areas immediately impacted by the attacks and involve all types of businesses.

In order to overcome their current difficulties, businesses who have suffered substantial hardship because of the September 11th terrorist attacks, Gordon has stood up to access to low-cost credit to cover their uninsured losses and to provide needed operating cash while they regain their footing. Congress has provided financial assistance to the airline industry. And, thankfully, many small businesses in the New York City area will qualify for economic injury disaster loans from the Small Business Administration. However, there are many more innocent small businesses who need the Government’s help to overcome the economic difficulties caused by the terrorist attacks and the resulting turmoil in the air transportation industry.

Among the small businesses that have been injured are those that sell goods and services to the airports, airlines and airline passengers. The current crisis has also taken a heavy toll on the entire tourist industry, particularly, the many small businesses that are integral to that industry. The closing of commercial air traffic during the week of September 11th had a severe impact on many businesses that depend on the airlines and air cargo industry for the delivery of items crucial to the conduct of their enterprise. While we cannot yet measure the economic impact of the attacks on the small business community, many small businesses all over the country are clearly suffering.

The SBA has requested for disaster assistance from small businesses all over the United States, including small businesses in the Dallas-Fort Worth area and California, and small businesses from as far away from New York City as Hawaii. But, under the current restrictions that apply to the SBA disaster loan program, the SBA cannot provide disaster assistance to businesses outside of a declared disaster area and contiguous communities.

My bill, the Terrorist Disaster Relief for Small Businesses Act, would provide needed disaster assistance to businesses all over this nation. First, the bill gives the Small Business Administration the authority to provide economic injury disaster loans to a small business located anywhere in the United States that can demonstrate it experienced a substantial economic injury because of the terrorist attacks, including injuries caused by actions taken by the government in response to attack. Additionally, the bill would permit the Administrator of the SBA to relax, as it deems necessary and appropriate, the “small business” size standards for an injured business that, as a technical matter, does not meet the size standards. These exceptions to the normal SBA criteria would only apply to businesses that have been injured by the September 11th attack.

These are extraordinary times that call for extraordinary solutions to overcome the Nation’s current crisis. I believe altering the criteria for SBA disaster loans will help the Nation’s small businesses to begin to recover from the economic hardships caused by the September 11th attack. I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation.

TRIBUTE TO GORDON GALVAN

HON. FORNYTE PETE STARK
OF CALIFORNIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, September 25, 2001

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I would like to pay tribute to Gordon Galvan’s many years of dedicated service on the San Leandro City Council.

A lifelong San Leandro resident, Gordon is a third generation San Leandran and grandson of Spanish immigrants. He is a graduate of St. Leander’s School and San Leandro High School.

Gordon began his service to the local community in 1992 as co-founder and President of the Bancroft Area Neighborhood Association. He went on to be elected in 1994 to the San Leandro City council, representing District One and was re-elected by a mandate in 1998.

During his two terms on the Council, Galvan was recognized as a champion of small and large businesses and a passionate advocate for revitalization of Downtown San Leandro. He led the way for public/private partner investments in the area resulting in over $2.5 million of improvements to downtown San Leandro.

Local and regional civic and community leaders recognized Gordon’s leadership on the Council. His colleagues on the San Leandro City Council elected Galvan for an unprecedented two terms as Vice Mayor.

He served as vice chair of the City of San Leandro’s Disaster Preparedness Council, and worked on San Leandro’s FEMA award-winning Disaster Preparedness Campaign.

Mr. Speaker, the proponents of the Panama proposal hope to include it as an amendment to the Coast Guard Authorization bill. I urge my colleagues to strongly oppose this misguided attempt to undermine one of our nation’s most important maritime laws.