

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

TRIBUTE TO GERALD W. OWENS—
GRAND MARSHAL OF THE 14TH
ANNUAL CELEBRATION OF
LABOR

HON. DONALD M. PAYNE

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 12, 2005

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to rise today to recognize a highly valued citizen of South Orange, New Jersey, which is in my district. Mr. Gerald W. Owens will preside as the Grand Marshal over the 14th Annual Celebration of Labor on Friday, September 9, 2005. He is a devoted husband to Jackie and the father to two children. For almost 5 decades, Mr. Owens has also dedicated his life to the social, political and economic justice of all working Americans.

Active in the International Longshoremen's Association, ILA, since 1958, Mr. Owens has been a rising star in the labor industry. Through the combination of on-the-job union experience with advanced studies in public relations, union organizing and labor law, Gerald has accomplished many feats. Over his career that has spanned in excess of 40 years; he started out as a longshoreman in the Ports of Newark and Elizabeth in New Jersey and has ascended to the ranks of International Vice President of the ILA. However, one of his most honorable successes to date has been his appointment as the International General Organizer of the ILA, AFL-CIO. This achievement marks an important milestone in the union's 113-year history because Mr. Owens is the first African-American to ever serve in that position. In fact, the current president of the union, Mr. John Bowers stated, "This elevation of an African-American to this top ILA Executive Council post is long overdue . . . Gerald Owens has served the ILA with distinction for more than 40 years and I'm certain he will continue to offer outstanding leadership for our union in the future."

His tremendous accomplishments do not end there. Mr. Owens is a founding member and current president of the New Jersey Organization of Black Labor Leaders. He also is the president of the Essex County (New Jersey) chapter of the A. Philip Randolph Institute, a national organization of black trade unionists whose mission is to convey to the labor industry the needs and concerns of black Americans.

Mr. Speaker, I know my colleagues here in the U.S. House of Representatives would join me in honoring Mr. Gerald W. Owens, who is presiding as the Grand Marshal over the 14th Annual Celebration of Labor, for his tireless work in the labor industry. I am proud to have him in my Congressional district and wish him never-ending success in his future endeavors.

HURRICANE KATRINA

HON. AL GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 12, 2005

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I want to join with persons across this great Nation and this world to express my condolences for those who have suffered as a result of Hurricane Katrina. I also want to commend all those people who have worked hard to lift up their fellow man during this time of crisis.

This disaster is one unlike anything we've ever seen before. At one point 80 percent of the city of New Orleans was under water. Up to 1 million families have been displaced. There are estimates that 400,000 to 500,000 people could lose their jobs because of the hurricane. And despite the magnitude of these numbers, they still don't do justice to the human suffering we have seen on television and in person.

But out of every tragedy comes the opportunity for each and every person to show his or her humanity through acts of compassion. That is why I am so proud of my fellow Texans and my fellow Houstonians. Our elected leadership, coalition of community groups, ministers and clergy have come together to make sure that we do everything in our power to help the quarter of a million evacuees we have taken in. In the Houston area alone, we have taken in over 100,000 of our neighbors to the east, 15,000 of which were sheltered in the Astrodome, which is in my Congressional District.

Several organizations in the Houston area are leading the disaster relief effort. Some of the help is coming from volunteers with Operation Compassion, a massive relief effort led by Interfaith Ministries for Greater Houston and spearheaded by the Second Baptist Church. The thousands of volunteers from 131 local congregations have assumed primary responsibility for feeding the masses of storm victims who have taken refuge there. I commend them and others for extending their good will towards others.

As we in Congress look towards our next steps, we must ensure that our top priority remains caring for those who have lost loved ones, lost their homes, and lost their means of providing for their families. They have, through no fault of their own, become the least, the last, and the lost of our society. It is our responsibility to help them back on their feet. To do so they will need food stamp assistance and access to Medicaid. They will need temporary emergency housing and the Federal assistance to help them rebuild their homes and their lives.

We have taken important first steps by passing a \$10.5 billion disaster relief bill last Friday, followed by an additional \$51.8 billion for the Departments of Defense and Homeland Security today. But these are only the first in a long series of actions that we will need to try to repair the physical damage

caused by Hurricane Katrina as well as the lives of those affected by the hurricane. I ask that all of my distinguished colleagues and the people of this Nation join in the effort to help rebuild and sustain the lives of the Hurricane Katrina victims.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 3,
SAFE, ACCOUNTABLE, FLEXIBLE,
EFFICIENT TRANSPORTATION
EQUITY ACT: A LEGACY FOR
USERS

SPEECH OF

HON. DON YOUNG

OF ALASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 29, 2005

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, as the Chairman of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, I had the great honor to serve as the Chairman of the conference committee for H.R. 3, SAFETEA-LU.

The conference committee had to reach agreement on a broad range of issues to be able to send a bill to the President that he could sign. I want to take this opportunity to clarify what I believe was the intent of the conferees concerning the language that became section 5508, the Transportation Technology Innovation and Demonstration Program. This provision extended a program that began under TEA-21. TEA-21 promised that the initial system contemplated by the program would be built out in greater than 40 areas. I have been a long-standing supporter of this public/private partnership that helps travelers avoid highway traffic congestion. It is currently providing up-to-date and accurate traveler information in areas across the country.

I believe it was the conferees intent that all of the existing \$54 million that has been provided for the current contracting team would be used to carry out the existing contract to deploy the current highway congestion information system under Part I. I believe it was our intention that Part I funds would stay in Part I. In this way, if deployment areas do not take advantage of all of the obligated funds, congested cities will have the opportunity to benefit from the \$54 million that is currently obligated under Part I and will be able to proceed under the existing contract with the existing contractor. TEA-21 promised that the initial system would be built out in greater than 40 areas and staying the course with the existing contractor is an important element of keeping that promise. Any funds appropriated for Part II would be recycled within Part II.

Because there is a 180-day clock running for areas to consent to participate in the program, I respectfully urge that USDOT quickly get implementing guidance to the field that is consistent with this intent.

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