

views of a whole array of Senators, and they know who they are. There are many of them, and we are very happy we were able to work with them. Of course, we will continue to work with them if there are ways we can improve this bill even more.

So this is long past time. As I said, it was 2007 when the last WRDA bill became law, so we have an infrastructure that is critical, and part of it is the water infrastructure. That is what we deal with.

Now, what does this bill do? We focus on flood control. We focus on ports and environmental restoration projects where the corps has completed a comprehensive study. Then we also incorporate authorizations for projects that need modifications, and the modifications don't add to the overall cost of the project. For the future, we have developed a system that allows local sponsors to make their case directly to the corps because we are fearful that as new needs come up, there is no path forward. So we do all that in this bill.

I am proud of a lot of provisions in this bill, but one of them is what we call WIFIA—the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act. It is a way to assist localities in need of loans for flood control or wastewater and drinking water infrastructure to receive these loans upfront.

Let me explain that. We expanded a program called TIFIA in the transportation bill dealing with transportation infrastructure. We said where a local government or a region came forward with, say, a sales tax or bond for a series of transportation projects, and they wanted to move quickly and build them in a shorter timeframe, as long as they had that steady stream of funding, the Federal Government, with virtually no risk, could advance these funds and let them build these projects quicker, creating jobs and improving the infrastructure quicker.

So we did this same thing with water. It is a small project, and it is not a replacement for our existing funding through the corps and EPA, but it is a supplement. It is a supplement that would help existing programs leverage more investment in our infrastructure. So WIFIA will allow localities an opportunity to move forward with water infrastructure projects in the same way TIFIA works.

This bill is critical. I mean, let's just say what it is. I know there are people who will offer amendments on subjects ranging—well, let's just say broad-ranging subjects. And it is their right to do it. Senator VITTER and I know that, and it is what it is. It is the Senate and people will come forward. But we hope we will not get bogged down on these nongermane amendments because so much is at stake.

I think this would be a good time for me to mention some of the supporters of our bill: the American Association of Port Authorities, the American Concrete Pressure Pipe Association, the American Council of Engineering Com-

panies, the American Farm Bureau, the American Foundry Society, the American Public Works Association, the American Road and Transportation Builders Association. This list goes on and on.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the list of these supporting organizations.

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

NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS SUPPORTING S. 601

American Association of Port Authorities, American Concrete Pressure Pipe Association, American Council of Engineering Companies, American Farm Bureau Federation, American Foundry Society, American Public Works Association, American Road and Transportation Builders Association, American Society of Civil Engineers, American Soybean Association, Associated General Contractors of America, Association of Equipment Manufacturers, Clean Water Construction Coalition, Concrete Reinforcing Steel Institute, Construction Management Association of America, International Liquid Terminals Association, International Propeller Club of the United States.

International Union of Operating Engineers, Laborers International Union of North America, Management Association for Private Photogrammetric Surveyors (MAPPS), NAIOP, the Commercial Real Estate Development Association, National Grain and Feed Association, National Ready Mixed Concrete Association, National Retail Federation, National Society of Professional Surveyors (NSPS), National Stone, Sand & Gravel Association, National Waterways Conference, Inc., Plumbing Manufacturers International, Portland Cement Association, The American Institute of Architects, The Fertilizer Institute, U.S. Chamber of Commerce, United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America, Waterways Council Inc.

Letter signed by 160 organizations to Members of the United States Senate (April 29, 2013).

Mrs. BOXER. I will say that we are looking at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce supporting this bill, the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America, the Waterways Council, Inc., and the Plumbing Manufacturers, International. Wherever we look, whether it is business or labor, whether it is governmental entities—even the American Farm Bureau Federation, as I said, and Laborers International Union of North America—it is a really important bill. Even the Commercial Real Estate Development Association. Why? Because they know if you are going to sell a house in an area that gets flooded, you need to address the flooding problems. So we do address flooding problems.

We do address port deepening. Believe me, without these port deepening in a lot of our ports—not all our ports need to do it—commerce could come to a halt, and I would say almost a screeching halt. There may be better terminology, but you have to dredge those ports to a certain depth so those vessels can move in and out.

Let me talk about just one area in my home State. Senator VITTER and I often say we see the world a little differently—or a lot differently when it

comes to a lot of issues, but when it comes to infrastructure, we have a lot in common. He had to face the horrific catastrophic situation during and after Katrina, and I look at that issue and say: Oh, my Lord, if we had something like that happen in Sacramento, what would happen? We have so many more people than they have in his State. We have more commerce there. We have the seat of the State government in the Natomas Basin. So we have to strengthen the levees, and we are talking about \$7 billion in property. So we are talking about a need to prevent terrible flooding.

Now, that is just one area of my State—and I want to thank Congresswoman DORIS MATSUI for all the work she has done over on the House side, and the many others who have helped her over there. I just mention her name because she has been so involved in representing Sacramento.

Our bill provides lifesaving flood protection for more than 200,000 residents of Fargo, ND, and Moorhead, MN, who have been fighting rising waters in recent weeks, just as they do most years after the spring thaw. The bill will restore the viability of the levee system that protects Topeka, KS. These levees protect thousands of homes and businesses, and this project will return over \$13 in benefits for every dollar invested.

I know our current Presiding Officer is a fiscal conservative. We are talking about a bill that invests \$1 and gets \$13 back. So flood control and flood protection are critical. All we have to do is look at Sandy to see what happened and look at the cost—one event, \$60 billion. So if we were to invest a portion of that into trying to mitigate these problems before they start, that is what the WRDA bill is all about and why it is so important and essential. So I hope it doesn't get bogged down in extraneous amendments.

I talked about the ports. One of those projects is in Texas, to widen and deepen the Sabine-Neches Waterway, which will have over \$115 million in annual benefits. It transports 100,000 tons of goods every year. It is the top port for the movement of commercial military goods.

Whether you are in a red State, whether you are in a blue State, whether you are in a purple State or, frankly, any other State if there are any, you are protected in this bill. You are covered in this bill.

Look at Florida, the Port of Jacksonville, with safety concerns there for ships entering and exiting this port because of dangerous cross currents. This bill will make it possible to protect that port.

Critical ecosystem restoration: The Florida Everglades. If you have never been to the Everglades, you should go to the Everglades. It is a miraculous place, a God-given treasure. We have to restore it. It needs our attention. We definitely have four new Everglades restoration projects that will move forward in this bill.