



The Washington Connection

Congresswoman **Candice Miller**

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Rep. Miller helps build Momentum on Solutions to Great Lakes Issues 1

Farm Bill Passage means a Positive Farm Future in Michigan 1

Miller Renews Commitment to Support our Veterans 2

Speech: Iraqi's Must Bear the Costs of Reconstruction 3

Miller brings hearing to Port Huron to discuss Great Lakes Protection 4

Hearing Builds Momentum on Solutions to Great Lakes Issues

On Monday, May 12, 2008 Congresswoman Candice Miller (MI-10) participated in a field hearing of the House Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment. Miller was joined by House Transportation and Infrastructure Chairman James Oberstar (MN-8) in focusing federal attention on nutrient levels and water quality in the Great Lakes. Miller released the following statement:



Rep. Miller addresses audience at Field Hearing in Port Huron.

“I am very grateful to Chairman Oberstar for bringing this important hearing to Port Huron and shining the federal spotlight on the Great Lakes,” Miller said. “This hearing highlights important issues facing the lakes, excessive nutrient levels and cutting-edge efforts here to improve water quality through monitoring systems. As a member of the committee, I am proud that we are working to build the Congressional record on the challenges faced by the Great Lakes so that we can work together toward meaningful action.”

Continued on Page 2

FARM BILL PASSAGE MEANS POSITIVE FARM FUTURE IN MICHIGAN

WASHINGTON, DC—Congresswoman Candice Miller (MI-10) recently voted in favor of HR 2419, the Food and Energy Security Act conference report, otherwise known as the Farm Bill. The legislation provides for increased loan rates for sugar farmers and includes the planting prohibition, a measure favored by Michigan specialty crop farmers. Miller released the following statement:

“Michigan’s farmers and producers should be overwhelmingly happy with the new Farm Bill,” Miller said. “This legislation is supported by the Michigan Farm Bureau and every Michigan agricultural industry that I have spoken with as this legislation has moved through Congress. I am very pleased that the House and Senate have worked together to come up with good public policy for our farmers.”

Miller continued, “The sugar loan increase will be the first increase

since 1985. Any excess sugar in the market will go toward ethanol production, an alternative fuel receiving much support in Congress. Loans and grant to research and develop other alternative fuels are also included in the bill. Additionally, our bean producers will find much to like as well; as The Farm Bill will keep excessively wealthy farmers from receiving government subsidies while providing a strong federal policy for family farmers.”

In honor of Memorial Day, Miller Renews Commitment to Support our Veterans

Congresswoman Candice Miller (MI-10) recently announced her renewed commitment to improving benefits for Veterans nationwide and in her district. Miller released the following statement:

“I think it is important for us as Americans to take a moment to thank our Veterans for the sacrifices they have made for our great Nation. I would also like to take this one step further, and charge that as Americans it is our responsibility care for and respect our veterans. My district is home to thousands of veterans who have proudly served our country over the years—and I keep their special needs in mind when I go to the floor to fight for legislation that will provide our veterans with educational and health benefits.

Recently I was given the opportunity to support the GI Bill of 2008, which overwhelmingly passed in the House last week. The Servicemen’s Readjustment Act of 1944 provided our WWII veterans with the opportunity to obtain a four-year degree at a public institution—and this leg-

islation provides the same benefit to our men and women who served in Iraq and Afghanistan. It is important that we give our Veterans consistent educational benefits, and I am glad that many of my colleagues have joined me in providing this very important benefit to the members of our Armed Services.”

This past week Congress brought three Veterans bills to the floor, which Miller had the opportunity to vote in favor of:

- H.R. 3819, the Veterans Emergency Care Fairness Act of 2007, provides reimbursement to veterans for all emergency-treatment received in a non-Veterans Affairs health facility. Healthcare for our veterans should not stop at doors of government healthcare facilities.
- H.R. 5826, the Veterans’ Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2008, increases the rate of compensation for our veterans who sustained disabilities while serving our country. This Act also provides for surviving spouses and children

of veterans while taking in to account current cost-of-living estimates.

- H.R. 5856, the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Facility Authorization and Lease Act of 2008, ensures that our Veterans Affairs health facilities remain up-to date and can provide the best possible care for our sick and injured veterans.

“As a tireless advocate for Veterans benefits I am proud to support measures that enhance veterans’ healthcare,” Miller continued “in the wake of this important Holiday, I renew my commitment to support and champion for Veterans’ rights. The sacrifice our American heroes have made must not be forgotten once the parades and celebrations of Memorial Day fade—it is incumbent upon us to provide our veterans with the benefits they so richly deserve.”

(Continued) Hearing Builds Momentum on Solutions to Great Lakes Issues

Miller continued, “One of my principle advocacies throughout my career in public service, and certainly since being elected to Congress, has been fighting for the protection and preservation of our magnificent Great Lakes. While we have also made significant progress on many fronts, including the recent passage of legislation in the House to regulate the discharge of ballast water from ocean vessels and critical federal funding for water quality monitoring systems,

more needs to be done. Maintaining strong partnerships at the local, state, and federal level is critical to building upon our momentum. I am pleased to work with my colleagues in the House, particularly Chairman Oberstar, and with the local officials and communities to ensure that the Great Lakes are able to be enjoyed for generations to come.”

“I would also like to thank our panel of distinguished witnesses for their participation in the hearing and for

their knowledgeable testimony that provides the foundation towards Congressional legislative action to meet these challenges. I am ready to build upon this hearing and keep the ball rolling to find legislative solutions that will continue to benefit our magnificent Great Lakes,” Miller concluded.

IRAQIS MUST BEAR THE COSTS OF RECONSTRUCTION

Congresswoman Candice Miller (MI-10) spoke on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives about the need for Iraqis to bear the costs of reconstructing their now-free country. Miller's floor statement is below:

Time for the Iraqis to pay for their own freedom

Our entire nation honors the brave men and women in our Armed Services who have sacrificed greatly in the effort to bring freedom and liberty to the people of Iraq.

And we recognize the sacrifice of the American taxpayers, who have shouldered the financial burden of this effort to protect America.

It is now time for Iraq to stand up and shoulder the burden of protect-

ing their own freedoms and it is long past time for Iraq to start paying its own way.

With the cost of oil, and the money that Iraq is making on oil, they need to be paying, at a minimum, for their own reconstruction.

As we continue to transition from American forces to Iraqi security forces – we also need to quickly transition from the American taxpayer footing the bill to the now free country of Iraq paying to protect their own freedom and rebuilding their own country.

Americans understand that freedom is not free and the Iraqi people need to understand that securing their own freedom will require their own investment.



[Congresswoman Candice Miller speaks to the cost of Iraqi Reconstruction on the House Floor](#)

Article: Miller brings hearing to Port Huron to discuss Great Lakes protection

By Nicholas Selewski
Port Huron Times Herald

Rep. Candice Miller was in town Monday to help lead a fact-finding hearing for the U.S. House of Representatives' subcommittee on water resources and environment, of which she is a member.

The hearing, which was at the St. Clair County Administrative Building in Port Huron, focused on the impact harmful nutrients have on the Great Lakes.

The hearing, which was chaired by Rep. Jim Oberstar, D-Minn., also discussed the possibility of including a locally developed water monitoring system in the upcoming Water Resources Development Act of 2008.

Miller said the meeting would help to bring federal attention to the current state of the Great Lakes. She said congressional action must be "reasonable but is absolute necessary to protect the quality of the Great Lakes."

Harmful nutrients, specifically phosphorous, are naturally occurring but greatly enhanced by industrial, agricultural and urban activity. House-

hold cleaners, fertilizer runoff and heavy industry contribute to the proliferation of harmful nutrients. Nutrient contamination can have pronounced effects on large areas, resulting in algae blooms, fish kills and hypoxic "dead" zones. Increased levels of nutrients also can have public health effects and lead to unsafe drinking water.

A panel of experts spoke at the hearing.

Dr. Carl Freeman, a biologist at Wayne State University, said self-policing among polluting companies in the Great Lakes and along the St. Clair River is not working.

"In my opinion, the policy of self-policing is fatally flawed," he said.

Oberstar agreed, citing the recent Federal Aviation Administration debacle where almost 1,000 aircraft were grounded as an example of ineffective self-policing.

Freeman also said water monitoring needed to be enhanced to "look at more types of organisms and more kinds of chemicals ... than we presently screen for."

Freeman mentioned a local water monitoring system that, when fully deployed, will be able to analyze 10,000 chemicals in five minutes and will be "the

first in the country that analyzes water quality on the same temporal scale as the flow of the river." This, Freeman said, will allow polluters to be identified correctly and swiftly, two things that have been difficult in the past.

Jim Ridgway, executive director of the Alliance of Rouge Communities, helped develop the monitoring system.

"Monitoring, permitting (and) enforcing," he said, was not the "sexy part of the job," but was extremely important.

"Simply stated, nutrients are degrading our Great Lakes and I have no reason to believe that the degradation will abate in my lifetime," he said. Miller said the success of the monitoring system was such that it could be used throughout the nation.

The local system currently takes measurements every 15 minutes and is able to "point source" a pollutant and find the polluter.

Miller said since the system began measuring pollution levels, potential polluters have been more careful and chemical spills have gone down.

"I don't know if it's serendipity or coincidence but ..." Miller said to laughter.



U.S. House of Representatives

Shelby Township Office
48653 Van Dyke Ave.
Shelby Township, MI 48317
Phone: 586-997-5010
Fax: 586-997-5013

Washington, D.C. Office
228 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
Phone: 202-225-2106

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