

Mr. DONNELLY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2787, CJ's Home Protection Act of 2007, introduced by my colleague and friend from Indiana (Mr. *Ellsworth*). H.R. 2787 would require that weather radios be installed in all new manufactured homes manufactured or sold in the United States.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation passed the Financial Services Committee unanimously on September 18 of this year. It would ensure that manufactured homes continue to provide the highest level of safety to their residents in the event of devastating weather conditions, such as hurricanes and tornadoes, which many regions of the country, including my home State of Indiana, are all too familiar with.

In Indiana, and in my congressional district, we have a proud and a strong tradition of providing first-class manufactured housing for Americans and providing quality jobs for Hoosiers. Manufactured homes house 22 million people in over 10.5 million homes. These manufactured homes have continued a tradition of quality and safe construction over the years. They present a high-quality, affordable housing option for families, and will continue to do so for years to come.

Mr. Speaker, this is a thoughtful and deeply personal piece of legislation, and I commend Mr. *Ellsworth* for working together with manufacturers and advocates alike to craft a bill in H.R. 2787 that works for everybody. I urge Members to vote in favor of this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I am glad to yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. *Ellsworth*).

Mr. ELLSWORTH. I would like to thank the gentleman, my good friend from Indiana (Mr. *Donnelly*).

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of CJ's Home Protection Act. Nearly 2 years ago, a killer F3 tornado struck my district in southwest Indiana. The tornado hit a manufactured housing community after most people had gone to bed on a Saturday night, and it took the lives of 25 Hoosiers, 20 in my county and five in Warrick County next door, lives that might have been saved if the victims knew a storm was approaching.

CJ Martin, an energetic, smiling 2-year-old boy, was one of the victims that night. He and the other 24 victims are the reason I am here today, as well as the victims who have suffered the same across our country. His picture is a reminder of the destruction that comes to families and communities when severe weather strikes without warning.

Mr. Speaker, I was the sheriff of the county back in 2005, and I oversaw the recovery effort in the wake of this storm. The picture doesn't do it justice.

The horror and devastation the storm left behind is something I will remember for the rest of my life. That is why this bill is so important to me.

I met Kathryn Martin, CJ's mother, right after the storm, and in the months afterwards she took that pain and suffering and turned it into an effort to pass this same legislation in the State of Indiana, which she was successful in doing.

Kathryn was successful in getting the bill passed, and because of the awareness she raised about weather radios, the people in my hometown of Evansville, Indiana, have the most weather radios in households per capita.

When I met Kathryn, I promised her that if I ever got to Congress, I would introduce a Federal bill that did the same thing she was trying to push in our State. This bill before us today fulfills that promise. CJ's Home Protection Act amends the Federal Manufactured Home Construction and Safety Standard to require that each manufactured home delivered for sale shall be supplied with a weather radio inside the manufactured home.

One might ask, not every area in this country suffers tornadoes. You are right about that. A tornado took CJ's life, but it could have just as easily been a fire like in California, flash flooding and even tsunamis. An added bonus of this bill would be that weather radios are also used to put out AMBER alerts.

The radio must be capable of broadcasting emergency information related to local weather conditions, equipped with a tone alarm and specific alert message encoding, and comply with Consumer Electronics Association standards for public receivers.

Like a smoke detector, these inexpensive devices can provide families with the warning they need to take action and protect themselves when severe weather strikes. This bill is about improving public safety, plain and simple. It is not about demonizing the manufactured housing industry. Kathryn and John Martin and the other residents of this community love their homes, and the manufactured homes provide affordable, high-quality homes for thousands of American families.

In fact, when my wife Beth and I were first married, we agreed to buy a manufactured home as our first home. Unfortunately, the manufactured housing park told us we were too young to move there so we had to make other arrangements.

I continue to be a strong supporter of manufactured housing. I see this legislation as adding one more feature to enhance the safety features of these structures. This bill is sponsored by the American Red Cross, the International Association of Firefighters, and the Michigan Committee for Severe Weather Awareness.

Before I close, I want to thank the chairman of this committee, **BARNEY FRANK, SPENCER BACHUS**, Congressman **DENNIS MOORE** and Congresswoman **KAY GRANGER** for their support and being supporters of this bill, as well as Congressman **JOE DONNELLY**. I would also like to thank my staff for their tireless work on this effort.

Severe weather does not distinguish between Republicans and Democrats. It doesn't care whether you live in Indiana, California, Alabama, or Kansas. This is public safety legislation, and for a mere \$30 to \$80, we can perhaps save the next 2-year-old boy from this type of devastation.

Mr. DONNELLY. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BACHUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of CJ's Home Protection Act of 2007.

Congressman *Ellsworth* said a picture is worth a thousand words, and he held up a picture of CJ Martin. When the Congressman brought CJ's mother, Kathryn Martin, to my office, he brought that picture with him. It brought back memories to me of another picture, of not a little boy but of a little girl, and I have that picture with me today.

This is a picture of Whitney Crowder. Now, unlike CJ, I am happy to say that today she is an eighth grader in a Tuscaloosa city school. She is doing well, but she has had a lot to overcome. Just like CJ, she and her family lived in manufactured housing.

Let me tell you, manufactured housing in the South has replaced a lot of substandard housing. It provides affordable housing for a lot of Alabamians. As many as one out of five Alabamians lives in a manufactured house. It is affordable. It is clean, and it provides a very good home.

Whitney was living in one of these manufactured houses. An alert went out that said a tornado was 30 miles off. She had approximately 20 minutes; but the TV wasn't on. She didn't have a weather alert radio. And although the TV stations were able to track that storm and to tell within a quarter mile where it was going and when it would arrive there, she and her grandmother and the rest of her family didn't have the TV on. Some people say why don't you require these in cars. Why just manufactured housing? Well, in fact studies show when people are in cars they have the radio on and more often than not they receive an alert.

But as is the case in Alabama with this storm and another storm that took 32 lives a few years before that, people were asleep. I think the Martins were asleep. They had no idea that a killer tornado was bearing down on them, even though warnings were going out.

As I said, although I am happy to say that Whitney survived the tornado, her brother Wesley, 16-month-old, and her father did not. They were killed.

We have come to a time in our country where we really have no excuse not to do the few elementary things we can do to prevent the death or at least lessen the likelihood of the death of CJ Martin in Indiana or Wesley Crowder and his dad, Whitney's father, in Alabama. Technology today in an F-5 or F-4 storm gives 30 to 40 minutes' warning. With that warning you only need two things: You need shelter from the storm, you need a place to go, and you need to receive that warning.

Now, in 2003 this Congress passed the Tornado Shelters Act, which allows communities to use community block grant money to build shelters, a shelter from the storm, a shelter that could exist for the Martins or the Crowder family, and a mobile community.

I am happy to report in my district, the Sixth Congressional District of Alabama, we now have six of these shelters in or near manufactured housing communities. But people don't have to go to those. If they are in manufactured housing, they can go to a nearby building with a basement or interior room. Manufactured housing, a mobile home as some of us call them, they don't have basements and interior rooms. It is not wrong; it is just something they are not designed to have. But there are permanent structures nearby, whether it be a school, a tornado shelter that we authorized in 2003, or maybe even their parents' house. The Crowders had an aunt and uncle that lived only about 400 yards away in a site-built house with a basement. They would have been safe from that storm. The technology was there to warn them. The shelter was there to receive them, but there was no weather radio.

Now, what's the cost of a radio? Some people have talked about the cost that you are imposing, although the manufactured housing industry as far as I know has said they support this bill. Well, Wal-Mart just came out with a weather radio for \$12. So that's the cost if you buy them in bulk. You can put them in for \$12 in a mobile home, manufactured housing. \$12. What is the cost of not acting? For the Crowder family there are all sorts of costs. The greatest cost was the loss of two individuals, a little 16-month-old boy, Whitney's little brother, and her father. Also the cost to Whitney and her mother and the 12 other people injured by this storm. The cost was several million dollars in health care costs.

Now, we are not here to save money; we are here to save lives. But this bill will not only save lives; it will save money. A killer tornado like this hit Oak Grove at night, and among the things it did was paralyze a man. That man is still paralyzed to this day and his cost of treatment is, as we all know, hundreds of thousands of dollars a year. One radio in that gentleman's manufactured housing home could have saved him a life of paralysis. But, instead, it took 30 lives and denied him mobility for the rest of his life.

As the Congressman from Indiana said, this is not about Republicans or Democrats. There are certain things we ought to say, it is time to do this; and technology has reached that time. When 40 percent to 50 percent to sometimes as many as 60 percent of the deaths every year from these killer tornadoes are in mobile homes, manufactured housing, and families live in these houses, whether they be our grandparents, our parents, our children, our neighbors, our loved ones, or people we don't even know, you see the devastation here. There were site-built homes here. This is a manufactured house. Twenty-seven manufactured housing units in this area, a mobile home community, no longer existed.

As the gentleman from Indiana said, looking at this picture really doesn't do it justice. People actually commented when they came upon this area which was about half a mile long and 400 yards wide, it looked like a garbage dump. You couldn't tell there had been a community there. It looked like there were a few junk cars because the cars were rolled over and over.

We can rebuild these communities; but CJ, we can't bring him back. We can't bring Whitney's little brother and father back, but we can do our best for literally pennies to prevent some of these deaths.

I think that is why 55 TV stations throughout this Nation have made this their cause. They visited us in Washington last year. They said, Look, we will get the warning out and there are shelters available. But please require the installation of a \$12 radio so we can bridge that gap between warning and safe shelter.

That is what we are here to do today. In this House where we sometimes are in conflict and at loggerheads, can't we this time come together in a united way in an effort that will cost almost nothing and which the manufactured housing industry said we are willing to do this, and require these radios. And not only when a tornado comes or when a devastating flood comes like came to Texas and people were asleep in a mobile home community and several of those homes were swept away. This will save lives.

So I commend CJ Martin's mother. That's what America is about, someone saying I lost my son but I don't want it to happen again. It is about the Crowder family who wrote me a letter, a grandmother saying please push this bill.

We will never go back and know whether CJ could have survived had this legislation been passed. We will never know whether Wesley Crowder and his father would survive, but we do know by talking to people throughout the United States that these radios have in many, many cases already saved lives and will save lives if we install them in manufactured housing.

We have a shot at significantly reducing over half the deaths from tornados simply by taking the step together united, Republicans and Democrats, and passing this legislation.

I commend Chairman *Frank* for expeditiously moving this legislation, and I commend the Member from Indiana for his thoughtfulness and his care and dedication to this issue.

Mr. DONNELLY. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the ranking member for his thoughtful and eloquent remarks; Congressman *Ellsworth* for his tireless effort on behalf of this, and the manufactured housing industry for their assistance.

Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. *Donnelly*) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2787, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.