

efficiently. Those mechanisms include a broad-based Task Force to evaluate evidence-based treatments and services, demonstration grants to enable states to provide evidence-based treatments and services, one-time planning grants and follow-on demonstration grants for states to provide services to adults, and supplemental grants to University Centers of Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Research, Education, and Services to allow the centers to train professionals who treat or serve individuals with autism, as well as the creation of four new University Centers of Excellence. To complement and further enhance the grant programs established under this Act, this legislation also provides assistance to a national nonprofit organization for establishment of a national technical assistance center and provides assistance for protection and advocacy systems.

Additionally, to fill an information gap important to almost all affected families, service providers, and government organizations, the legislation calls for the Government Accountability Office to conduct a study and release a report on the ways in which autism treatments and services are currently financed, including policies for public and private health insurance.

This is truly bipartisan, bicameral legislation, and I am gratified that Representatives ELIOT ENGEL of New York and CHIP PICKERING of Mississippi joined Representative DOYLE and myself in introducing this legislation. We are all most appreciative that critically acclaimed actor and star of the "West Wing" Bradley Whitford, co-founder of Cure Autism Now and board member of Autism Speaks Jonathan Shestack, and President of the Autism Society of America Lee Grossman joined us this week in announcing the introduction of the EPIAA. Their support, along with that of other advocates for individuals with autism, will be critical as this legislation advances in the House and Senate.

OFFERING HEARTFELT CONDOLENCES TO THE VICTIMS AND THEIR FAMILIES REGARDING THE HORRIFIC VIOLENCE AT VIRGINIA TECH AND TO STUDENTS, FACULTY, ADMINISTRATION AND STAFF AND THEIR FAMILIES WHO HAVE BEEN AFFECTED

SPEECH OF

**HON. MARY FALLIN**

OF OKLAHOMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 18, 2007*

Ms. FALLIN. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to discuss something that is neither Democrat nor Republican in nature, but simply American. That, Mr. Speaker, is the greatness of this nation and of the American community, the extraordinary ability of American men and women to overcome tragedy and to be stronger for it.

Twelve years ago today, the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building was destroyed by an explosion that claimed the lives of 168 men, women and children, and that left over 800 injured. At the time, it was the deadliest terror attack ever carried out on American soil.

Like everyone else in Oklahoma, I can remember exactly where I was when I heard the

news. I remember seeing the carnage on television, and later that day, in person, and thinking "How can this have happened? What kind of person would do this?" And I saw the acts of one deranged mad man bring our city to a standstill, while the nation watched and grieved.

But even before the smoke and rubble had been cleared, I saw something wonderful. I saw complete strangers coming together, praying, and comforting each other. I saw a state and then an entire nation rally behind the families who had lost their loved ones. And rather than a group of victims, the men and women of Oklahoma became a group of heroes, facing down terrorists and rebuilding both their city and their lives.

Twelve years later, we still bare the scars of that awful day. We will never forget. And today, the Oklahoma City Bombing Memorial stands as a reminder of our pain and our heartbreak in the days and months after that attack.

But the memorial stands for more than that. It reminds us of the strength of our community. It reminds us of a city and a state that came together after a devastating attack to heal itself and to rebuild. And finally, it reminds us of the greatness of this country and of the power of American hope, even in the face of the most heartbreaking of tragedies.

Our memorial is a monument to our sadness. But it is also a monument to our hope and ultimately to our strength. Today we are a thriving city. We have a new federal building which is stronger and safer than the one that was destroyed. And after facing tremendous adversity, we became a stronger people.

On Monday, the nation and the state of Virginia suffered another terrible tragedy, when a crazed gunman shot and killed 33 men and women on the Virginia Tech campus. It is yet another tragedy of almost unimaginable proportions—innocent students living in what they thought was a peaceful sanctuary, only to have their lives cut short by a mad man.

In a time of sadness, I believe that the story of the Oklahoma City Bombing can deliver a message of hope to the families and friends of the victims, and indeed to the nation.

Twelve years ago today we saw tragedy and death. But we also witnessed the healing power of prayer and the strength of friendship and community. We found God in the most trying of times and we found ourselves stronger for it.

My message to the students and faculty of Virginia Tech is this: your community and your faith are more powerful than the destructive urges of one crazed gunman. Again and again the people of this great nation are faced with adversity and tragedy, and again and again we overcome that tragedy and grow stronger. So will you.

And while you struggle to find meaning in this calamity and to deal with the pain and sadness of that terrible event, you should know that all of America stands with you, and prays with you, and will ultimately heal with you.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. TED POE**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 19, 2007*

Mr. POE. Madam Speaker, due to other Congressional business, I unfortunately missed a recorded vote on the House floor on Tuesday, April 17, 2007.

Had I been able to vote that day, I would have voted "yes" on rollcall vote No. 214.

ON THE INTRODUCTION OF "THE NORTHWESTERN NEW MEXICO RURAL WATER PROJECTS ACT"

**HON. TOM UDALL**

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 19, 2007*

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Madam Speaker, I rise today to re-introduce The Northwestern New Mexico Rural Water Projects Act. This legislation, which was also introduced today in the Senate by my colleagues from New Mexico, Senators BINGAMAN and DOMENICI, will ratify the historic San Juan River Settlement Agreement. This agreement, signed by the Navajo Nation and the State of New Mexico, will provide for the development of a rural water system to address the water needs of numerous New Mexicans, many of them members of the Navajo Nation.

Once ratified, the settlement agreement will resolve the Navajo Nation's water rights. It will also provide a water supply for Gallup, New Mexico, and recognize authorized and existing uses of San Juan River basin water. In exchange for relinquishing some of their claims to water from the San Juan River basin, the Navajo Nation will benefit from water development projects which include the Navajo-Gallup project and the Navajo Nation Municipal pipeline. Incredibly, even now in 21st-century America, more than 70,000 Navajos must still haul water daily for residential use. These water projects will go a long way toward rectifying that grievous situation.

The Navajo Nation, the State of New Mexico and many other residents of northwestern New Mexico put a tremendous amount of effort into reaching an agreement that will provide a more secure future for many vulnerable communities. I am proud to be able to contribute today to their hard work and diligent commitment by introducing the legislation in the House. I look forward to working with my colleagues to pass this legislation and move these important water projects forward.

RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF MR. ROSS P. MARINE, HONORARY CONSUL FOR THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC

**HON. EMANUEL CLEAVER**

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 19, 2007*

Mr. CLEAVER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize one of my constituents, the Honorary Consul for the Slovak Republic, Mr.