

**AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE
TO H. RES. 1376
OFFERED BY MS. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON OF
TEXAS**

Amend the preamble to read as follows:

Whereas the Okeechobee Hurricane, also known as Hurricane San Felipe Segundo, formed in the Atlantic Ocean, traveled through the Caribbean Sea, and up the eastern coast of the United States between September 10 and September 20, 1928;

Whereas on September 16, 1928, the Okeechobee Hurricane made landfall in the continental United States at Palm Beach County, Florida, and proceeded north over Lake Okeechobee, after which it decreased steadily in intensity before dying in Ontario, Canada;

Whereas the Okeechobee Hurricane attained the highest classification of Category 5 for tropical cyclone intensity on the Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Scale, with winds exceeding 160 miles per hour;

Whereas the Okeechobee Hurricane is officially recognized by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration as the second deadliest hurricane on record in United States history, exacting the tragic loss of approximately 3,000 lives in the United States and its territories;

Whereas approximately 75 percent of fatalities from the Okeechobee Hurricane in the United States were migrant

farm workers, the vast majority of which were African-American;

Whereas the extensive impact of the Okeechobee Hurricane on African-American migrant workers in southern and central Florida was memorialized in the famous 1937 literary work of Zora Neale Hurston, *Their Eyes Were Watching God*;

Whereas the Okeechobee Hurricane exacted horrendous damage valued at over \$16,000,000,000, adjusted for inflation, to the infrastructure and towns of western Palm Beach County alone;

Whereas many of those killed by the Okeechobee Hurricane in southern Florida were buried in segregated mass graves, such as the more than 670 African-American victims in a mass grave in West Palm Beach;

Whereas the Nation and the State of Florida have taken steps to respond to the Okeechobee Hurricane and other storm events with the construction of storm damage reduction projects to mitigate the loss of life and property;

Whereas the Herbert Hoover Dike's system surrounding Lake Okeechobee consists of 143 miles of levee with 19 culverts, hurricane gates, and other water control structures that provide flood and storm damage reduction and other water control benefits;

Whereas on November 2, 2007, the Army Corps of Engineers Dam Safety Action Classification External Peer Review Panel designated the Herbert Hoover Dike with Class I designation of "urgent and compelling," the highest risk category;

Whereas a breach of the Herbert Hoover Dike or similarly designated structures throughout the Nation could poten-

tially cause catastrophic loss of life and poses grave economic and environmental consequences to the surrounding communities; and

Whereas economically disadvantaged and migrant communities are at increased risk for extensive damage and loss of life associated with natural disasters: Now, therefore, be it

Amend the resolving clause to read as follows:

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2 (1) memorializes the tragic loss of approxi-
3 mately 3,000 lives in the United States and its terri-
4 tories due to the Okeechobee Hurricane of 1928;

5 (2) recognizes the enduring importance of hur-
6 ricane preparedness measures, enhanced evacuation,
7 emergency plans, and disaster response training es-
8 pecially in economically disadvantaged communities
9 to prevent a disproportionate impact of natural dis-
10 asters and disparities in disaster response;

11 (3) recognizes the role of relevant Federal agen-
12 cies, research institutes, universities, and disaster re-
13 sponse organizations in providing intensity fore-
14 casting, long-range projections of hurricane activity,
15 emergency management, and hurricane and storm
16 damage reduction to better prepare for, respond to,
17 and mitigate the extensive loss of life and dev-
18 astating impacts of hurricanes and storms;

1 (4) fully supports initiatives to enhance our un-
2 derstanding of storm impacts on physical structures,
3 including water management systems and other in-
4 frastructure that may be vulnerable to the most in-
5 tense of storms;

6 (5) urges the State of Florida and local govern-
7 ments to—

8 (A) commemorate and memorialize the
9 80th anniversary of the Okeechobee Hurricane
10 of 1928 and its associated tragic loss of ap-
11 proximately 3,000 lives in the United States
12 and its territories; and

13 (B) appropriately recognize mass graves of
14 the victims of the Okeechobee Hurricane;

15 (6) urges the Federal government, and State
16 and local governments, to—

17 (A) take appropriate actions to encourage
18 hurricane and disaster preparedness, education,
19 response, and mitigation; and

20 (B) support programs and initiatives that
21 promote disaster preparedness, education, re-
22 sponse, and mitigation especially in economi-
23 cally disadvantaged and migrant communities;

24 (7) commends the Army Corps of Engineers for
25 its ongoing rehabilitation of the Herbert Hoover

1 Dike and encourages continued collaboration among
2 Federal, State, and local governments toward expe-
3 ditious completion of the rehabilitation effort; and
4 (8) recommits itself to hurricane preparedness,
5 safety education, response, and mitigation for all
6 communities in the 110th Congress.

