Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to rise in support of H.R.

4939. I would like to thank the Appropriations Committee leadership for

their efforts to provide our men and women in uniform with the

equipment that they need as they continue their efforts in Iraq,

Afghanistan and throughout the world. My colleagues on the House Armed

Services Committee and I have fought for enhanced force protection

equipment, much of which is included in this bill. H.R. 4939 includes

$410 million for up-armored Humvees and $2 billion to develop and

procure jammers for improvised explosive devices. Given the number of

U.S. casualties resulting from IEDs, jammer technology is one of the

most important investments this Congress can make to protect our

troops.

I am also pleased that this legislation provides more than $19

billion in much-needed assistance to the victims of Hurricanes Katrina,

Rita and Wilma. Months after those storms battered our Gulf Coast, many

Americans are still displaced, and basic services are not available in

places like New Orleans. Given the federal government's insufficient

efforts in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, it is our responsibility to

provide the affected residents and businesses with the resources and

assistance they need to rebuild.

This measure will also greatly assist those facing exorbitant heating

bills this winter. After Hurricanes Katrina and Rita damaged domestic

energy sources, all Americans experienced higher energy costs, but the

burden was particularly heavy for low-income residents in cold

climates. H.R. 4939 will allow states to access $1 billion in Low

Income Home Energy Assistance (LIHEAP) funding more quickly, which will

be welcome news to states such as Rhode Island that are struggling to

help families in need.

I greatly appreciate the Committee's inclusion of assistance to the

victims of genocidal violence in Darfur and to train and equip the

African Union peacekeeping troops. To date, at least one hundred

thousand people have been killed, with millions more displaced. It is

impossible to view the images from Sudan without being outraged at the

cruelty and injustice of the situation. Our nation must do more to

prevent further violence. Last year, I advocated for funding for

African Union peacekeepers in the Defense Appropriations bill, and

though that was not successful, H.R. 4939 funds peacekeeping missions

in Sudan and encourages greater involvement by the United Nations.

Finally, in welcome news to the American people, the legislation

blocks Dubai Ports World from assuming control over six U.S. ports as

part of their acquisition of P&O Steam Navigation Company. As a member

of the Homeland Security Committee, I strongly opposed the sale because

of the lack of a comprehensive investigation into the national security

implications. We need to ensure that foreign investment decisions are

based on real national security considerations and not just financial

gain. I have been working to enhance port security in our nation, and

the Dubai ports deal reminds Americans that until appropriate measures

are taken, our ports will continue to be vulnerable. I am pleased that

H.R. 4939 contains this commonsense provision, but we must do more to

secure our infrastructure and improve Congressional oversight of

foreign investment decisions.

Again, I thank my colleagues for their efforts on this important

bill, and I urge all Members to support its passage.