

February 27, 2007

Mr. Speaker, my state of Florida is going through a crisis. A crisis that began with the devastating hurricanes that ripped through my state in recent years. A crisis made worse by the overwhelming tornadoes that plagued central Florida earlier this month.

These and other natural disasters have pushed homeowners' insurance rates to unaffordable levels. And as a result, many of my constituents have been forced to leave the areas they call home.

It is incumbent upon this body to pass legislation that would help my state and others affected by these forces reduce the costs of skyrocketing homeowners' insurance rates.

I have introduced H.R. 913, the Hurricane and Tornado Mitigation Investment Act, to do just that. My bill would provide tax incentives to home and business owners to better protect their homes and businesses from major storms to reduce the loss of innocent lives and destruction of private property. The end result would be more manageable insurance rates.

Mr. Speaker, hurricane season begins in a few months, but the tornados that hit my state are a stark reminder that Mother Nature doesn't keep a calendar. I encourage my colleagues to support H.R. 913. I yield back the balance of my time.