

time to stop the bleeding to make sure our heroes are removed from the conflict that is inflicting so much damage. We can start winning the war on suicide by ending the war in Afghanistan.

Let's bring our troops home now.

#### NATASHA'S STORY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, Natasha's life changed because she was the prey of a sexual predator.

Here's the beginning of her dramatic story:

In 1993, I was violently raped, sodomized and robbed at gunpoint by an unknown assailant. When I escaped and thankfully found myself in my apartment, my roommate insisted that I go to the hospital.

I agreed to wait for an ambulance, even though my first instinct was to take a shower. I'm so grateful today that I made that choice to go to that hospital.

Mr. Speaker, Natasha is one of many victims of this barbaric and dastardly crime. According to information released by the Centers for Disease Control, nearly one in five women in America has been raped at some point in their lives. As both a former prosecutor and a judge in Texas, I was involved with the criminal trials of rape cases for 30 years.

I learned firsthand the devastation that sexual assault victims experience, and I understand and learned that sexual assault does not just physically harm the victim; it harms their entire being both physically, emotionally, and mentally; and the pain sometimes lasts forever. Mr. Speaker, rapists try to steal the soul from their victims, and they try to destroy the self-worth of victims, and sometimes they do.

One of the most critical pieces of evidence for rape trials is the rape kit, a tool that gathers forensic evidence, including DNA evidence, to link the rapist to the crime. But, unfortunately, rape kits often languish in evidence rooms across the United States, some untested for years, some discarded before ever being tested, and some gather dust so long that the statute of limitations on the crime of rape has expired and the criminal can never be prosecuted. This ought not to be.

Mr. Speaker, Natasha's story did not end in that cold hospital examination room. She says further:

Ten years later, in 2003, I received a call from the New York City District Attorney's office. My rape kit, which unbeknownst to me had been sitting on a shelf for almost 10 years, had at last been finally processed. I had long since reconciled the fact that my perpetrator would never be held accountable for his actions. But now there was hope.

After a long trial, Victor Rondon was tried before a jury of his peers in 2008 and was found guilty on all eight counts of violent assault against me. He's in jail now for a long time. The best part for me is that he can never hurt anyone else.

My rape kit sat on a shelf for many years. It was not just a number in a police department. My rape kit was me—a human being.

Every rape kit that sits on the shelf somewhere is a human being.

Mr. Speaker, Natasha's story humanizes rape kits ignored in evidence rooms throughout the country. Victims of sexual assault deserve justice, and their perpetrators deserve to be punished by courts and juries in America.

Stories like Natasha's compelled Congresswoman CAROLYN MALONEY from New York and me to introduce the Sexual Assault Forensic Evidence Registry Act, the SAFER Act, in the House, and Senators CORNYN and BENNETT to introduce the same bill in the Senate. This bill would allow existing funds to be used to provide grants to States and localities to audit their rape kit backlog and also would call upon the Attorney General to create an Internet-based rape kit registry for sexual assault evidence testing. Estimates of untested rape kits are as high as 400,000 in America according to Human Rights Watch.

□ 1040

According to the DOJ's National Institute of Justice, 43 percent of the Nation's law enforcement agencies don't even have a computerized system to track forensic evidence, either in their inventory or after it is sent to a crime lab. The SAFER Act would allow criminal evidence to be prosecuted and processed, and these do-bads to be held accountable for their dastardly deeds.

Mr. Speaker, the insensitive say there's no money for these exams, these rape kit tests. Well, Congress needs to find the money. Maybe, instead of sending money to foreign countries to help them, keep some of that money in America to help American rape victims like Natasha. Help them get justice. Because, Mr. Speaker, justice is what we do in America.

And that's just the way it is.

#### FEDERAL RESERVE TRANSPARENCY ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DUNCAN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, later today, we will vote on H.R. 459, the Federal Reserve Transparency Act of 2012. Because this legislation comes to us on the suspension calendar, it will require a two-thirds vote in favor of passage.

I rise today in support of a full audit of the Federal Reserve. I have thought for many years that there's too much secrecy and too much power vested in our Federal Reserve. This is an effort that I first joined in June of 1991, in the 102nd Congress, when I cosponsored a bill introduced by Congressman Phil Crane of Illinois to audit the Federal Reserve.

Even back then, before our most recent major financial recession, Congressman Crane's bill had 56 bipartisan cosponsors. That support has grown over the years, and in the 111th Con-

gress, the last Congress, Congressman RON PAUL's "audit the Fed" bill gathered an overwhelming 320 cosponsors from both parties. Now that support, I believe, is at 270 in this Congress.

Thomas Jefferson was one of our Founding Fathers who was concerned about putting too much power into a central bank, and he wrote in a letter in 1816 "that banking establishments are more dangerous than standing armies." That was not me; that was Thomas Jefferson.

Listen to what people are saying about this bill today from both ends of the political spectrum.

Matt Kibbe, president and CEO of Freedom Works, said:

Many economists have found that the central bank's loose monetary policy played a major role in the current economic crisis. It is more crucial than ever that the Federal Reserve's monetary decisions be examined. Without a comprehensive audit, we will never know how the Fed is manipulating our money behind closed doors.

The National Taxpayers Union, one of our most respected organizations, said:

American taxpayers deserve to know more about the workings of a government-sanctioned entity whose decisions directly affect their economic livelihood.

Arnold Kling, an author and scholar at the Cato Institute, said:

If an audit were to uncover serious flaws and decisions made by the Fed, it is difficult to see why we are better off remaining ignorant of such flaws.

Journalist and columnist Rick Sanchez said:

For an entity that wields so much power, we know relatively little about the Fed. Would you trust an unknown banker to decide what happens with your paycheck every week? Why do we accept this for our country?

And Brent Budowsky, a very liberal political opinion writer, wrote in support of an audit and said:

In my years of experience in politics, media, and business, I have learned that secrecy is usually the enemy of common sense, fairness, and sound policy.

Another liberal economist, the famous John Maynard Keynes, said this:

There is no subtler, no surer means of overturning the existing basis of society than to debase the currency.

And a very conservative—one of the most respected conservative economists, F.A. Hayek, said this:

When one studies the history of money, one cannot help wondering why people should have put up for so long with governments exercising an exclusive power over 2,000 years that was regularly used to exploit and defraud them.

I have heard over the years, Mr. Speaker, people say that we need to have a Federal Reserve and a Federal Reserve system in order to prevent depressions and recessions. Well, that is certainly a very, very dumb statement to make because the Federal Reserve was created in 1913, and 16 years later,