

and to undermine the economic security of the middle class, millions of working Americans are struggling to make ends meet due to this Chamber's inaction.

It has been months since across-the-board sequester cuts were enacted, devastating so many important Federal programs on which Americans rely; and now, as the House leadership refuses to allow votes on alternatives to replace the sequester, 18,132 Defense employees are currently being involuntarily furloughed across Pennsylvania, resulting in a \$71 million economic loss for my State. In one place alone, 3,528 middle class Americans are being furloughed at the Tobyhanna Army Depot, which is a facility that provides essential support for our warfighters.

We have to work together to fix this problem and to reduce our deficit by growing the economy.

DELAYING INDIVIDUAL AND EMPLOYER MANDATES

(Mr. MESSER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MESSER. ObamaCare is not working. The American people know that. Now, it seems President Obama knows that, too.

The President's unilateral decision to violate the law and delay the employer mandate postpones some of the law's worst damage for businesses. Fundamental fairness dictates that individuals get the same reprieve. Some say delay gives the administration time to get it right. I say no amount of time will fix what's wrong with this job-killing law.

Each day this law is delayed gives us more time to seek its total repeal. We must protect as many people as possible from the pain this Big Government behemoth is inflicting on our Nation.

LEARN ACT

(Mr. YARMUTH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. YARMUTH. Madam Speaker, literacy is the foundation for success in every aspect of our economy and society.

Research clearly demonstrates that a literacy-rich environment starting in early childhood is a critical prerequisite for high school graduation, college success, and career readiness; but according to the National Assessment of Educational Progress, two-thirds of all fourth and eighth graders do not read at a proficient level. Underachievement in literacy at all educational levels contributes significantly to our Nation's high dropout rate, which costs the country hundreds of billions of dollars and squanders the potential and contribution of each student who drops out.

That is why today, along with my colleague, the gentleman from Colo-

rado (Mr. POLIS), I am introducing the Literacy Education for All, Results for the Nation Act. The LEARN Act provides a strong Federal investment for States and localities to develop and implement comprehensive literacy plans for children from birth through the 12th grade.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the LEARN Act in order to help ensure today's students are prepared to lead the workforce of the future and to keep our Nation at the forefront of the global economy.

□ 1230

IN RECOGNITION OF JEB HARMON

(Mr. GOSAR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GOSAR. Madam Speaker, joining me off the House floor today is Jeb Harmon, a dedicated staffer of mine for almost 2 years.

Jeb embodies the spirit, work ethic, and patriotism we need from young adults who will one day lead our Nation. He has worked tirelessly first as an intern and then as a valued member of my communications team, helping to keep my constituents updated on my actions in D.C. and at home.

Jeb isn't a future leader. Jeb is a leader today. In just a few weeks, Jeb will leave my office to go to law school. Though he will be missed, I am incredibly proud of him.

For Jeb and for all students reaching their own American Dream, we must keep the burden of student loan debt from being cost prohibitive.

MILITARY SEXUAL ASSAULT

(Ms. GABBARD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. GABBARD. Mr. Speaker, yesterday in the Senate, we heard some great news. Senators RAND PAUL and TED CRUZ joined Senator KIRSTEN GILLIBRAND and many others in support of the Military Justice Improvement Act.

This is a group of courageous leaders, bipartisan, taking serious action to stop the epidemic of violent sexual assaults amongst our men and women who courageously serve in our military.

Recently, the Defense Department reported that 26,000 sexual assaults had occurred in 2012 alone. Contrary to popular belief, this is not just an issue affecting female servicemembers. Over 53 percent of these assaults, over half of the 26,000, had been male victims. Unfortunately, 87 percent of these assaults went unreported.

This is a matter of basic fairness, transparency, and justice. Placing the decision to bring charges against these perpetrators of serious violent crimes into the hands of experienced professional military investigators and prosecutors outside of the chain of com-

mand will not erode a commander's ability to lead his or her troops.

We must change the status quo. These crimes have been ignored for far too long.

OBAMACARE IS A BAD LAW

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, the President announced that his administration plans to ignore ObamaCare's employer mandate for 1 year, exempting businesses from its harmful side effects.

The White House scrambling is to be expected. ObamaCare is a bad law. But it's a bad law the President asked for; and it's a bad law he, as mastermind and chief enforcer, must obey, unless Congress authorizes a change.

It's no secret to anyone that House Republicans see ObamaCare for the broken law it is. We don't want any American to suffer under its weight. We voted nearly 40 times to delay, dismantle, or repeal the law, and we'll vote again to delay the implementation of ObamaCare's onerous employer mandate today.

But we aren't stopping there. If businesses are getting a break from the President's law, individual Americans should, too.

Attempting to justify selective enforcement is beyond rationality. Delaying the individual mandate tax is a matter of basic fairness.

PATIENT PROTECTION AND AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

(Ms. HANABUSA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. HANABUSA. Mr. Speaker, 38 times? How many times will we vote to repeal or take away patient protection from families and to undermine the middle class? It makes no sense.

Look at what we know:

The United States Supreme Court said the PPACA is constitutional;

Millions have already benefited;

One hundred million cannot have lifetime limits placed upon their health care;

By January 2014, 129 million cannot be denied coverage due to a preexisting condition;

By 2020, there will be no doughnut hole, and already 6.3 million seniors save \$6.1 billion on prescription drugs;

Women cannot be discriminated against by 2014; last year alone, 90 percent of the best-selling plans still charged women more; and

Seventeen million children are now protected from being denied coverage due to a preexisting condition.

Mr. Speaker, really, 38 times? Why? It makes no common sense.