

shut down—it has been shut down 17 times—and numerous times because the Democratic Party sought to shut it down. If you go back to the 1970s, the Democrats repeatedly tried to shut down the government over the issue of abortion.

What we are talking about is the issue of preventing suffering and misery for Americans. Surely that's worth a conversation.

OBAMACARE

(Mr. CULBERSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CULBERSON. Mr. Speaker, the Founding Fathers created this magnificent institution to protect our liberty. The purpose of the House, the Senate, the entire Federal Government was created to protect our liberty.

House Republicans are united in our opposition to ObamaCare because it is one of the most massive intrusions into the individual privacy of Americans that the Federal Government has ever attempted. It is an attempt to socialize the greatest health care system the world has ever seen, and we will see intrusions into the private lives of Americans on a scale never seen before.

So I just want to reassure the American people that we are united as conservatives, as constitutional conservatives, to do everything in our power to repeal, defund, delay, do whatever it takes to stop the socialization of American medicine and the destruction of the most important right we have as Americans—to be left alone.

OBAMACARE

(Mr. McDERMOTT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, as we approach the 1st of October when everyone in this country is going to have an opportunity to have health insurance, you know that there are some people who always like the status quo and they will say anything and do anything.

The public is today being subjected to a propaganda campaign, the likes of which we have never seen in this country, against ObamaCare. Somehow it is the worst thing that has ever happened—the sky is going to fall, the world is going to end as we have known it, we should run and pray that in the latter days we will be saved.

The fact is that ObamaCare is going to go into effect. The Supreme Court has looked at it and said it is constitutional. It is going to happen, folks.

Will there be a few problems? Of course. You can't make the change and bring 30 million people into a program without having a problem here and there. Some of the complaints I hear on the other side are from people saying: Oh, it's going to do this, it's going

to do that, it's going to do this, it's going to do that—but they didn't want to make one single change to make it better. We should just be calm.

HONORING LINDA LUNSFORD

(Mr. GRAVES of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GRAVES of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Linda Lunsford, a lifelong resident of Murray County, Georgia.

Ms. Lunsford has been a dedicated teacher to the students of Murray County, helping to enrich the lives of the young people both inside and outside of her classroom.

It was in 1968 that Ms. Lunsford returned to Murray County High School as an English teacher. Over those next 30 years, and for many years after her retirement in 1998, she devoted herself to teaching young Georgians, helping them value their education and succeed in life.

During her teaching career, she served as a drama sponsor, scholars bowl sponsor, yearbook advisor, cheerleading sponsor, newspaper advisor, and much, much more.

Ms. Lunsford has made such an impact on her community that Murray County is declaring October 5, 2013, the first Linda Lunsford Day.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the 14th Congressional District of Georgia, I join in celebrating October 5 as Linda Lunsford Day and thank her for her many contributions to our community in Georgia.

SUICIDE PREVENTION MONTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PITTENGER). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentlewoman from Arizona (Ms. SINEMA) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Ms. SINEMA. Mr. Speaker, September is Suicide Prevention Month, a time for our Nation to raise awareness about the persistent scourge of suicide.

Tens of thousands of Americans die each year purposefully by their own actions. They are our neighbors and our friends, they are our sons and our daughters, and too often they are the men and women who have served our country honorably in the United States military. An estimated 22 veterans commit suicide every day in our country. That is one life lost every 65 minutes.

We have assembled today's Special Order to accomplish three things:

First, we seek to demonstrate our continuing support for the individuals, organizations, and agencies whose efforts in addressing this preventable epidemic continue in the face of difficulty.

Second, we are here to challenge the VA, the Department of Defense, and our fellow lawmakers to do more. The

number of veteran deaths by suicide is increasing, despite current efforts. Clearly, what we are doing now isn't working. We are failing in our obligation to do right by those who have served so honorably.

And finally, we send a message to military families who have experienced this tragedy. To grieving families across America, know that your family's loss isn't forgotten. We are working to stop this epidemic and prevent future suicides. We work for the memory of your loved ones and for the prevention of future losses.

My colleagues here today believe, as I believe, that no one who comes home after serving our country should ever feel they have nowhere to turn. Sadly, many of our young vets feel just that.

Earlier this year, a young veteran in my district committed suicide. Daniel Somers was an Army veteran of two tours in Iraq. He served on Task Force Lightning, an intelligence unit. He ran over 400 combat missions as a machine gunner in the turret of a Humvee. Part of his role required him to interrogate dozens of terror suspects, and his work was deemed classified.

Like many veterans, Daniel was haunted by the war when he returned. He suffered from flashbacks, nightmares, depression, and additional symptoms of posttraumatic stress disorder, made worse by a traumatic brain injury. Daniel needed help. He and his family asked for help the best way they knew how.

Unfortunately, the VA enrolled Daniel in group therapy sessions instead of connecting him with a private counselor or therapist where he would be able to talk confidentially about his experiences. He attended the VA group sessions even though he knew—due to the classified nature of his work—that he could not fully share what gave him nightmares.

Like many, Daniel's isolation got worse when he transitioned home to civilian life. He tried to provide for his family, but he was unable to work due to his disability.

□ 1600

Daniel struggled with the VA bureaucracy. His disability appeal had been pending for over 2 years in the system without any resolution. Daniel didn't get the help he needed in time. On June 10 of 2013, Daniel wrote a letter to his family.

It begins:

I am sorry that it has come to this. The fact is, for as long as I can remember, my motivation for getting up every day has been so that you would not have to bury me. As things have continued to get worse, it has become clear that this alone is not a sufficient reason to carry on. The fact is, I am not getting better; I am not going to get better; and I will most certainly deteriorate further as time goes on. From a logical standpoint, it is better to simply end things quickly and let any repercussions from that play out in the short term rather than to drag things out into the long term.

He goes on to say: