

urgent congressional action on climate change.

We must follow the examples of my home State of California, Washington, Oregon, and British Columbia. These leaders came together Monday and signed the Pacific Coast Action Plan on Climate and Energy. The action plan will help them to collectively reduce carbon pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, which will not only help the environment and public health but will also strengthen our economy.

This is a small, but significant step to act on climate change. These leaders are taking these important steps because they know the consequences of inaction. They recognize that the effects of climate change cross borders freely. Republicans and Democrats should follow this good example of action, and our leadership should move forward to combat climate change.

I, too, want to give my sympathy and my prayers with the loss of a great leader, Chairman Ike Skelton. And I know on behalf of my predecessor, my former boss, my colleague Congressman Skelton was a personal friend, and I know that he would want me to say today that he misses him.

May his soul rest in peace.

#### MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Mr. Brian Pate, one of his secretaries.

#### BENGHAZI

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WILLIAMS). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WOLF) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, last week, a new national poll was released by a respected pollster, Patrick Caddell, a Democrat, and John McLaughlin, a Republican, making clear that the American people still don't feel they know the truth about what happened in Benghazi nearly 14 months ago.

According to the poll commissioned by Secure America Now, 63 percent of Americans "think the Obama administration is covering up the facts about Benghazi"; and only 29 percent of registered voters say the Obama administration has been honest about Benghazi. Think about that for a moment. A supermajority of Americans believe they have been misled by their government about what happened in Benghazi. This is remarkable.

The American people know how significant it is that Ambassador Stevens, the President's personal envoy to Libya, was the first Ambassador killed in the line of duty in four decades on September 11, 11 years to the day that nearly 3,000 people were killed by al Qaeda terrorists.

The American people intuitively understand that a plot of this scale was

not spontaneously inspired, as claimed by the administration's now infamous talking points. The American people also know that it is remarkable that no effort was made by Washington to rescue the Americans in Benghazi or dispatch a hostage rescue team after the Ambassador went missing that night.

I think the American people also wonder just what the CIA was doing in Benghazi. Was it involved in the collection and transfer of weapons to foreign countries? Possibly to support the Syrian rebels? And could some of those weapons have fallen into the wrong hands, like the Syrian jihadists?

It is too easy to say that this is "classified information" and expect the American people to look away. Four Americans were killed that night, several were wounded, and no one came to help them.

□ 1500

Was it because the CIA was conducting a covert operation and if something went wrong, that was just the price of doing business? Were the CIA activities in Benghazi part of the reason the consulate and annex were targeted?

These are legitimate questions the American people are asking that deserve clear answers.

The McLaughlin-Caddell poll also found that 62 percent of the American people support creating a "special bipartisan committee with broad powers to get to the truth about the attacks in Benghazi."

Eighty percent of Republicans and 58 percent of independents support the idea. Notably, nearly half of Democrats said it was important to create a bipartisan committee to learn the truth.

The bottom line is Americans from across the political spectrum recognize that not only are they not being told the truth, but they feel Congress needs to change its approach to the investigation by creating a special committee.

Why is it that, despite more than a year of investigations in five separate committees, the American people feel they still don't know the truth about what happened?

Perhaps it is because, despite more than a year of investigations by five committees, most of the questions raised about that night remain unanswered.

Perhaps it is because, despite more than a year of investigations by five committees, hardly any of the key witnesses responsible for the government's response that night—or lack thereof—have publicly testified.

Perhaps it is because, despite more than a year of investigations, none of the survivors that could help answer key questions have publicly testified before Congress.

Perhaps it is because, despite more than a year of investigations, so few committee hearings have been held publicly.

Or perhaps it is because, despite more than a year of investigations, what little the American people have learned has come from news reports from CNN, CBS, FOX, and other news organizations and not from congressional hearings or testimony.

I think all these factors have contributed to the sense among the American people that Congress has failed in its oversight responsibility.

The American people know they haven't been told the full story about what happened that night, and they believe they have been intentionally misled by the administration.

I have come to the floor today to once again call on my leadership to create a House select committee on Benghazi.

I am often asked what is holding up the creation of this select committee. The simple answer is because the Speaker has not agreed to it. I like the Speaker. He has a tough job, and he may have good reasons for not wanting to establish a select committee, but I don't know what it is. And more importantly, I don't think the American people know what it is.

Let me be clear: my criticism is not with the chairmen of committees that are looking into this. They are all good men. They have worked very hard. Their hands are tied. They are required, though, to stay within their jurisdictional lanes, examining only what they are allowed to investigate according to their committee charter.

What happened in Benghazi is interrelated. The "lanes" crisscross. The White House, the State Department, the CIA, and the Defense Department were all involved, resulting in overlapping, but uncoordinated, investigations.

Benghazi was a terrorist attack. We need a team effort to find out what happened, why it happened, and how we are going to bring the perpetrators to justice. Any of these chairmen would be capable of leading the select committee, and other members of their committees would be very good to serve as well. They would do a good job. I have confidence in them.

And let me be clear: I have no intention of chairing or serving on the select committee. I will not serve on the select committee. I just want to learn the truth, just like the American people.

There is a history in Congress that when things overlap between committees and transcend jurisdictions, select committees were established. Two well-known examples are Watergate and Iran Contra. And I will submit a list of the past select committees over the past 50 years at the end of my statement.

A select committee would take members from each committee with their individual expertise—and many of the members from these various committees have tremendous expertise—and have them work on this investigation

day in and day out, with no other distractions. It would also prevent the administration from saying one thing to one committee of jurisdiction and something else to another.

I am reminded of the poem “Blind Men and the Elephant,” which is said to originate in India. In the poem, six blind men touch a part of an elephant and each has a different description of what the elephant must look like. They argue at great length among themselves. The poem ends by saying that while each is partly right, they are all wrong.

The moral of the poem is that, independently, people may think their understanding of the situation is correct; yet they don’t know the truth until the full picture comes into focus.

Each of the five committees may not be seeing the entire picture of what happened that night. Regular order has limited the committees from going beyond their jurisdictions. One group ought to have the responsibility to get to the bottom of all parts of this tragedy. One group needs to lay out a roadmap to obtaining and reporting that information to the American people so we can restore confidence that Congress has a serious oversight plan on Benghazi.

Remember, the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. We need to see the whole of this tragedy.

My bill to create a select committee, H. Res. 36, now has 178 cosponsors—more than three-quarters of the Republican Conference and more than a supermajority of the majority.

Nearly three-quarters of the Republican members who serve on the committees already investigating Benghazi now support a select committee. That means a plurality of the members who have been directly involved in committee investigations believe a select committee would be a more effective approach.

The bill has been endorsed by the American Legion, representing so many vets who have sacrificed and given their time and effort to serve this country; the Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association, which represents the diplomatic security agents that were present in Benghazi—the people who represent them and who were present in Benghazi support the select committee; groups representing the highly respected Special Ops community, who serve this Nation so well; and the editorial page of *The Wall Street Journal*.

Perhaps, most important, it is being endorsed by some of the family members of the Benghazi victims, like Sean Smith’s mother and Ty Woods’ father, who want to know the truth about what happened to the children that night and why their country fell short in its response.

Nothing will bring their children back, but we can at least provide them with the clear answers and assign accountability for those responsible for intelligence failures and the inept response that night.

The best way to do this is to break down the stovepipes between the five committees, hold public hearings, and issue subpoenas to all the survivors from Benghazi, those who were in Tripoli, and those who were in Washington responding that night.

We need a public hearing with the principals involved in the decision-making process in Washington on September 11, 2012, including former Secretary Panetta, former Secretary of State Clinton, former CIA Director Petraeus, former White House adviser and current CIA Director John Brennan, and former AFRICOM Commander General Ham, as well as the White House.

We also need a similar hearing with each of their deputies and others who were witness to the calls for help and the decisions surrounding the response not to help.

Unless we hear from these people publicly, the American people will never learn the truth about whether there were warnings prior to the attack, what calls for help were made that night, whether the CIA security team was in fact delayed in leaving to respond to the initial attack at the consulate, and what the response was from Washington, among many other questions.

Also, the American people should know of the bravery of the men who were there in Benghazi.

Until these key individuals are sitting side by side at the witness table answering questions under oath in public, we will never get a clear picture of who made the decisions that night and why.

Again, the hearings must be in public. The American people can handle the truth. Failure to get these answers means there will never be any accountability, which further erodes public confidence in government.

Absent a select committee, the Congress will fail to learn the truth about what happened that night because the administration will continue to use the jurisdictional barriers between each committee to continue to slow-walk or deny information.

There are a number of new developments in recent weeks that make a select committee more timely than ever.

First, our colleague, MIKE ROGERS, chairman of the Intelligence Committee, confirmed earlier reports, telling Fox News that the plot against the consulate and the CIA annex in Benghazi appears to have been weeks, if not months, in the making and that at least two of the plot’s leaders had close connections to senior al Qaeda leadership.

Nearly a year ago, I circulated a memo to all members prepared by respected terrorist analyst Thomas Joscelyn detailing the apparent connections and likely coordination between al Qaeda affiliates in Libya, Egypt, Tunisia, and Yemen that resulted in threats and attacks on U.S. diplomatic facilities in those countries

the week of September 11, 2012. Unfortunately, the committees have not held public hearings looking at the connection between these threats.

Last week, Fox News’ Catherine Herridge first reported that:

At least two of the key suspects in the Benghazi terror attacks were at one point working with al Qaeda senior leadership, the sources familiar with the investigation tell Fox News. The sources said one of the suspects was believed to be a courier for the al Qaeda network and the other a bodyguard in Afghanistan prior to the 2001 terror attacks.

Catherine Herridge went on and said:

The direct ties to the al Qaeda senior leadership undercut earlier characterizations by the Obama administration that the attackers in Benghazi were isolated extremists—not al Qaeda terrorists—with no organizational structure or affiliation.

And then, on Sunday, CBS’ “60 Minutes” aired a segment by Lara Logan, further explaining what happened that night and the increasingly clear connection to al Qaeda. And I am very grateful for “60 Minutes” covering this story.

Logan reported:

Just a few weeks ago, Abu Anas al-Libi was captured for his role in the Africa bombings and the U.S. is still investigating what part he may have played in Benghazi. We’ve learned that this man, Sufian bin Qumu, a former Guantanamo Bay detainee and a longtime al Qaeda operative, was one of the lead planners, along with Furaj al-Chalabi, whose ties to Osama bin Laden go back more than 15 years. He is believed to have carried documents from the compound to the head of al Qaeda in Pakistan.

It is particularly notable how al-Chalabi reportedly delivered documents from U.S. facilities in Benghazi to the head of the al Qaeda in Pakistan, establishing a direct link between the Benghazi attacks and the most senior leadership of al Qaeda.

Among the other revelations in the “60 Minutes” segment was that al Qaeda stated its intent to attack Americans in Benghazi, along with the Red Cross and the British mission, well in advance of September 11.

Lieutenant Colonel Andy Wood, the top American security official in Libya in the months leading up to the attack, told CBS that both the State Department and the Defense Department were well aware of the threat and the attacks on the Red Cross and British missions. He said it was obvious to the Americans in Libya that it was only a matter of time until an attack on the U.S. facilities.

□ 1515

When the terrorists stormed the consulate property they said, “We’re here to kill Americans, not Libyans,” and they spared the lives of Libyan guards.

Confirmation of that information I detailed on the House floor in July, noting:

A quick reaction force from the CIA annex ignored orders to wait, and raced to the compound, at times running and shooting their way through the streets just to get there.

The Americans faced a “professional enemy” as they encountered waves of

intense fighting on the CIA annex in Benghazi during the early morning of September 12. Mortars fired during the final wave of the assault hit the roof of the annex three times in the dark. Lieutenant Colonel Wood described hitting a target like that as “getting the basketball through the hoop over your shoulder” and that it took “coordination, planning, training, and experienced personnel” to pull off such a “well-executed attack.”

Two Delta Force operators who fought at the CIA annex, apparently as part of the impromptu team that flew in from Tripoli with Glen Doherty during the attack without permission from Washington, have “been awarded the Distinguished Service Cross and the Navy Cross—two of the military’s highest honors.” We owe them a debt of gratitude.

The U.S. already knew that senior al Qaeda leader Abu Anas al Libi was in Libya and was “tasked by the head of al Qaeda to establish a clandestine terrorist network inside the country; al Libi was already wanted for his role in bombing two U.S. Embassies in Africa” where constituents from my congressional district were killed. Notably, the administration made no mention of his connection to the Benghazi attacks in its announcement of his capture last month.

Some of the key questions that remain unanswered are why the CIA security team was ordered not to respond to the attack at the consulate and “why no larger military response ever crossed the border into Libya—something U.S. Deputy Chief of Mission Greg Hicks realized wasn’t going to happen just an hour into the attack.”

It is particularly noteworthy that Logan addressed the pressure on witnesses she encountered during her investigation, saying:

An extraordinary amount of pressure on the people involved not to talk and an extraordinary amount of pressure on anyone in the government—the military side, the political side—not to say anything out of official channels.

This is consistent with the concerns I have repeatedly raised on the House floor about efforts by this administration to silence survivors and witnesses to the Benghazi attacks and response.

What are they afraid of these witnesses sharing with the American people, and how can the Congress stand by and allow this to happen knowing full well it is taking place?

CNN in July reported:

Since January, some CIA operatives involved in the Agency’s mission in Libya have been subjected to frequent—even monthly—polygraph examinations, according to a source with deep inside knowledge of the Agency’s workings. The goal of the questioning, according to sources, is to find out if anyone has been talking to the media or to Congress.

That was reported by CNN in July.

In a separate piece in July, FOX News reported:

At least five CIA employees were forced to sign additional nondisclosure agreements

this past spring in the wake of the Benghazi attack.

That is what FOX News said in July of this year.

As someone who represents thousands of Federal employees and contractors, including many who work for the CIA, the FBI, the State Department, and the Defense Department, I know from years of firsthand experience how agencies can sometimes use various forms of pressure and intimidation to keep employees from sharing information of concern with Congress.

I know the Benghazi survivors and other witnesses that night from those agencies need the protection of a “friendly subpoena” to compel their testimony before Congress, particularly on matters as sensitive as this, in order to protect them. So far, the committees have failed to provide this protection to allow survivors and other witnesses to share their stories publicly so the American people can hear them.

Based on disclosures in recent news reports, I now believe that the Benghazi plot represents a significant intelligence failure by the United States at several levels. Understanding these failures, as well as the government’s inexplicable response during and after the attack, is critical to preventing future attacks.

I want to outline a number of the apparent intelligence failures leading up to the attack, which I believe a select committee investigation would confirm:

First: The State Department and CIA failed in their assessments of the militia groups working for the Americans in Benghazi, including the February 17 Martyrs Brigade, responsible for guarding the consulate property which abandoned the Americans and may have even facilitated access to the compound for the terrorists;

According to a May 21 article by Eli Lake at the Daily Beast:

CIA officers were responsible for vetting the February 17 Martyrs Brigade, the militia that was supposed to be the first responders on the night of the attack, but melted away when the diplomatic mission was attacked;

Second: The State Department, the Defense Department, and the CIA apparently failed to adjust their security postures to support the Americans in Benghazi based on the growing number of attacks on Western targets in Benghazi during the summer of 2012;

To date, no one has explained or been held accountable for why the U.S. submission was so poorly secured despite pleas for assistance by the Embassy staff in Tripoli to Washington;

No one has adequately explained why the Defense Department’s emergency response team was on a routine training mission in Croatia during the week of September 11 when it should have been on alert to respond, especially given the threats to the U.S. Embassies in Cairo and Egypt earlier in the day before the Benghazi attack. So the emergency response team was on a

training mission in Croatia at the very time and on the very date that everyone knows, September 11. Given the threats to the Embassy, it is shocking that this is the case;

Third: The intelligence community apparently failed to understand the size and scope of the attack brewing in Benghazi in the months leading up to September 11;

As Chairman ROGERS acknowledged to FOX News’ Catherine Herridge last week, this was a well-coordinated attack that was many weeks, if not months, in the making;

Earlier this year, CNN reported on the number of foreign fighters who arrived in Benghazi to participate in the attack in the days leading up to September 11. A witness in the “60 Minutes” report noted how black al Qaeda flags were openly flying in the months before the attack, and he also noted the announced threat against U.S., British, and Red Cross facilities;

How did the government miss these warnings or were they just simply ignored?

Fourth: The intelligence community seems to have more broadly failed to understand and anticipate how al Qaeda was metastasizing in North Africa;

This administration has been quick to take credit for the raid that killed Osama bin Laden in May 2011, and declared throughout the 2012 Presidential campaign that as a result of its efforts that “core al Qaeda” has been decimated. However, the facts don’t support the administration’s narrative;

In a CNN report on Monday:

Terrorist attacks hit a record high in 2012, and “more than 8,500 terrorist attacks killed more than 15,500 people last year as violence tore through Africa, Asia, and the Middle East.” Increasingly, this includes North African countries likely Libya;

CNN also said:

“Despite the death of Osama bin Laden and the capture of other key al Qaeda leaders, the group has exported its brand of terrorism to other militant Muslims.” These groups include affiliates like Ansar al Sharia in Libya;

Additionally, following a report on Benghazi, CBS’ Lara Logan noted earlier this week:

It became evident to us during the course of our research—this is what she said—that very little is known publicly about the true nature of al Qaeda’s network in Libya, and that has consequences beyond Benghazi and beyond Libya. It has consequences that speak to the national security interests of the United States of America;

Most of these affiliate terrorist groups have sworn an allegiance to al Qaeda and appear to closely coordinate their activities and plots with the core al Qaeda leadership, including Ayman al-Zawahiri, bin Laden’s successor.

To dismiss or minimize the relationship with al Qaeda’s senior leadership is misguided and, I believe, dangerous as we have seen over the last several years. I fear that this administration’s insistence in treating core al Qaeda in Afghanistan and Pakistan differently

than groups like Ansar al Sharia in Libya has led to a dangerous mischaracterization of the threat and that it has apparently resulted in the failure to anticipate attacks like the one that was carried out in Benghazi;

Fifth: It appears that documents were taken from the consulate and CIA annex in Benghazi in the wake of the attacks;

As I said earlier, “60 Minutes” reported that terrorist Faraj al Chalabi, whose ties to bin Laden go back nearly two decades, is “believed to have carried documents from the compound to the head of al Qaeda in Pakistan.”

What was taken from the consulate and annex and given to al Qaeda’s leadership? We don’t know;

Additionally, as Lara Logan noted following the report:

We did not expect that we would find the U.S. compound in the state that we found it. There was still debris and ammunition boxes and a whiteboard that had the day’s assignments for the security personnel at the compound as of September 11, 2012;

Clearly, in the chaos of the fighting and evacuation that night, information was left behind at the facilities that may have consequences for Americans operating in the region.

I also believe the administration’s response to the Benghazi attack over the last year has been nothing short of shameful and that it also merits a full investigation by a select committee.

From the first hours of the attack, when it became apparent that no help was coming to assist those under attack—either from U.S. forces or from our allies in the region—to the failure of the FBI to gain access to key suspects in Tunisia and Egypt over the last year, this administration has sent a signal to terrorists that the U.S. will not strongly respond to an attack on Americans abroad.

The failure to either arrest or kill any of the scores of terrorists responsible for the attacks more than a year later is inexcusable and reflects an unwillingness by this administration to bring diplomatic pressure to bear on countries harboring these terrorists.

I am increasingly convinced that this administration is more comfortable in using the ongoing FBI investigation as an excuse not to answer questions than it is in bringing these terrorists to justice.

As I said on the House floor in July of last year, Tunisia detained the first suspect in the Benghazi terrorist attacks, Ali Harzi, after he was deported from Turkey in the weeks following the attacks.

Tunisia, despite being a beneficiary of more than \$300 million of U.S. foreign aid—American taxpayer money of over \$300 million goes to Tunisia—refused to allow the FBI access to this suspect for nearly 5 weeks.

□ 1530

It was only after congressional threats to cut off the aid that the government of Tunisia reconsidered its position.

Ultimately, the FBI interrogation team returned to Tunisia and was allowed just 3 hours to interview Harzi with his lawyer and a Tunisian judge present.

Not long after the FBI interview, Harzi was inexplicably released by Tunisian authorities, and his release was celebrated by Ansar al Sharia terrorists.

Last month, it was confirmed that Harzi has been involved in at least one assassination of a Tunisian political leader.

In another equally concerning case in Egypt, the FBI has been denied access to Muhammed Jamal, an al Qaeda-connected terrorist who ran training camps in Egypt and eastern Libya prior to the Benghazi attack.

Several of Jamal’s associates are believed to have participated in the Benghazi plot, and terrorism analysts believe that Jamal may have communicated directly with Zawahiri and al Qaeda leadership about this and other terrorist attacks.

Although Jamal has been in Egyptian custody for more than a year on other terrorism-related charges, the U.S. has never been provided access to him under both the Morsi government and now the current military government.

I personally delivered a letter to former Ambassador Patterson in Cairo asking then-President Morsi to provide the FBI access to Jamal and his documents. I don’t believe the Ambassador ever delivered the letter, and if she did, she never told me. That in itself is very, very troubling.

Jamal’s connection to the Benghazi attack is particularly noteworthy given that both the U.S. and the United Nations formally, both the U.S. and the United Nations, formally designated him as a terrorist earlier this month.

However, in another example of this administration’s aversion to discussing terrorist connections to the Benghazi attack, the U.N. designation clearly notes Jamal’s connection to the Benghazi attack, whereas the State Department designation omits it. So the U.N. designation clearly notes Jamal’s connection to the Benghazi attack; the State Department omits it. The UN says, and our State Department omits it?

I believe there has been pressure from the administration to omit this type of information from U.S. intelligence products, sending conflicting signals to both our allies and to countries that may have Benghazi suspects of interest to the FBI. I have a lot of confidence in the FBI if they are just allowed to do their job.

But if we are unwilling to identify their involvement in the attacks, it further erodes U.S. credibility in asking for access to these individuals. This willful blindness is disingenuous and, I believe, ultimately dangerous.

In early January, when I offered an amendment to create a select com-

mittee to the House rules package for the 113th Congress, Speaker BOEHNER told the Republican Conference that he didn’t believe that we had “reached the threshold” for a select committee. He suggested that we might get to the threshold, but the committees of jurisdiction just needed more time.

That may have been the case in January, but nearly 11 months later, I think the broad support that has built up over the last year makes it clear we have more than passed the threshold for a select committee now.

I believe, and I believe the American people believe, that the threshold has clearly been reached in terms of co-sponsors, endorsements, and new revelations from the press reports, and a deep concern the American people have for this issue.

I was particularly struck by the comments made by Ambassador Stevens’ deputy, Greg Hicks, in the 60 Minutes segment on Sunday:

For us, for the people that go out onto the edge to represent our country, we believe that if we get in trouble, they are coming to get us, that our back is covered. To hear that it is not, it is a terrible, terrible experience.

It is not enough for the administration to just say there is nothing more that could have been done, especially given that evidence indicates that they didn’t try much at all to assist the Americans under fire in Benghazi.

Mr. Speaker, it is time for a unified, bipartisan select committee. Let’s get to the truth once and for all so we can find out what happened and restore the American people’s confidence in congressional oversight and confidence in government.

I yield back the balance of my time.

HOUSE SELECT AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES  
(1963–PRESENT)

House Select and Special Committees	Date of creation
Select Committee on Government Research .....	September 11, 1963
Select Committee to Study the Factors Relating to the General Welfare and Education of Congressional Pages .....	September 30, 1964
Select Committee on Standards and Conduct .....	April 3, 1967
Select Committee on the Seating of Adam Clayton Powell in the 90th Congress .....	January 10, 1967
Select Committee on the House Beauty Shop .....	December 6, 1967
Select Committee to Regulate Parking on the House Side of the Capitol .....	March 13, 1969
Select Committee on Crime .....	July 1, 1968
Select Committee on the House Restaurant .....	July 10, 1969
Select Committee to Investigate All Aspects of United States Military Involvement in Southeast Asia .....	June 8, 1970
Select Committee on Committees I (Bolling) .....	January 31, 1973
Permanent Select Committee on Aging .....	October 2, 1974
Select Committee on Intelligence (Nezdi and Pike) .....	February 19, 1975
Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence .....	July 14, 1977
Select Committee on the Outer Continental Shelf (Ad Hoc) .....	January 11, 1977
Select Committee to Study the Problem of United States Servicemen Missing in Action in Southeast Asia .....	September 11, 1975
Select Committee on Professional Sports .....	May 18, 1976
Select Committee on Narcotics Abuse and Control .....	July 29, 1976
Select Committee on Assassinations .....	September 17, 1976
Select Committee on Ethics .....	March 9, 1977
Select Committee on Congressional Operations .....	March 28, 1977
Select Committee on Energy (Ad Hoc) .....	April 21, 1977
Select Committee on Population .....	September 28, 1977
Select Committee on Committees II (Patterson) .....	March 20, 1979
Select Committee on Children, Youth, and Families .....	September 29, 1982
Select Committee on Hunger .....	February 22, 1984
Select Committee to Investigate Covert Arms Transactions with Iran .....	January 7, 1987
Select Committee to Investigate Fire Safety in the Capitol and House Office Building .....	May 10, 1988
Select Committee on U.S. National Security and Military/Commercial Concerns with the People’s Republic of China .....	June 18, 1988
Select Bipartisan Committee to Investigate the Preparation for and Response to Hurricane Katrina .....	September 15, 2005

HOUSE SELECT AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES  
(1963–PRESENT)—Continued

House Select and Special Committees	Date of creation
Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.	March 8, 2007
Select Committee to Investigate the Voting Irregularities.	August 2, 2007

Source: Committees in the U.S. Congress 1947–1992 by Garrison Nelson; Committees in the U.S. Congress 1993–2010 by Garrison Nelson.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS  
MONTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. AL GREEN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, ending domestic violence is not a quixotic quest; it is a noble calling. This is why we have filed H. Res. 392, a resolution supporting the goals and ideals of October as National Domestic Violence Awareness Month, expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that Congress should continue to raise awareness of domestic violence and its devastating effects on individuals, families, and communities, and support programs designed to end domestic violence in the United States.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to tell you that we will have a number of speakers.

At this time, I yield to the Congresswoman from the Fourth District of Maryland, the Honorable DONNA EDWARDS. She serves on Science, Space, and Technology; Transportation and Infrastructure; she cochairs the Women's Caucus; and she is the chair of the Democratic Women's Working Group. She also cofounded the National Network to End Domestic Violence in 1994. She was its executive director.

Ms. EDWARDS. I thank the gentleman. I know that you join with your colleague, Mr. POE of Texas, in hosting this hour so that we can have an opportunity to remember why it is that we identify and commemorate Domestic Violence Awareness Month, and to make a commitment from this day forward, and from this coming year to the next time we have this observance, to do what we can to end domestic violence. I think, after all, that is the goal.

I can't remember, Mr. GREEN, when I first became interested in domestic violence, or even aware of domestic violence, but I look back to the times when I was growing up. I grew up in a military family. We lived in very close quarters. We shared a wall in that military family housing with our neighbor. In our neighbor's house, there was clearly something going on. My sister and I shared a bedroom, and we could hear what was going on, and it was violent. It was clearly violent.

I don't know that I understood that at the time, Mr. Speaker, but I have come to understand it as an adult. It frames my commitment, lifelong commitment, to ending domestic violence.

I remember at that time the military police being called. They would come and they would drive the gentleman around the block, and then he would be delivered right back home. Then a few nights later, the exact same thing would happen again.

I remember my sister and I seeing the woman who lived next door, and we were friends with their children, and I remember seeing her. I was always intrigued by her dark glasses and her great makeup and the scarves that she wore around her neck. It wasn't until later that I understood that she was covering her black eye, she was covering the bruises on her neck, she was covering the bruises on her face from having been a victim of domestic violence. It was many, many years, in fact, as an adult where I came to really process and understand what was going on.

I think because domestic violence affects so many around the country, and most particularly it affects women, that there is almost a chance that in any given family or at a family reunion or family gathering, if you probe just enough, you will find someone who has experienced domestic violence.

Very sadly, you will also find many young children who have witnessed domestic violence. I think that we have only to look at the children who are growing up in homes where mostly their mothers are being abused, and then we wonder why it is that when we look at the population of young people who are incarcerated, and when you ask them one by one—and I have done this, I have visited incarcerated youth—almost to a one they will tell you that either they have been the victims of violence or they grew up in a violent home.

I think, Mr. Speaker, it must resonate with us that we have to ask ourselves why it is that we continue to have violence, and what it is that we can do to get to the root cause of that violence.

So in addition, during Domestic Violence Awareness Month, to identify the fact that we lose about \$8 billion a year in productivity that is lost because of domestic violence—lost time off of work, medical expenses, and the rest—we know that it is a social ill that is very pervasive.

We also know that there are other kinds of crimes that are associated with domestic violence—stalking is one of those, sexual assault within a relationship.

Mr. Speaker, we also are aware that our young women, ages 16 to 24, are more likely than not to experience some form of violence in those relationships.

So earlier this year—and it took us some time to get there, Mr. Speaker—we did finally reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act. The Violence Against Women Act, which was first authorized in 1994—I was a part of that, helped to lead that effort on the outside, where our leaders in Congress

were leading on the inside, leaders like our now Vice-President JOE BIDEN, who was in the Senate and who took this bull by the horns and led us to the passage of the first Violence Against Women Act that was signed into law by President Clinton.

It was the first time ever that the Federal Government came forward and said, we have a real commitment to ending domestic violence by providing resources for shelters and services, training law enforcement, making sure that our judges were equipped to handle these cases in court, providing advocacy services for those who are experiencing violence, and going through the system.

Over each successive couple of years, we have reauthorized the Violence Against Women Act. We did that just recently. As I have said, in these tough economic times, it has been very difficult. All of a sudden, domestic violence became partisan and political.

I am glad to say, Mr. Speaker, that we did finally reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act again. We are providing those resources to those who experience violence.

But it should also come as no surprise that as we engage in the fiscal debates that we have here in the Congress, that because of sequester and shutting down the government even, that many of those shelters and services and programs are, in fact, experiencing a really difficult time at the same time that they are experiencing more demand.

I don't say that, Mr. Speaker, to call out one side or the other, but I am glad we are back at a point where in this Domestic Violence Awareness Month, we take the politics out of domestic violence, and we say to women, whether you are Republicans, Democrats, or Independents, or you don't think about politics at all, that we care about ending domestic violence, we care about the fact, Mr. Speaker, that more women are placed in a much more dangerous circumstance when there is a weapon in the home and that weapon is used to either kill or harm or threaten the lives of those who are in the home. That is something that we can do something about.

Mr. Speaker, let me just say, this last year, we lost a really powerful advocate for those who experience domestic violence. When Senator Frank Lautenberg of New Jersey died earlier this year, we remembered him in a lot of ways as a leader, Mr. Speaker, but on this Domestic Violence Awareness Month, I would like the Nation to remember Senator Lautenberg because he was the one who spearheaded the domestic violence firearm prevention that said that if you are committing domestic violence and you have a domestic violence offense, that you cannot purchase or possess a weapon. The Federal Government and the Congress recognized the importance of removing a weapon from a home where there is domestic violence. Senator Lautenberg was the champion.