

life. I met Judy on her doorstep, and over several years she became someone I cherished—her commitment to serving, her compassion, and her advocacy.

Despite her small frame, Judy had an enormous presence as she fought fiercely for justice in the community and in the halls of government. Judy's advocacy and work with the Service Employees International Union led her to traverse the Nation to make sure those depending on care and those providing care had a voice and had dignity and had respect.

I will remember until my last days the afternoon I spent with Judy for a day in her shoes. By the end of the day, I was exhausted, physically and emotionally. I was so grateful to Judy and to caregivers who do the work they do to help people live with dignity.

Andy Stern used to say that the "power of SEIU was that it was the way that ordinary people could accomplish extraordinary things and the way that the powerless could become powerful." No one demonstrated that better than Judy. I will always be grateful for her tireless work.

FIRST AMENDMENT RIGHTS SHOULD ALWAYS BE PROTECTED

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, the American people have lost faith in the President and his administration's ability to serve in an unbiased manner. Sadly, last year's scandal revealed the IRS is targeting organizations who disagree with the President's Big Government agenda.

We should never have to worry that our First Amendment rights are in jeopardy because the government opposes our beliefs. Based on last year's revelations, it is clear that these actions were deliberate. The Founding Fathers treasured the rights of freedom of speech and to petition the government, which is why they were protected first in the Constitution.

On Wednesday, the House acted in a bipartisan vote to prevent future abuse by passing legislation that bans the Treasury Department and the IRS from implementing new requirements targeting political groups. I hope the Senate will take action on this bill so we can ensure that every citizen's First Amendment rights stand protected.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

A GEM OF THE TEXAS WINTER GARDEN AREA—CRYSTAL CITY, TEXAS

(Mr. GALLEG0 asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GALLEG0. Mr. Speaker, I use some time to talk about the 23rd District. It comprises nearly a quarter of the land area of Texas.

Everybody has heard of the character Popeye and his penchant for spinach, and the spinach capital of the world is Crystal City, Texas. It was named by its early settlers for the clear artesian spring water, and a statue of Popeye was erected there in 1936.

The Spinach Festival is now one of the biggest and best festivals in all of south Texas. It was started in 1936, stopped for a period of time during World War II, and didn't go back up until the 1980s, but it has grown significantly over time.

Crystal City also occupies a unique spot in Texas' political history in that it was the birthplace of the first Latino political party in Texas, La Raza Unida Party, which, for a time, received enough votes to qualify for a statewide ballot.

Crystal City has long been known as a core of civil rights activism, and its rolling fields are now sharing space with the booming Eagle Ford Shale economy of our region.

Come see a gem of the Texas Winter Garden area, Crystal City, Texas.

MAKING RARE DISEASES A THING OF THE PAST

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

Mr. MARINO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring attention to an issue that affects millions of American citizens.

A rare disease is defined as a disease that affects fewer than 200,000 people. There are over 7,000 rare diseases that affect close to 30 million people.

My family knows the difficulties of dealing with a rare disease. My daughter, Chloe, has suffered from cystic fibrosis her entire life. CF is a life-threatening rare disease that causes mucus to build up and block major organs. Chloe is one of only 30,000 people affected by this disease in the United States.

As a rare disease, CF requires specialized care that can cost an individual hundreds of thousands of dollars over their lifetime. Even though there have been advancements in medicine, a CF sufferer may only survive into their thirties. This is much different than it was 50 years ago, where a child was lucky to live to the age of 10.

Today we observe CF and all other rare diseases to stress the importance of funding for rare disease research. Hopefully, we can make rare diseases a thing of the past.

NEED TO RAISE MINIMUM WAGE

(Mrs. BUSTOS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. BUSTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about the urgent need to raise the minimum wage for hard-working Americans just struggling to get by. The cost of living has increased, but wages have not.

In Illinois alone, more than 1 million people—a full 20 percent of our workforce—could benefit from an increase in the minimum wage. It could also lead to close to a billion-dollar economic shot in the arm to my State.

Currently, my State's small businesses are at a competitive disadvantage because in our neighboring States of Wisconsin and Iowa, the minimum wage is lower than in ours. Raising the Federal minimum wage could help level this playing field and make small businesses in my region stronger.

Increasing the minimum wage is a win-win situation for the people I represent and for our local economy. I believe strongly that anyone who works full-time should not have to live in poverty.

Let's work together and get this done.

ELECTRIFY AFRICA ACT OF 2014

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

Mr. BROOKS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the House Foreign Affairs Committee passed H.R. 2548, the Electrify Africa Act of 2014.

Another day in Washington, another boondoggle on the backs of American taxpayers.

I am flabbergasted that in the same week our Secretary of Defense warns of severe defense cuts caused by America's deteriorating financial condition, cuts that risk national security, Congress seeks to force American taxpayers to help build electrical power plants and transmission lines in Africa.

Financial prudence dictates that we reduce our deficits by not spending the money at all. If we must spend it and must choose between Africa or America, Mr. Speaker, I choose spending it in America.

America spends more than \$40 billion a year on foreign aid with money we do not have, borrow to get, and cannot afford to pay back. Mr. Speaker, if financial irresponsibility and economic insanity have a home, rest assured they live in Washington, D.C.

EMERGENCY UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION EXTENSION ACT

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

Mr. TIERNEY. Mr. Speaker, 2 months ago today, emergency unemployment benefits expired for over 1 million Americans, including 20,000 veterans, and yet this House still has not taken up legislation to provide these workers and their families necessary relief. That is shameful.

I rise to ask immediate action on my legislation, the Emergency Unemployment Compensation Extension Act, which provides a 3-month extension of benefits. 183 Members of the House—over 90 percent of the Democratic Caucus—have signed on to my bill.

Constituents from across my district and across the country have been sharing heartbreaking stories of hardship and pain because these benefits have expired. One constituent, VeraMae of Lynn, Massachusetts, wrote to me and said:

I am one of the people whose benefits expired at the end of the last year. My husband and I have tapped out all of our savings, and I'm beside myself with worry wondering how to make the little that we have remaining last longer. It is a mistake to eliminate this crucial safety net for those of us struggling to get back on our feet.

We should not leave VeraMae and others just like her out in the cold another day longer.

If the moral imperative to act isn't enough, Mr. Speaker, perhaps we should consider the economic benefits of extending unemployment insurance. In fact, economists agree that unemployment insurance is one of the best ways to spur economic growth, delivering \$1.52 in economic activity for every dollar spent.

This House should pass that bill immediately.

REMEMBERING MAJOR CHARLES SWIM

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

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, sadly, I rise today in remembrance of my dear friend and a great patriot, Mr. Charles Swim of Paradise, California.

Charlie was quite a character. He was very involved politically, and if he picked you as the person he thought was going to win, that virtually guaranteed your election. But more importantly, what we know him for in northern California is his service to his Nation and his community.

He was born on April 14, 1927, in Detroit, Michigan, although he claimed Kentucky. His true age at the time he enlisted in the Army was 15. They finally caught up to him when he was 17. He then soon enlisted in the Navy, where he served 6 years during World War II. After that, he rejoined the Army. He also served as a California State parole agent for 27 years, where he successfully fought for the Second Amendment rights of parole agents. Many credit Charlie's efforts to saving their lives.

After retirement, Charlie's extensive knowledge and experience in his field continued to affect those in California's First District, leading him to become appointed the first official historian for the Butte County Sheriff's Office.

He is survived by his wife of 40 years, 8 children, 11 grandchildren, 15 great-grandchildren, 3 great-great-grandchildren, 1 niece, and 3 nephews.

Charlie's valiance and warm heart touched and changed many lives. We are very grateful to him. He was deeply loved by his family, friends, and the community, and he will be incredibly missed by all.

□ 0915

PAYING TRIBUTE TO THE SERVICE OF SALVADOR LARA AND JESUS DURAN

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

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Salvador Lara and Jesus Duran, two Inland Empire heroes who, after decades of being overlooked, will be awarded the Medal of Honor.

Salvador Lara served in World War II and, while in Italy in 1944, he "aggressively led his rifle squad in neutralizing multiple enemy strong points. The next morning, as his company returned the attack, Lara sustained a severe leg wound but did not stop to receive aid."

Jesus Duran served in Vietnam and saved several wounded Americans on a search-and-clear mission in 1969. According to his son, Chuy, "His platoon was in a fight and a lot of guys were killed. He thought he was going to be left for dead, so he decided to take the M60 and unload."

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, these heroes are no longer with us and they will receive their Medals of Honor posthumously, but we must never forget their sacrifice, for it is because of their bravery that we are able to continue spreading freedom throughout the world.

UNFUNDED MANDATES INFORMATION AND TRANSPARENCY ACT OF 2013

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 899.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Oklahoma?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 492 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 899.

The Chair appoints the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HULTGREN) to preside over the Committee of the Whole.

□ 0916

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 899) to provide for additional safeguards with respect to imposing Federal mandates, and for other purposes, with Mr. HULTGREN in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered read the first time.

The gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. LANKFORD) and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oklahoma.

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Last Congress, the Oversight and Government Reform Subcommittee that I chaired began studying the effectiveness of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act, also known as UMRA, which was enacted in 1995.

We held three legislative hearings, and we inquired with the Congressional Budget Office and the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs about various UMRA provisions and the possible improvements to the law.

During our hearings, representatives from State and local governments, and the private sector, they all came to testify about many of the burdensome mandates that are actually not characterized and not protected under the original Unfunded Mandates Reform Act. The analyses often failed to capture the heavy burdens of those regulatory mandates.

UMRA's limited coverage is a concern because, as the chief economist of the Small Business and Entrepreneurship Council testified: "Unfunded mandates and regulations continually stifle private sector growth and economic expansion."

To help raise awareness about unfunded mandates and ensure more of these mandates are captured by the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act, H.R. 899, the Unfunded Mandates Information and Transparency Act, was introduced by Representative VIRGINIA FOXX. It is bipartisan legislation that will close existing loopholes in the law and bring more transparency and accountability to the regulatory process.

The legislation has the support of the National Federation of Independent Businesses, the Small Business and Entrepreneurship Council, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, and the National Conference of State Legislatures.

The American Action Forum, which is headed by former CBO Director Doug Holtz-Eakin, also supports the concepts of this bill.

H.R. 899 requires that independent regulatory agencies comply with the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act. Independent regulatory agencies are currently excluded from review, but the regulations they promulgate can impose significant costs and burdensome requirements.

Currently, regulations issued by agencies such as the Securities and Exchange Commission, the National Labor Relations Board, they are excluded from cost-benefit analyses otherwise required of other agencies.

The Congressional Research Service found that between 2010 and 2012, nine independent agencies issued 57 major rules. Those are rules with a cost to the economy of over \$100 million. But