

Congress that is working hard for them. Unfortunately, under Republican leadership, the 113th Congress is set to be the least productive Congress in history. Let me say that again. Speaker BOEHNER is presiding over what will be the least productive Congress in history.

Mr. Speaker, leadership comes with responsibility. Rather than working with Democrats to enact legislation that will strengthen the middle class and expand economic opportunity for all Americans, my friends on the other side of the aisle are obstructing progress and suing the President.

Democrats have a different plan. Instead of blocking legislation that will grow the economy, we have a plan that will jump-start the middle class. It has concrete proposals that will bring jobs back to America, provide women equal pay for equal work, raise the minimum wage, provide emergency unemployment benefits, and help millions of students afford college.

Mr. Speaker, we have serious challenges facing our Nation. Let's put aside partisan differences and get to work to jump-start the middle class and create jobs. Let's not adjourn. Let's cancel the recess and stay here and do the work the American people expect us to do.

THE UNITED STATES MUST CONTINUE TO STAND BY ISRAEL

(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 world has watched violence in the Middle East escalate due to Hamas rocket attacks. The bottom line is that Israel, under the trusted leadership of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, has the absolute right to defend its citizens from murderous attacks.

Hamas is a terrorist organization attacking to achieve one goal: bring death and destruction to the people of Israel. The Hamas threat is: "We love death more than you love life."

Hamas continues to launch thousands of rockets into Israel and create a network of terror tunnels. Sadly, Palestinian civilians have died because Hamas uses the innocent as human shields.

The United States must stand by our greatest ally in the region. Anything but total support of Israel by the President signals weakness for future attacks on the American people.

Terrorist threats are increasing, despite the President's denial. The President's actions to defeat terrorism are more significant than words.

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

Rest in peace, Earl Brown, a South Carolina patriot.

RECOGNIZING THE PASSING OF SHERIFF RALPH FROEHLICH

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

Mr. SIRES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about the recent loss of Sheriff Ralph Froehlich.

Sheriff Froehlich was born and raised in Elizabeth, New Jersey. After serving over 9 years in the U.S. Marine Corps as an Infantryman and a drill instructor, Mr. Froehlich joined the Elizabeth Police Department. Mr. Froehlich worked for almost 20 years, rising up to the rank of Lieutenant.

In 1977, he was elected the Sheriff of Union County and, at the time of his passing, was in the midst of serving his 13th term. This gave him the distinction of being the longest-serving Sheriff in the history of New Jersey.

While serving as the Sheriff of Union County, he implemented several programs designed to make our community safer. He worked hard to establish units regarding missing persons, domestic violence, and search and rescue.

I want to express my deepest condolences for all who knew and cared for Sheriff Froehlich, and my gratitude for the years he devoted to keeping our community safe.

RECENT BIPARTISAN ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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

Mr. LANCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning to draw attention to the recent bipartisan accomplishments here in the House of Representatives. These efforts include passage of legislation to keep the Internet tax-free, a highway bill that will keep more than 700,000 construction workers on the job, a series of education bills that will give students and their families the tools they need to help make postsecondary education more accessible and affordable, and legislation that will reform the Veterans Administration.

The House has also acted on an energy bill that would make it easier to ship our natural gas overseas, and put much-needed pressure on Russia, as well as a tax measure that will allow U.S. companies, large and small, to innovate, create jobs, and increase wages.

These are just a few of the more than 300 House-passed bills, including more than 40 jobs bills, that wait for action in the Senate of the United States. These bipartisan measures would benefit American families and businesses. They all deserve an up-or-down vote in the United States Senate.

THIS IS A SAD DAY IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

(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, I come today to this floor on what I believe is a very sad day for this House. There is no place left safe for children. Yesterday and today, we have condoned and endorsed activities which put children at risk. Children are not safe in mosques, in churches, in U.N.-protected schools, in hospitals, in ambulances, or even playing on the beach.

167 years ago, my great-grandmother came from Ireland, 12 years old, by herself, on a boat, landed in the docks of New York. If this Congress had been sitting then, she would have been sent back to Roscommon County, to her people, to her family, where a third of the people were dying of famine, a third emigrated, and a third stayed. That is what we would have sent her back to, without a hearing, without anything. She had no rights. And, luckily, it wasn't that way.

There is no resonance for Jesus' command: Suffer the little children to come unto me.

Our country will rue this day.

VETERANS ACCESS, CHOICE, AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I am here to celebrate the most recent of many bills produced by this House, the Republican-led House. This one is H.R. 3230, the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act, with overwhelming bipartisan support. This legislation will begin the process of reforming the Veterans Health Administration and instituting great accountability across our veterans' health system.

Being the father of an Army soldier and having worked for 30 years as a health care practitioner, my heart broke when I first heard of the disturbing revelations of gross misconduct and dysfunction at the VA.

Fortunately, with the passage of H.R. 3230, we have moved one step closer to restoring the trust of our veterans. This legislation will afford greater and timelier access to cost-effective care services, while bringing necessary changes to the Department of Veterans Affairs. However, Mr. Speaker, this is just the first step, and more needs to be done to fulfill the commitments we have made to these brave men and women.

I want to thank the chairmen of the House and the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committees for their commitment to overcoming political differences and finding common ground.

□ 0915

KURDISTAN

(Mr. POLIS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1