

or fraudulent payments—tens of billions. This has to stop. It is not an issue of not making sure that people pay their taxes.

I am all for making sure that things are applied fairly and equitably, but we have an obligation of responsibility to make sure that money is spent appropriately and efficiently or safeguarded. It is not our money.

I just wanted, today, to take the opportunity to recognize the hard-working moms and dads, individuals across this country who have written their check to Uncle Sam, and they expect us to be good stewards of their hard-earned dollars.

There are a few bills we are working on this week I urge this body to pass. Whether it is balancing the budget or making sure that we eliminate the death tax, we will have our opportunity to make sure that we are holding the Federal Government accountable.

□ 1230

WATER WEEK

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

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about our most precious natural resource: water.

It is Water Week here in D.C.; but in the San Joaquin Valley, in California, it is always Water Week.

At first glance at this picture, you might think this was taken in an underdeveloped country thousands of miles away. It is not. These are the squalid living conditions in California's San Joaquin Valley. They are a direct result of the extreme lack of water in California.

While, in part, the drought is to blame, our inability to move the limited water is exacerbating the crisis. While conditions like these are unacceptable, I think to all of us in the richest country in the world, we must do something about it.

It takes water to grow food, period. California grows half the Nation's fruits and vegetables and more, but this year, some estimates say that 1 million acres out of 6 million acres usually in production will be fallowed.

In the short term, we need to act on operational flexibility to deal with this crisis. In the long term, it is time that we fix this broken water system not just for California, but for the West and for the entire world to whom we provide a large part of the food supply. This is the challenge of the 21st century.

TACKLING THE TAX CODE

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

Mr. HARDY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address an issue that has ham-

pered the growth and prosperity for both individuals and businesses.

Our economy continues to struggle. Our Tax Code shouldn't be working against us. Each year, hard-working Americans have to navigate the Internal Revenue Code, which stands at tens of thousands of pages. Moreover, the agency charged with collecting taxes from Americans has been scrutinizing and delaying critical paperwork for conservative groups.

Mr. Speaker, I stand here today to advance the conversation surrounding the comprehensive tax reform. From the individual Code to the corporate tax system, reform needs to result in a fairer, flatter system that works for Americans and their businesses, not against them.

As we labor through another tax day, it is a reminder, Mr. Speaker, that we haven't addressed the Code in close to 30 years. We have the ability to tackle the Tax Code only if we are willing to make hard decisions.

ADOPT A LONG-TERM HIGHWAY FUNDING BILL

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

Mr. DELANEY. Mr. Speaker, in 45 days, the highway trust fund runs out of money. That means that 90 percent of the road projects in this country will grind to a halt. That is a national tragedy, particularly when there are numerous bipartisan proposals in this Congress to deal with the situation.

Rather than just focusing on the macro statistics, we decided to reach out to my constituents and find out what they think about America's infrastructure. We received hundreds and hundreds of responses detailing all the problems my constituents have with long commute times, concrete falling down from bridges and hitting their windshields, and water interruptions.

We cannot let this happen in the United States of America in the year 2015. I encourage this Congress to adopt a long-term highway funding bill and stop with short-term measures that just delay the inevitable.

Let's invest in America's future; let's invest in our infrastructure, and let's stop Americans from having the problems that they have to deal with day in and day out with an underinvested, aging, decrepit infrastructure.

BOKO HARAM

(Ms. CLARKE of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. CLARKE of New York. Mr. Speaker, I stand today with my colleagues to focus the attention of the world on the 276 young women who were kidnapped by Boko Haram—219 whose whereabouts remain unknown—in Chibok, Nigeria, just a year ago in April.

This kidnapping, this act of terrorism, was an attack on the basic human rights of women and girls to participate in the civil society, in this instance by attending school to develop their individual talents and God-given potential.

These young women were violently abducted for the explicit purpose of preventing their full participation in the civil society of Nigeria.

Now, a year after their kidnapping, these young women are still missing, and Boko Haram continues to terrorize the people of west Africa, forcing millions of people to flee their home and undermining the foundations of democracy.

We must continue in our efforts to find these girls and bring their abductors to justice. The destabilization of Nigeria, Cameroon, and Chad has implications for the entire continent of Africa and, indeed, the world.

We have called on the community of nations to bring back our girls.

BRING BACK OUR GIRLS

(Ms. JACKSON LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, what you have seen today is the powerful impact of the women of the United States Congress.

Earlier today, we joined on the steps of the United States Capitol; and in that area that we joined with the young girls who had escaped from Boko Haram, women of faith, and many other advocates, we stood there, arm-in-arm, listening to the stories of those young girls who jumped out of trucks and escaped the violence of Boko Haram and their very thuggish leader.

The Boko Haram are terrorists. A year ago, they stole the "world's girls." I led a delegation, joined by my colleagues, to Nigeria. In that effort, we saw the families who were crying and broken. We protested at the Nigerian Embassy and made a direct call to the then President to ask him to denounce Boko Haram.

Today, we have been on the floor. Working with my colleagues, we have continuously said: bring the girls back.

Mr. Speaker, in Nigeria, 15,000 have been killed because of Boko Haram. Also, 1.5 million are displaced persons, 800,000 of which are children.

I end my remarks by saying: bring the girls back. I am delighted to have been with Congresswoman MALONEY and Congresswoman WILSON. We will never give up on bringing the girls back. They are the world's girls. They are our girls.

THE GIRLS OF CHIBOK

(Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, on the 1-