

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from New York (Mr. HIGGINS) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. HIGGINS led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

WE MUST PASS THE NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT

(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, today, the House of Representatives will consider the National Defense Authorization Act. Under the leadership of Armed Services Committee Chairman MAC THORNBERRY, the committee voted favorably, 60-2, with almost unanimous bipartisan support. Our national security depends on it.

While our Nation faces a complex and threatening environment at home and abroad, this year, the NDAA provides necessary resources to establish a strong national defense, protect American families, and support our brave servicemembers.

As chairman of the Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities, working with Ranking Member JIM LANGEVIN, I am especially pleased this bill addresses the growing threats posed by cyber attacks and our enemies' use of advanced technologies and unconventional warfare.

This bill also preserves means to train and equip special operations and cyber forces to defend America now and in the future. The NDAA has always been widely supported. It should not be held hostage to other legislation.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and may the President by his actions never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

Our sympathy to the family of Midshipman Justin Zemser.

IT IS TIME TO INVEST IN OUR INFRASTRUCTURE

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

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, every year, our economy loses \$33 billion to air traffic delays, \$121 billion to highway congestion, and \$200 billion to freight bottlenecks. Unless we increase spending on waterways, America will lose \$270 billion in exports over the next 5 years.

According to the Chamber of Commerce, our declining infrastructure costs \$1 trillion a year in lost economic growth. Ignoring these facts is economically irrational and governmentally negligent, but that is exactly what Congress has done.

We just spent \$50 billion on our roads and bridges and transit, and only 8 percent, or \$46 billion, in 2009 economic stimulus went to infrastructure; yet we spent over \$150 billion rebuilding the infrastructure of Iraq and Afghanistan.

The American Society of Civil Engineers has identified an enormous deficit between the projected spending and what is needed to bring our infrastructure to a state of good repair.

Today, I introduced the Nation Building Here at Home Act to close this gap. It is time for Congress to make the investments we need and reject the pathetically weak policies that we can no longer afford.

NATIONAL POLICE WEEK

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

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of National Police Week and to honor the memory of law enforcement officers who have lost their lives in the line of duty. All Americans are grateful for these brave men and women and the ultimate sacrifice they made.

During my time as deputy mayor of Indianapolis and U.S. attorney, I witnessed firsthand the burdens and challenges faced by our law enforcement officers and their amazing families. Even more importantly, I witnessed men and women in blue who have overcome these challenges while displaying so much compassion and commitment to duty. Our Nation must embrace them and be forever mindful of their integrity and service.

Sadly, we have learned it is estimated that, every 3½ days in this country, we lose an officer in the line of duty. This week, we will remember 117 officers killed in 2014, including four officers from Indiana: Jeffrey Westerfield of Gary, Perry Renn of Indianapolis, Nickolaus Schultz of Merrillville, and Jacob Calvin of Tip-ton County.

We are thankful for their service and send our thoughts and prayers to their loved ones. Without hesitation, we renew our appreciation and steadfast commitment to our heroic women and men in blue.

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH AND OUR VETERANS

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

Mr. ASHFORD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my unqualified support for those struggling with mental health issues.

May is Mental Health Awareness Month and an opportune time to reach

out to those battling with this issue, including this country's veterans and their families.

Many of our veterans endured trauma during their time of service and, as a result, are now forced to face the negative perceptions and stigma associated with mental health care. I want to lend my voice to a national program designed to reducing those negative views.

The Department of Veterans Affairs is encouraging veterans, along with their families and friends, to visit the Web site maketheconnection.net. Make the Connection allows veterans to tell their personal stories of mental health treatment and recovery.

Through the Web site, veterans and their loved ones hear from hundreds of other veterans who may be experiencing similar challenges and learn strategies for support and recovery. This is truly an excellent source of strength for veterans in need of hope.

USA FREEDOM 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, yesterday, the House of Representatives overwhelmingly passed the USA FREEDOM Act, a bipartisan bill to reform the controversial domestic surveillance programs.

The passage of this legislation is the result of strong bipartisan negotiations to strike a balance in order to protect American citizens' rights without dealing a blow to lawful and warranted surveillance efforts.

Mr. Speaker, Congress did not intend for any law to authorize the indiscriminate collection of personal information from Americans. The USA FREEDOM Act will help end government overreach, while ensuring intelligence agencies have the tools at their disposal to lawfully pursue suspected terrorists in efforts to protect all Americans.

As a member of the bipartisan Congressional Privacy Caucus, I applaud the Judiciary Committee and the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence for working together to write a bill that strikes a balance to protect our constitutional rights without compromising our national security.

HIGHWAY TRUST FUND EXPIRATION

(Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, in just 5 legislative days, the highway trust fund authorization will expire. Transportation projects all across the country will come to a screeching halt. Thousands of workers will be unnecessarily laid off.

Despite the Republicans now having a majority in both House and Senate,