

its budget on wildfire suppression and across the country over 8 million acres have already burned just this year.

The Forest Service reported last week that it has begun the practice known as fire borrowing, which is transferring funds to supplement its diminishing firefighting budget.

This practice of fire borrowing leads into a vicious cycle where funding is not available for critical fire mitigation efforts, such as thinning dense forests, rehabilitating areas after wildfires, and ensuring communities are more resilient and prepared for future fires.

This leads the next fire season to be worse than the last, a trend that we are now experiencing in Washington, which is why it is more important than ever to pass legislation to fix this problem such as the Wildfire Disaster Funding Act.

To protect our communities and battle the wildfires, firefighters from across the U.S., as well as Australia and New Zealand, have joined the fight. We owe them our deepest gratitude and thanks.

Additionally, the thousands of first responders and volunteers and National Guard servicemembers who have worked around the clock at great personal risk to fight the blaze deserve recognition for their heroic and selfless efforts.

I have seen firsthand how our communities have pulled together to help one another during these trying times. Our communities in central and eastern Washington are resolute, resilient, and have come together to confront the many challenges facing them.

The outpouring of support and effort of volunteers from all over the State and country, who provide shelter to survivors, cook meals, and unload trucks of relief supplies, is a testament to the spirit and determination of Washingtonians and our neighbors.

However, help is needed still as the current fires have only worsened what was already a perilous situation, with more and more homes being destroyed, families being displaced, and severe economic hardship expected in the aftermath.

Mr. Speaker, we must remember the losses caused by catastrophic wildfires of the last 2 years, and Congress must continue to push to improve forest health and to ensure that this does not happen again.

AMERICAN HEROES OF FRENCH TRAIN ATTACK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. DESAULNIER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. DESAULNIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to join my neighbor and good friend from Sacramento in honoring three brave Americans who foiled an attempted attack on passengers in a train traveling from Amsterdam to Paris on August 22, 2015. Anthony

Sadler, Spencer Stone, and Alek Skarlatos were the three brave Americans who stopped this attack.

Anthony Sadler is a native of Pittsburg, California, which, happily, is in my congressional district. These courageous men charged the attacker, who was armed with an AK-47 and dozens of rounds of ammunition, enough to kill everyone on that train.

Thanks to Anthony and his friends, no one was killed and injuries were minimized. Each were awarded France's highest civilian honor, the Legion d'Honneur.

As we reflect on 9/11, 14 years ago this week, the heroic efforts of these young men underscore our Nation's resolve to confront violent extremism. I am thankful they returned home to their families and to America.

A MUNICH-SIZED MISTAKE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. McCLINTOCK) for 5 minutes.

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, in 48 hours, the House will vote on a resolution to stop the Iran nuclear treaty.

Now, I know the President chooses not to call it a treaty, but it is a treaty in everything but name, with international ramifications as great as any treaty Congress has ever considered.

Because treaties have a profound implication to the life of this Nation, the Constitution requires they be ratified by a two-thirds vote of the Senate. Yet, in this post-constitutional era of Obama's America, it now require two-thirds of both Houses to reject them.

Every Republican in both Houses has taken a stand against this treaty. So rejection or ratification now rests solely on whether enough Democrats are willing to place country ahead of party on a matter of the gravest consequence to world peace.

I don't think anyone can dispute the immediate effects of this treaty: \$150 billion in frozen assets will be released to a regime whose leaders daily reiterate their intention to wage war on Israel and the United States. These funds will be available to finance Iran's military and terrorist activities and to fund its nuclear ambitions.

Although the agreement purports to halt production of fissile material, it gives Iran the legal right to continue its research and development of advanced centrifuges, the only purpose of which is to produce nuclear weapons.

It gives them legal access to traffic in conventional arms in just 5 years and ICBM technology in 8 years, something that Obama's own chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff said should be done "under no circumstances" just a week before the treaty was announced.

Does anyone deny that the nation most immediately imperiled by a nuclear Iran—our ally, Israel—is united in its opposition to this treaty? Israeli political parties are among the most fractured and disputatious in the

world. Yet, they stand united on this issue.

Does anyone deny that the Iranian regime is notorious for not honoring its treaty obligations? Indeed, Iran signed a nuclear nonproliferation treaty and has violated it ever since, which is why we are now debating this treaty.

Verification therefore must be the central focus of any treaty with this regime. Yet, under its very terms, spot inspections can be delayed for weeks or even months if the regime objects.

More recently, we have learned that, under secret side agreements the administration had no intention of sharing, inspections of the most important nuclear sites are to be conducted by the Iranians themselves. This provision alone guarantees that history will ridicule this treaty as the pinnacle of naivety.

So I ask my Democratic colleagues, why? Why would anyone who values peace support this treaty? The answer I hear is that it reduces the chance of war in the next few years or, in Neville Chamberlain's words, it guarantees "peace in our time."

Does anyone really believe this? This treaty gives Israel the Hobson's choice of launching a preemptive strike or ramping up its own nuclear program.

The Saudis and Egyptians have already made clear this agreement gives them no alternative other than to initiate their own nuclear programs. It catastrophically undermines the Iranian democratic opposition at just the time the regime was faltering from within.

Ironically, Mr. Obama tacitly concedes the destabilizing effect of this treaty by following it up with pledges to vastly increase military aid to Israel, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia. If he really believed this treaty stabilizes the region, why would it need a new infusion of arms?

□ 1100

I appeal to my Democratic colleagues to consider the ramifications of this vote. The constitutional concerns are huge. This sets a dangerous precedent that essentially rescinds the treaty clause of the Constitution, a precedent they might live to regret under Republican administrations.

A far more immediate danger is the chain of events this treaty would set off in the Middle East and quickly spread throughout the world. This treaty bolsters the Iranian regime from within. It infuses it with \$150 billion with which to finance its nuclear ambitions. It gives it the legal right and guaranteed timetable to pursue nuclear war and cannot be verified through inspections.

Iran has made crystal clear its intent to destroy Israel and the United States, a threat reiterated yesterday in no uncertain terms by its Supreme Leader.

Mr. Speaker, we are running out of time to avert a catastrophe.

SOCIAL SECURITY DISABILITY
TRUST FUND

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. REED) for 5 minutes.

Mr. REED. Mr. Speaker, there are a lot of important issues before the House this week, but I wanted to take an opportunity to raise an issue that we have been working on in our office for quite some time.

We, as a body, Mr. Speaker, will be faced with an opportunity, hopefully, to resolve this issue here shortly in the next few months, and that is the issue of the Social Security disability insurance trust fund.

Not a lot of people are aware—and I just read the Social Security trustees report over the summer—that the disability trust fund goes insolvent in 2016. That means millions of Americans who rely on Social Security disability benefits are looking at a situation where their benefits are going to be cut 20 percent because of the insolvency of the Social Security trust fund—2016, Mr. Speaker, that is right around the corner.

When I raised this issue 2 years ago with the White House, with Jack Lew—our Treasury Secretary—in our Committee on Ways and Means hearing, I asked him 2 years ago: What is the plan? What is the solution to this problem?

What I was ultimately told was this is what we are going to do: we are just going to take money from the Social Security retirement fund and move it over to the disability trust fund and bail it out.

Well, in my private life in business, I knew a lot of businessowners, and what that essentially was, it is robbing Peter to pay Paul because the Social Security retirement fund is on a path to insolvency just a few short years down the road.

I said we could do better. That is why I was glad to join with my colleague, SAM JOHNSON, who chairs the Subcommittee on Social Security here in Washington, to change the rules to make sure that that solution would not be the one that we follow here in 2015 and 2016. We can do better.

You know why we can do better? It is because we care. We care about the people that are in the disability trust fund, and we need to listen to those people. This is what their experience is with the disability trust fund today. They are frustrated. It is a bureaucracy. It is a mess.

We have overpayments. We have fraudulent payments. We have a system that penalizes people returning to work, rather than trying to incentivize them and stand with them when they return to work.

We had an individual by the name of Mike Zelly come before the committee and testify to us, and he is in the disability trust fund. He was in a horrific automobile accident 36 years ago and has been in a wheelchair ever since.

These are the people we should listen to. These are the people that know the

disability trust fund the best. What his testimony to us was, he says we should seize this opportunity to fix this problem, take care of the bureaucracy, make sure the overpayments don't occur because, when an overpayment occurs to a disability recipient, guess who has to pay it back? It is the disability recipient because of the Social Security Administration's incompetence. That is not right. That is not fair.

Most importantly, what he talked about in his 36 years in the disability trust fund is that, when he tried to return to work, he was faced with obstacle after obstacle of a bureaucracy that said, if you do that, you will lose your benefit. That is not right.

Mike Zelly offered ideas on how we can improve the system to streamline this bureaucracy. This is the process someone in the Social Security disability trust fund has to go through in order to try to go back to work. We need to simplify it, and we need to stand with the American work ethic for the people in the disability trust fund that want to return to work.

There was a recent Brookings Institution report that came across my desk that I read. There was 40 percent return on the beneficiaries in the disability trust fund that indicated they would like to return to work, but because of the bureaucracy, there was fear. There was a sense that, if they did that, they would lose their benefit, and they just couldn't risk it.

That is why we are offering common-sense reforms here out of our office, out of the Committee on Ways and Means, out of this House, hopefully, shortly, so that what we can do is make sure that those disability trust fund recipients don't look at a 20 percent cut in 2016.

We will hold them harmless, and we will make sure we do what is necessary in order to make sure that our obligations and promises under the disability trust fund are met to those individuals because that is the right thing to do.

We cannot lose this opportunity to modernize the Social Security disability trust fund to make sure that we stand with those that want to return to work and believe in the American work ethic like we do.

I ask my colleagues to join with us on a bipartisan basis, and there has been an indication of bipartisan work that we have been able to show here in the initial conversations.

Let's modernize the disability trust fund; let's cure the waste, fraud, and abuse, but most importantly, let's stand with the individuals like Mike Zelly who want to return to work because it gives him dignity and it gives him a sense that he is contributing rather than being in any way a burden on the system.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair

declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 6 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

Reverend Robert Michaels, Serve & Protect, Brentwood, Tennessee, offered the following prayer:

Lord God, we humbly come before You asking for wisdom, unity, and peace.

We are reminded that September 9, 1776, the Continental Congress declared the name of our new Nation to be the United States of America, no longer United Colonies. Our national unity was strong.

Lord, we also remember unity September 11, 2001, when terrorists attacked our Nation. Again, our Nation stood united, strong, and resolute.

Today, Lord, we pray for that same commitment to unity, that sense of all for one and one for all. We pray for our military and first responders, noble heroes all.

Please, Lord, help our leaders. Grant wisdom and vision; help them serve this great Nation, under God, "with liberty and justice for all." One Nation. One heart. One mind.

We sincerely pray this as one Nation under God, as Jesus taught us to pray, to our Father, who is in heaven.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentlewoman from Minnesota (Ms. MCCOLLUM) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. MCCOLLUM 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.

WELCOMING REVEREND ROBERT
MICHAELS

The SPEAKER. Without objection, the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, it is a distinct honor to introduce and honor guest chaplain Reverend Robert Michaels, from Brentwood, Tennessee.