

It is Iowans like Cathie that make me proud to represent our great state. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Cathie for receiving this award and in wishing her nothing but continued success.

CONGRATULATIONS TO PIKEVILLE
PANTHERS FOOTBALL TEAM

HON. HAROLD ROGERS

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 17, 2015

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Coach Chris McNamee and the Pikeville Panthers High School Football team for winning the 2015 Kentucky High School Athletic Association 1A Class State Championship title for the first time since winning three straight from 1987 to 1989.

On December 3, 2015 at Western Kentucky University in the Houchens Stadium, the Pikeville Panthers put their skill and heart to the test against the Beechwood Tigers, a high school team from Northern Kentucky with a legacy steeped in state titles. The two teams battled hard for each inch on the field with a tied score of 21-all leading into the final quarter, proving they both deserved to compete for state bragging rights. With victory in sight, the Panthers battled back for three remarkable touchdowns in the last nine minutes of the game. The final score was 42 to 28, giving Coach McNamee his first Championship as the Panthers' coach.

The Panthers' win brought some much-needed celebration back to the coalfields of Eastern Kentucky, where we've lost more than 9,000 coal mining jobs since 2009. These young men have undoubtedly seen the impact first hand, as many of them have fathers or other family members who have recently been laid off from the coal mines. Through sheer determination and hard work, they proved that we can rise above our challenges and daunting circumstances to bring hope and victory back to the mountains.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Coach McNamee and the Pikeville Panthers for bringing the highly coveted state title back home to the mountains of Eastern Kentucky. I wish them all the best of luck in the years to come.

COMMENDING NORTHEASTERN
UNIVERSITY ON THE OPENING
OF ITS CENTER FOR THE AD-
VANCEMENT OF VETERANS AND
SERVICE MEMBERS (CAVS)

HON. SETH MOULTON

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 17, 2015

Mr. MOULTON. Mr. Speaker, at a time when employment rates for many student veterans continue to lag behind those of their civilian peers, I rise today to commend Northeastern University for launching a new center aimed at tackling this urgent challenge head on. Northeastern's new Center for the Advancement of Veterans and Service Mem-

bers—or "CAVS" for short—offers a wealth of services and benefits to returned service members, including mentorship opportunities and assistance with the transition from military to civilian life.

Student veterans at Northeastern benefit from the university's renowned experiential learning infrastructure through specialized cooperative education placements within a global network of 3,000 employers. And with CAVS now coming online, these students can also access tailored experiential learning programs and career resources that leverage their unique individual competencies and prior military experience.

Mr. Speaker, despite a slowly improving unemployment rate, veterans nationwide consistently face greater barriers to employment than non-veterans. According to the Department of Veterans Affairs, half of all veterans in the United States will face a period of unemployment after transitioning from military service—particularly younger veterans, with those aged 18–24 facing an unemployment rate double that of civilian peers. In a report by Prudential prepared in conjunction with the Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America, 69 percent of veterans list finding a job as a civilian as their greatest challenge after service.

That's why I am so pleased to see that Northeastern's new center expands the university's focus on student veteran employability by focusing on the education and career advancement of returning service members. It's clear that Northeastern recognizes the contributions and sacrifices of service members and is committed to providing student veterans with an experiential education that allows them to leverage their unique leadership skills for their future careers.

Mr. Speaker, this work is not new for Northeastern. In fact, the university has a proud, 100-year legacy of educating veterans and service members. Today, Northeastern ranks among the top 10 private, non-profit, research universities for attracting post-9/11 G.I. Bill recipients. And the university also signed a first-of-its-kind agreement earlier this year to offer accelerated master's degrees in homeland security to members of the National Guard.

Northeastern is building on its strong track record of educating and preparing student veterans for the future: Northeastern's student veteran graduation rate is 82.6 percent, well above the national average of 51 percent. Through its Institute for Military Leadership in the Workforce, Northeastern's new veterans center will serve all aspects of veterans' integration into academia and will link students to strategic partners in the private sector. Based in Boston, the center's reach and impact will extend worldwide to veterans within Northeastern's Global Network.

Mr. Speaker, today there are some 600 student veterans and active duty personnel currently receiving benefits and support at Northeastern, a population that is expected to continue to grow in the wake of the opening of the center. The university's commitment to veterans now totals some \$4 million, including its assistance through the federal Yellow Ribbon Program, the support and operation of the new center, and the establishment of a new scholarship program to aid veterans with costs not otherwise provided for through the government's benefits.

Additionally, Northeastern has more than 90 ongoing research projects funded by the De-

partment of Defense, two Centers of Excellence funded by the Department of Homeland Security, and a \$15 million state-of-the-art research institute that focuses on sensitive problems of national security. This past September, the university signed a \$20 million cooperation agreement with the U.S. Army Research Laboratory to continue conducting critical defense research.

Mr. Speaker, Northeastern's unique military-aligned ecosystem provides veterans with more opportunities to explore different career paths, to learn how to better translate skills for the civilian job market, and to build relationships among the community. I commend Northeastern, under the visionary leadership of President Joseph Aoun, for undertaking this important work.

Northeastern's attention to veteran education and transitional needs is deeply appreciated. I urge all of my colleagues to take the time to review this important effort.

PROTECTING AMERICANS FROM
TAX HIKES ACT OF 2015

HON. TERRI A. SEWELL

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 17, 2015

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to express my strong concerns for the "Protecting Americans from Tax Hikes Act of 2015." I want to commend Ranking Member LEVIN and the Democratic leadership for their strong, unwavering support for hard-working families across our country during these difficult negotiations for a comprehensive tax extenders package. While I support a strong tax policy that provides certainty to individuals and American businesses, I have a number of concerns with respect to the final provisions of the package and the ultimate cost of the bill.

Our nation's tax code should continue to evolve in order to reflect and meet the challenges facing modern businesses. It should also create opportunities for growth, without undermining critical social programs that benefit all Americans.

This package includes several provisions I strongly support, including permanent expansions of the earned income tax credit, the child tax credit, and the American opportunity tax credit. The package also provides a two-year moratorium on the medical device tax and extends the work opportunity tax credit to help employers that hire Americans who have faced significant barriers to employment. This bill also provides incentives to individuals for charitable contributions and for businesses to continue to invest in critical research and development.

However as with most legislation, these tax cuts and extenders have a huge price tag. The Joint Committee on Taxation (JCT) estimates that the provisions would reduce net revenues, and thereby increase deficits, by a total of \$622 billion over 10 years. I am deeply concerned that passing this tax extenders package without offsetting its cost would greatly undermine our ability to make key discretionary investments in the future that would hinder job creation, and lessen opportunities that make the American dream possible for millions of families across our great nation.