

metric you use, this effort has been a real failure," he said.

The USAID-funded Shorandam Industrial Park in Kandahar province was transferred to the Afghan government in September 2010 with the intention of accommodating 48 business and hundreds of local employees. Four years later, SIGAR inspectors found just one active company operating there.

This was due to the U.S. military building a power plant on one-third of the industrial park to provide electricity to nearby Kandahar City, causing "entrepreneurs to shy away from setting up businesses" at the site, SIGAR said in its report of April 2015.

After the military withdrew in mid-2014, the investigators were told that at least four Afghan businesses had moved into the industrial park. However, SIGAR said that it could not complete a thorough inspection because USAID's contract files were "missing important documentation."

The DOD spent nearly \$82 million on nine incineration facilities in Afghanistan—yet four of them never fired their furnaces, SIGAR said in February 2015. These four dormant facilities had eight incinerators between them and the wastage cost \$20.1 million.

In addition, SIGAR inspectors said it was "disturbing" that "prohibited items," such as tires and batteries, continued to be burned in Afghanistan's 251 burn pits. U.S. military personnel were also exposed to emissions from these pits "that could have lasting negative health consequences," the watchdog said.

The Department of Defense said it was "vitaly interested in exploring all possible ways to save taxpayer dollars and ensure we are good stewards of government resources."

A spokesman added: "We'll continue to work with SIGAR, and other agencies, to help get to the bottom of any reported issues or concerns."

A spokesman for Afghanistan's President Ashraf Ghani declined to comment on this story.

Mr. JONES. Madam Speaker, we have already spent more in Afghanistan than it cost to rebuild Europe after World War II. In fact, last week I asked my staff to draft a letter to Speaker PAUL RYAN.

In the letter, I asked the Speaker of the House, PAUL RYAN, to meet with John Sopko, who is the Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, and listen to this absolute waste that is going on in Afghanistan.

Yet, sometime soon we will mark up the NDAA, National Defense Authorization Act, and I will guarantee you there will be billions of dollars in OCO funds going to Afghanistan.

There will be those of us on both sides of the aisle that would like to take that money out or significantly reduce the money. Last year it was over \$43 billion in OCO funds, which is nothing but a slush fund.

Madam Speaker, there is a famous line about Afghanistan. It says that Afghanistan is the graveyard of empires.

I predict today—but I hope I am wrong—if we continue to spend and waste billions of dollars in Afghanistan, there will be a headstone in that graveyard that says: USA.

I hope that does not happen. But we had better wake up, as Members of Congress, and stop supporting programs like money for Afghanistan that

are a total waste of the taxpayers' money.

Madam Speaker, I will ask God to continue to bless our men and women in uniform and ask God to continue to bless America.

#### TRIBUTE TO PAUL BARKLA

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

Mr. KIND. Madam Speaker, today I rise to celebrate the life and legacy of my good friend, Paul Barkla. I met Paul when I first ran for Congress. He was one of my earliest supporters.

I still vividly recall meeting him at the end of a Democratic primary debate when he introduced himself as a former Bill Proxmire staffer, as I was, and then promised to do everything he could to help me get elected. It was the beginning of a 25-year friendship, during which time he became a member of our family.

Paul is a native of the Pacific Northwest and was raised in Eugene, Oregon. Paul was a firm believer in good, old-fashioned, shoe-leather politics, and he pounded the pavement for Democratic candidates across the country, where he met many friends along the way.

In 2004, he traveled to New Hampshire to volunteer for the Presidential campaign of General Wesley Clark. In 2008, he again loaded up his dog and traveled around the country, showing up in battleground States and volunteering for President Obama. He believed we all had an obligation to participate in our democracy.

After college, Paul moved to Washington, where he received a master's degree from George Washington University and worked as a Capitol policeman.

He also went to work for numerous Congressmen and then worked for Senator Proxmire of Wisconsin, where he became engaged with Wisconsin politics.

It was during his time in Washington that he became active in the civil rights movement, participating in the March on Washington in August 1963. He enjoyed telling stories of his life during those times.

Paul met his wife, Nancy, who also worked for Senator Proxmire in Washington, in 1958. And then, in 1968, they moved their family to Wisconsin, where he continued to work on progressive causes and campaigns. There he worked as a caregiver and manager of group homes.

Paul and Nancy raised three children: Ann Fedders of New Richmond, Sidney Scott of Fall City, and Paul Barkla, Jr., of Ellsworth. He was very proud of his 12 grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

Paul believed in our democratic process and public service. That is why he ran for and was elected to the Pierce County Board in 2004 and later became the board chair.

Pierce County residents knew Paul as a community leader and advocate

for the needs of his neighbors. He wasn't afraid to tackle tough issues.

He told me he enjoyed serving on the county board because it was less partisan, driven more by the local needs of the Pierce County residents rather than strict adherence to party ideology.

Although Paul was gruff on the outside, he was fiercely loyal to his family and friends. We had many discussions over the years. I knew I could always count on Paul to provide an honest opinion, and he was never afraid to speak his mind.

He made many friends over the years through politics and public service. He befriended many of my staff whom he talked to frequently and stayed in touch with even when they moved on to other opportunities.

For those who are lucky enough to cross paths with Paul, from folks in Washington to Oregon to Washington, D.C., he will not be forgotten.

Paul exemplified what was great about America: deep love for his country, the importance of public service, and the need to fight for the most vulnerable and less fortunate in our society.

In short, Paul was a great patriot and a great American. For those whose lives he touched, Paul will be greatly missed.

#### HOLDING INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE ACCOUNTABLE

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

Mr. PERRY. Madam Speaker, yesterday was tax day—or at least the deadline for filing and paying your taxes. I can't imagine very many citizens look forward to that.

We all know that we have to do our part, but we are often frustrated by the unacceptable waste of government spending. We all work hard; yet, they take our money and oftentimes spend it on things that we find objectionable or, worse, they simply waste it.

To add insult to injury, government doesn't have to follow the same standards that every citizen has to. Nowhere is this more obvious than in the IRS and its Commissioner, who scoffs at the very same rules that every other citizen has to abide by.

Now, I would just ask you: If you got subpoenaed to produce documents and to protect documents and just ignored it, how do you think that would go for you? If you lied to government officials—let's say government officials in the IRS—about your tax records, knowing that they are requirements, and you just refused to provide them, how do you think that that would be for you?

This is just another example of two sets of standards, one for the ruling class and another for the rest of the citizens. It was never intended to be this way, essentially where we are forced to serve our government.