

CBO warns that America's debt service cost will increase within a decade by \$464 billion per year, to roughly \$712 billion per year—more than what America spends on national defense. Which begs the question: Where will the money for a \$720 billion a year annual debt service payment come from?

Mr. Speaker, America's financially irresponsible conduct has caused both America's Comptroller General and the Congressional Budget Office to repeatedly warn in writing that America's financial path is "unsustainable." I agree with the Comptroller General and CBO warnings and I am convinced that, absent major changes in the economic understanding and backbone of Washington's elected officials, a debilitating American insolvency and bankruptcy is a certainty within three decades, a probability within two decades, and a dangerous risk over the next 10 years.

All of this brings us to the continuing resolution spending bill that Congress will soon vote on. According to the CBO, this continuing resolution spending bill, plus so-called mandatory spending, increased Federal Government spending by \$150 billion and blows fiscal year 2017 Federal Government spending through the \$4 trillion mark—a new record high amount of spending.

This CR spending bill ignores economic reality and fails to prudently restrain Federal Government spending to reflect America's tax revenue. This CR spending bill reflects Washington and special interest group greed and shortsightedness and continues the worst generational theft in American history by again breaking into our kids' piggy banks and stealing money we don't have and will never pay back, callously letting our children suffer the consequences.

□ 1030

Mr. Speaker, economic principles don't care if you are a family, a business, or a country. If you borrow more money than you can pay back, you go bankrupt. Americans are rightfully angry at Washington elected officials who are all too willing to sacrifice America's future for today's special interest campaign contributions.

Mr. Speaker, I can't speak for anyone else, but as for me, MO BROOKS, from Alabama's Fifth Congressional District, I vote for financial responsibility and prosperity and against a debilitating American bankruptcy, insolvency, and resulting economic depression.

As such, and although this continuing resolution admittedly spends money on lots of good things, I will vote against it because it is financially irresponsible. I will not vote for a debilitating insolvency and bankruptcy of America that will damage so many Americans for so many years to come.

#### FUND THE ZIKA PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. WILSON) for 5 minutes.

Ms. WILSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, today, at 12:30 p.m., I will be convening an emergency press conference from the U.S. Capitol on Zika. This is a bipartisan press conference of Floridians, Democrats, and Republicans who are concerned about their State. Please join us.

We will send out a clarion call to our fellow Members of Congress to help Floridians by passing a clean Zika bill—no riders, no poison pills, just a clean Zika bill. Our Governor, Governor Scott, will visit Congress tomorrow, and I hope he will urge Congress to act.

Life is too precious, and we should not be playing political football with unborn children and whatever else science will reveal to us about Zika. There is so much yet to be discovered, but we do know this: we are gambling with the developing brain of an unborn fetus.

Florida's 24th Congressional District, which I proudly represent, is the epicenter of the Zika epidemic in America. The district's small boutique community was where they discovered the first local mosquito-borne transmission.

A travel advisory has been put in place to warn pregnant women against coming to this American neighborhood. This is the first time in a long time that an American city has received a travel advisory. It is hurting businesses. It has a huge economic impact that is devastating to this robust business district in Miami. Tourism is down, restaurants are on the verge of closing, and the crowded tourist attractions are literally abandoned.

This public health crisis has grown so serious that one of Florida's major newspapers, the Miami Herald, has created a daily tracker to monitor the virus' spread across our State. I spent most of our 7-week recess working to educate residents in my district about how to protect themselves against this terrible and rapidly spreading virus. Whip HOYER joined me on an occasion.

So Miami is the epicenter. It has evolved into an open laboratory where the CDC is working closely with local health officials and county officials. For weeks, a CDC response team has been on the ground in Miami working to control, contain, and defeat the virus and to educate the community on mosquito control.

The CDC is literally using Miami to teach the Nation how to cope with the Zika virus. They have said to me: We have to use every tool in the toolbox, and that requires adequate funding. They have said: We cannot lose this battle; it is too dangerous. Determining what works and what doesn't work requires adequate funding.

It is sexually transmitted, but how long does the virus live in semen? How

long does the virus live in the blood? Should we stop blood donations in affected areas?

The Zika virus has been found in tears and saliva. Research shows that it causes blindness and brain disorders and could cause Alzheimer's in adults. So many questions. So many questions.

We cannot afford to delay much-needed scientific research, but that requires adequate funding. We need resources to help develop a vaccine, to develop medications to stymie the virus. We need resources to find out how long it takes for a pregnant woman to get results from her Zika test. They need to determine how long the Zika virus lives in the body.

The fever, the chills we can deal with, but we can't gamble with the developing brain of an unborn fetus. The bottom line is: the threat of Zika is grave to pregnant women.

There are so many unanswered questions, and it requires funding. We need a clean Zika bill—no poison pills, no riders, just a bill addressing the Zika virus.

Many people who live in Florida are living in fear because there is so much more to be learned about the virus. It is my State now, my beautiful State of Florida. There are 27 of us serving in the House. Many of us have taken votes to help you when your State needed help. I ask you today, my colleagues, to help my State, my district.

And please note, this epidemic has already begun to start in other States. We cannot pretend it does not exist. Please bring a clean bill to the floor.

The people of America are depending on each of us. The unborn children of America are depending on each of us. Let's put our children's future first. Mosquitoes carrying Zika must be dealt with now, and that requires the political will to do the right thing.

#### NOMINATIONS FOR U.S. SERVICE ACADEMIES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOONEY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia. Mr. Speaker, one of the most meaningful things a Member of Congress does is nominate some of the best and brightest students from our congressional district to serve our Nation's service academies.

U.S. service academy graduates receive a first-rate undergraduate education with options to pursue advanced degrees. They spend a minimum of 5 years serving their country on Active Duty as a military officer and are provided with an education and experience that will provide a world of career opportunities.

The full 4-year scholarship is valued at more than \$350,000, which includes tuition, room and board, medical and dental care, and also a monthly salary. Students learn discipline, moral ethics, and teamwork in a structured environment that fosters leadership and character development.

Last year, I had the privilege of nominating 20 high school seniors for admission to one or more academies. Half of the young men and women that I nominated received admission to at least one service academy.

Calling each nominee in my district, as I am doing here, to tell them that they have been selected to these prestigious institutions was one of the most special moments of my freshman year in Congress. I hope to make many more phone calls this year. This is a picture of me calling Drew Polczynski last year to tell him he had been accepted to West Point.

If you are highly motivated, looking for a challenge in your life, and want to serve your country, I hope you will consider attending a U.S. Service Academy.

I will be hosing information sessions throughout my district this year. These sessions are a great opportunity for students to explore the possibility of attending one of several prominent academic institutions and meet with admissions representatives. I hope students and their family will attend these events throughout the Second Congressional District.

If you are interested in a congressional nomination, please contact my office in Charleston at (304) 925-5964, or my office in Martinsburg at (304) 264-8810, and ask for the individual who oversees academy applications.

#### HUMANITARIAN CRISIS IN SYRIA

Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia. Mr. Speaker, this past weekend I met with members of the Syrian community in Charleston, West Virginia, to discuss ways that the Federal Government can help the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Syria. This is us meeting.

In particular, we discussed H.R. 5732, the Caesar Syria Civilian Protection Act of 2016. The bill would hold Syrian human rights abusers accountable for their crimes. The bill would impose sanctions on individuals who do business with dictator al-Assad's brutal regime and would require the President to publish a list of people who are complicit in the grave human rights violations that have occurred and continue to unfold in Syria.

Despite promises and agreements to the contrary, chemical weapons are still being used regularly by the Assad regime in Syria. We cannot look the other way while innocent children are murdered.

I am a proud cosponsor of this critical bill, and I thank my colleagues, Congressman ELIOT ENGEL and Chairman ED ROYCE, for introducing it. I encourage the leadership here in the House to bring the bill to the floor for a vote immediately.

The innocent Syrian people have suffered enough. The current civil war has resulted in 4 million refugees and nearly 500,000 killed.

My mother fled Fidel Castro's Communist Cuba after being unjustly thrown in jail by Fidel Castro's tyrannical Communist regime. We must pro-

tect persecuted individuals who have no one to stand up for them.

#### ENSURING SAFETY, QUALITY, AND RELIABILITY FOR OUR VETERANS WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITIES

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

Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 3471, the Veterans Mobility Safety Act, a bill I am proud to cosponsor. This legislation would set minimum standards for any individual or company installing or selling mobility products to veterans through a Department of Veterans Affairs equipment program.

These products are used by disabled veterans to increase their mobility and their overall quality of life, but the VA does not currently require vendors who make or repair the products to meet a certain level of certification. Standards in this legislation would help guarantee safety, quality, and reliability.

It is critical that our veterans who have given so much for our country have the best available equipment to accommodate any physical disability. I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

#### SUPPLYING STUDENTS WITH SKILLS BUSINESSES NEED

Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 5587, the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act, a bill I am proud to cosponsor; and I wish to recognize my colleague from Pennsylvania, G.T. Thompson, for his work on that bill.

This bipartisan legislation would provide State and local educators with greater control and flexibility with respect to career and technical education programs; and it takes an important step in closing the skills gap faced by American employers and manufacturers.

In order to succeed in the modern workforce, students need to emerge with the skills that State and local businesses need. The Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act does just that, encouraging greater student involvement in work-based learning and, in the classroom, emphasizing the development of employability skills and the importance of attaining credentials.

As co-chair of the 21st Century Skills Caucus, I have been working on legislation with similar goals, and I am very proud to see provisions I have advocated for included in this bill.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

#### HALTING TAX INCREASES

Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 3590, the Halt Tax Increases on the Middle Class and Seniors Act. This legislation would put taxpayers' hard-

earned dollars back into their own pockets. It would lower the required percentage of income that must be spent to qualify for a tax deduction for medical costs.

Americans should be able to deduct high-cost medical expenses, and this legislation would reduce the required percentage from 10 percent to 7.5 percent of adjusted gross income.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill to provide middle class families and seniors with deserved tax relief, as they have already had to spend a significant amount of their income on these expenses.

□ 1045

#### RICHLAND BOROUGH CELEBRATES 100 YEARS

Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Richland Borough, Lebanon County, of my district, on 110 years of incorporation.

On September 17, 1906, Richland became its own municipality, breaking from Millcreek Township, gaining its name from the fertile soil in the area.

Richland is home to the inventor of the air pump used by Henry Ford on the Model T and will celebrate this and the rest of its impressive history this weekend.

I wish to also recognize the Lebanon Daily News for a great article on the history of Richland Borough. Gary Althaus of the Richland Heritage Society and many others have been organizing a series of events that will take place this upcoming Saturday.

A little bit more brief history: August 9, 1906, the citizens of Richland held a public meeting on the subject of the advantages of a borough. On August 12, the plan was put in circulation, and by 11 p.m., it had 50 signatures. Then on August 16, 1906, Mr. Holstein took the petition to the county courthouse and presented it before the court, and on September 17, the presiding judge granted the charter. On February 25, 1907, the first Richland Borough Council meeting was organized at the Union House, which then became the place of many meetings, including borough council meetings thereafter.

Congratulations to Richland Borough and all its residents. I am very proud to represent you in the United States Congress.

#### CONGRATULATING DR. BILL HOGARTH

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

Mr. JOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Dr. Bill Hogarth, a former director of our Nation's National Marine Fisheries Services. Dr. Hogarth recently retired as director of the Florida Institute of Oceanography based at the University of South Florida in St. Petersburg. Not only do I recognize Dr. Hogarth on his retirement, but also on two honors that he recently received.