

This week, we turn the page to a new Congress. There is no reason that commonsense measures like universal background checks, making gun trafficking a Federal crime, and reinstating the ban on military-style assault weapons should fall victim to partisan gridlock.

Together, we have the opportunity to save lives and make our communities safer. This is a priority for me and my constituents, and I look forward to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to make progress on reducing gun violence and building a safer future for all our children.

SUPPORTING OUR NATION'S VETERANS

(Mr. BILIRAKIS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, as the 115th Congress kicks off this week, I remain committed to supporting our Nation's veterans. We made some good progress last year, but there is still much more work to be done.

While our military spends over 6 months preparing soldiers for assignment, we only spend 5 days preparing them to reintegrate to civilian life. I will be making it a priority to ensure veterans have a robust transition and support system for returning home.

We also must bring greater accountability and transparency to the VA. If a VA employee fails to do their duty to care for our Nation's heroes, they should be swiftly terminated. We need to turn around the culture of mediocrity at the agency. I look forward to working with Chairman ROE and my colleagues on the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs this year to stand up for our men and women in uniform.

COOL SCIENCE TOPICS

(Mr. MCNERNEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MCNERNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to continue a series of 1-minute speeches on cool science topics. Today I recognize the work of scientists working in the McMurdo Dry Valleys of Antarctica to develop geological metal maps. Researchers developed a three-dimensional electronic mapping system that is being used to detect large precious metal deposits in the United States.

With funding from NSF, researchers mapped out the Nokomis deposit in northern Minnesota, which is estimated to contain 10 billion pounds of copper, 3.1 billion pounds of nickel, 4 million ounces of platinum, 9 million ounces of palladium, and 2 million ounces of gold. The value of these metal deposits will more than pay for the science investment to develop this technology.

Congress should support research that furthers the understanding of our

incredible universe, including the ground beneath our feet.

HONORING THE LIFE OF A. WARREN KULP

(Mr. THOMAS J. ROONEY of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. THOMAS J. ROONEY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of A. Warren Kulp, Jr., better known as Sonny, who passed away on New Year's Eve in West Palm Beach at the age of 81.

Sonny's life was the American Dream personified. After graduating from Hilltown High School in Pennsylvania in 1953, he worked as a self-employed dairy farmer for most of his life. He also earned his real estate license and worked as the head of the real estate department for 8 years in Bucks County, Pennsylvania. After moving to Florida with his wife, Judy, he worked at the Palm Beach Kennel Club until his retirement in 2007.

Outside of work, Sonny pursued many different interests. He was a loyal, lifelong Republican and served as an officer and committee chairman for the Pennridge Republican Club in Pennsylvania. He was a consummate grassroots advocate and always could be relied upon for sound advice on both politics and sports.

Mr. Speaker, our thoughts and prayers are with Judy and the Kulp family and the entire community as they mourn his passing today. He will be greatly missed.

REPEALING THE ACA IS UNACCEPTABLE

(Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to the majority's efforts to repeal the Affordable Care Act and make America sick again.

It is atrocious that Republicans intend to repeal ObamaCare without any plan for replacement. It is barbaric to take health care away from 30 million Americans. It is cruel and disgraceful to go back to the dark times when there were annual and lifetime limits on care for all Americans. It is gutless to repeal the law that protected breast cancer survivors like me and up to 129 million Americans with preexisting conditions. It is fraudulent to tell the American people that we can keep popular provisions like that one without any mechanism to share risk to keep health care affordable.

It is greedy to give insurance and drug companies billions of dollars in tax breaks but cut funding for Medicaid expansion. It is heartless to take away free preventive services like cancer screenings from 55 million Americans, particularly seniors and people with disabilities in Medicare. It is inde-

fensible to roll back the \$23.5 billion in prescription drug savings realized by seniors on Medicare in the donut hole.

It is past time—long past time—that my Republican colleagues understand from A to Z that repeal is unacceptable and a disaster waiting to happen.

LET'S GET TO WORK ON OBAMACARE

(Mr. OLSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, the American people gave my party control of the entire Congress and the White House because of the promise-breaking, job-killing bill known as ObamaCare, the craziest thing in the whole world, according to President Bill Clinton. On November 8, we were ordered to repeal ObamaCare, and that is just what we are going to do.

Fearmongers on the other side are telling Americans they will lose their health insurance like that. That will only happen if we follow their example and pass a bill that becomes law before we have the time to read it. House Republicans will take time to listen to doctors, nurses, hospitals, patients, the American people to give them the health care they deserve at a lower cost, higher quality with the doctor of their choice. We have our orders. It is time to go to work.

PROTECTING THE ACA

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

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, the Affordable Care Act is not a matter of politics. It is a matter of life or death for the people back home. In the San Diego region, repeal of the ACA would mean nearly 300,000 people could lose access to health care.

I heard from one constituent just this week who was diagnosed with an autoimmune disease where the rheumatoid arthritis is not just attacking her joints, but her organs as well. She needs a double lung transplant to stay alive. Her 7-year-old son, she writes me, tells her, "Mommy, I'm scared. I hope you get your new balloons soon." She lives with the anxiety and the fear of how the repeal of the ACA may affect her treatment every day because of her preexisting condition.

I implore my Republican colleagues to remember the people that this decision will impact. The effect of this repeal has much more important consequences than politics. Let's not be responsible for any child who sees a mother suffer or even lose her life without the treatment she needs.

OUR NEW ADMINISTRATION WILL SUPPORT ISRAEL

(Mrs. WAGNER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1