

and more than 200,000 individuals forced from their homes. Many schools are closed, residents hundreds of miles away are advised to stay indoors to avoid the smoke, and, more urgently, lives and property are at risk across Los Angeles and Ventura Counties.

The time for the Senate to act was 2 years ago when they failed to act on similar legislation. We can't afford for the Senate to continue to do nothing. Pass the Resilient Federal Forests Act. Give the Forest Service the tools it needs to prevent and combat catastrophic wildfires. Fires are raging, lives are in danger, and the situation will get worse in the future if the Senate continues to fail to act.

HONORING RICHARD CULLEN OF VIRGINIA

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

Mr. MCEACHIN. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor a fellow Virginian, Richard Cullen, who is in the midst of transitioning his law practice into "becoming one of the boys" again.

Richard Cullen is a dedicated public servant who has served our great Commonwealth in different capacities during his longstanding career at both the Federal and State levels.

Mr. Cullen was raised in Staunton, Virginia—located in our State's cherished Shenandoah Valley—and completed his education at the University of Richmond's T.C. Williams School of Law where he served as the editor-in-chief of the school's law review.

Richard began his career at the Federal level with former Congressman Butler of the Sixth Congressional District. He continued to serve Virginians at the State level when he was appointed in 1991 as the United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia.

Richard also served at the State level, from 1997 to 1998, as the attorney general of Virginia. He is a Virginian's Virginian who values his community.

On behalf of our great Commonwealth, we thank Richard Cullen for his continued service.

HONORING PEARL HARBOR SURVIVOR AND WORLD WAR II VETERAN CLARENCE VAROS

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

Ms. CHENEY. Mr. Speaker, on this historic day in this Chamber where President Roosevelt appeared the day after the Pearl Harbor attack, I rise to honor a World War II veteran and Pearl Harbor survivor, Mr. Clarence Varos, who will turn 100 this weekend.

Born on December 10, 1917, Mr. Varos has served our country and State in many ways. As a member of the U.S. Navy, Mr. Varos fought through and

survived the attack on Pearl Harbor. He risked his life in the defense of freedom as a gunner on the USS *Hyde*, transporting marines in the Pacific theater. After bravely serving our Nation in uniform, Mr. Varos went on to dedicate 30 years of his life to the Union Pacific Railroad.

I want to thank Mr. Varos for all he has contributed to our great Nation and State. His sacrifice, bravery, and grit are an example to us all. I look forward to congratulating Mr. Varos in person at celebrations in his honor this weekend in Cheyenne. I would like to say happy birthday to Mr. Varos and thank him for his service.

OPPOSING OFFSHORE OIL AND GAS EXPLORATION IN THE EASTERN GULF OF MEXICO

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

Mr. FRANCIS ROONEY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to, once again, vigorously and unrelentingly oppose offshore oil and gas exploration in the eastern Gulf of Mexico. I know this is an imperfect graphic, but what I have got here is a map of the Gulf of Mexico showing the Military Mission Line, longitude 86 degrees, 41 minutes, where the military doesn't want offshore drilling east of it, and neither do we citizens of Florida.

This big blob here is where the oil companies want to go get oil and gas and tear up our Gulf of Mexico and change our coast from high-quality residential development to things like this: huge, steel-hulled offshore supply vessels coming in our residential bays and estuaries.

This is Sanibel Lighthouse. We don't want to see a commercial vessel like this in Sanibel Lighthouse, nor do we want to see one in the Gordon River of Naples surrounded by beautiful homes, trees, and second homes of retirees who have come to Naples to make it their home. This thing could be replicated in Fort Myers as well.

We can't let our coast be changed irreparably by industrialization to support unnecessary offshore drilling.

HONORING JOE GEORGE, AN AMERICAN HERO

(Mr. BANKS of Indiana asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BANKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Joe George, a sailor who showed exceptional bravery during the attack on Pearl Harbor. Joe defied direct orders from his superior officer and saved the lives of six men trapped on the embattled USS *Arizona*.

Mr. Speaker, for years, Joe's family and two veterans he saved have petitioned the Navy to acknowledge his bravery. I first heard his story from Warsaw, Indiana, middle school students Keller Bailey, Jason Benyousky, Ryun Hoffert, Geoffrey Hochstetler,

and their adviser, Richard Rooker, regarding the National History Day project.

I introduced a resolution that highlights Joe's courage and calls for the Navy to recognize his selfless actions during the attack. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that the Navy has recently announced that Joe George will be posthumously awarded the Bronze Star for his heroism. Joe George was an American hero and a shining example of the courage of the Greatest Generation.

TO ATTACK STUDENT LOAN DEBT, EMPOWER STUDENTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GARRETT) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. GARRETT. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to address this Chamber and, indeed, America about the challenges that we face at this time in our country. There are many. Some exist within this Nation, some exist overseas, and some have many answers being batted around in Washington; whereas, others have nearly none.

One of those challenges that has hamstrung our youngest generation is the massive, dark cloud of student loan debt. When our colleague, Senator SANDERS, from the other side of the aisle addressed student loan debt during the Presidential campaign last year, he was correct in identifying a problem. The way that he chose to address it I would disagree with, as he suggested that we should provide for people something from the government. I would suggest that the people should provide for themselves.

There are two schools of thought, one that the people rely on the government, and one that the government should rely on the people.

So how do you address this massive black cloud of student loan debt that is handicapping our youngest and most creative generation? That is something that we have started to do today with the filing of H.R. 4584, the Student Security Act.

I speak to you tonight about a brighter future, a future where individuals are empowered to make decisions for themselves and where they can escape this looming cloud of debt so they might be free to do things that we have, heretofore, perhaps taken for granted in this country, like buy a new car, like start a family, or, in the words of former Presidential candidate Hillary Clinton, move out of mom and dad's basement.

But the most important thing that they are not able to do because of the black cloud of debt that faces them, Mr. Speaker, I would submit, is harness the creativity and the energy that is embodied by their ideas. This is a nation of ideas, and certainly when you