

EPA ADMINISTRATOR SCOTT PRUITT NEEDS TO RESIGN

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

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Mr. Speaker, in April, I filed a resolution, it is H. Res. 834. It is a resolution of no confidence in the EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt. We now have over 140 co-sponsors to this resolution.

This is a resolution that points out that we have high standards for government service and it is unacceptable to have scandal after scandal, the waste of taxpayers' money, coming out of the Environmental Protection Agency's Administrator's office in Scott Pruitt.

What we know now, scandal after scandal that comes to light, is that Administrator Pruitt, he has a penchant for luxury travel at taxpayer expense, he likes to fly first class at taxpayer expense, he likes to stay in luxury hotels at taxpayer expense, and this is unacceptable.

Federal ethics laws bar public officials from using their position or using their staff to enrich themselves.

In addition to his luxury travel and luxury accommodations, we now know that he installed a secret privacy phone booth in his office to the tune of \$43,000, paid for by the taxpayers. He has installed biometric locks on his door at the EPA that cost over \$5,000.

Due to good journalism, we know that the EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt rented a condo here on Capitol Hill for \$50 per night. The Administrator said that the condo owner did not lobby him, but then it was discovered later that, in fact, that was not true, that was a lie.

Just in the past week, it has now been discovered that EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt has ordered very special fountain pens, paid for by the taxpayers, about \$1,500 worth of special pens for him to use and give out.

We know that he has received gifts, like court-side seats to a basketball game given to him by a coal baron.

It was also reported yesterday that he made from his office an official phone call to the CEO of a fast food franchise to try to secure for his wife a fast food franchise business. That is not acceptable.

We know, also due to good reporting, that he asked his staff to go out and find a mattress for his home. You are not allowed, as a government official, to use your government staff to do personal tasks. That is against Federal ethics laws.

All of that pales in comparison, however, to his standing up for special interests, the cost to our health, to our clean water and clean air, while the EPA Administrator again and again is siding with special interests, many of whom have lobbied him and are implicated in a lot of these sweetheart deals.

The interest of the public, the air we breathe, the water we drink, of simply confidence that our Environmental

Protection Agency is going to stand up for us: that is what is really at issue.

All of these things are awful, they are a violation of Federal ethics laws, and Scott Pruitt should resign.

I am very troubled, and a lot of my colleagues are troubled that my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, many of them have not called him out, they have not signed on to the resolution.

Down at the White House, they continue to say it is acceptable for Scott Pruitt to serve as our EPA Administrator.

I am here on the floor today because we simply cannot stand for this any longer. I am asking for all of our colleagues on both sides of the aisle to sign on to H. Res. 834 and say it is time to stand up for ethics in government.

This wasteful spending is undermining the confidence that the American people have in our country and the ability of our government to protect them from air pollution and water pollution and toxic chemicals.

But more importantly, this is a time for us to say to our Environmental Protection Agency, we have very high standards, we have high standards for what we believe in: the landmark Clean Water Act, the landmark Clean Air Act, everything that we do to protect the climate and to reduce carbon pollution.

It has just gotten that swampy here in Washington, D.C., Mr. Speaker, and it is time for a change at the EPA. The White House needs to take action.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to speak up, stand up, and say we are not going to stand for these lapses of ethical behavior anymore. Scott Pruitt needs to resign.

FEDERAL OPPORTUNITY ZONES

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

Mr. MARSHALL. Mr. Speaker, this Congress and this President made pro-growth policies a top priority since day one. My colleagues and I should be very proud that due in part to the policies of this Republican Congress, consumer confidence is at an all-time high, businesses are optimistic, and our economy is booming. Even The New York Times has run out of words to explain and describe how great this economy is.

As families across Kansas receive an average tax break of more than \$2,000 a year, as well as seeing record wage growth and bonuses, I see the excitement growing firsthand throughout my district.

However, today in particular, I want to highlight one specific aspect of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act: Federal Opportunity Zones, which are designed to promote economic development and job creation in communities throughout the country. This is where government meets private sector business in a very positive way.

The Treasury Department recently selected 22 opportunity zones in 17 different counties across the First District of Kansas.

When a tract is deemed an opportunity zone, it allows taxpayers to defer capital gains tax if they invest and prioritize local projects. This is a win-win scenario for both investors and communities that will spur growth and expansion.

My good friend, Ashley Hutchinson, in Cloud County, Kansas, said her community hopes to use these opportunity zones to recruit new businesses to areas in counties like hers that are in great need of investment incentives.

In Manhattan, Kansas, home of the Kansas State University Wildcats, the local Chamber is using these opportunity zone programs to revitalize and enhance Aggieville, a beloved and historic social district very near and dear to my heart.

In southwest Kansas, municipalities are using the program to spur job growth by updating existing buildings for new retail and commercial space, as well as attracting housing developments for the region's growing workforce.

In Emporia, Kansas, expansion of the growing pet industry is being allowed by these opportunity zones as well.

Across my district, community leaders and economic development departments are excited by the new opportunities these zones will deliver to their communities.

As the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act continues to help existing businesses grow and expand, opportunities are starting to rise across the country. In Kansas, we are excited about what is to come.

As a Congressman, I am often asked: What are you doing in Congress? What is this Congress doing to help save rural America? These Federal Opportunity Zones as well as the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act are one such example.

RAISING AWARENESS OF ALOPECIA AREATA

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to raise awareness of alopecia areata, an autoimmune disease that causes hair loss on the scalp and other areas of the body.

Today, close to 7 million Americans live with alopecia areata, including over 1 million children under the age of 12.

Alopecia areata is a greatly unpredictable disease and currently has no known cause and no known cure.

Sadly, this disease often presents itself at an early age, with small round, smooth patches appearing on the head.

With limited treatment options, many individuals use wigs, which come at a significant out-of-pocket cost.

It was one of my constituents, Deirdre Nero, an alopecia patient, who