

they are promising that that is coming.

But I will just say this: As someone who was involved when this bill was first passed, we will make sure there will be a legislative response if the Department of Defense does not keep faith with those who wear the uniform of this country and who have volunteered based on reliance of the fact that there would be a GI Bill benefit for them and their spouse and children.

To use FDR's words, protecting transferability "gives emphatic notice to the men and women in our Armed Forces that the American people do not intend to let them down."

SUPPORT OIL REGION NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, northwest Pennsylvania has a rich history and vibrant, diverse economy. Its winding trails, beautiful landscapes, recreational and educational opportunities, and thriving communities make Venango and Crawford Counties especially captivating places to live, to work, and to visit.

Many of these attractions are centered around one common theme, the world's first commercial oil well. Colonel Drake successfully drilled this well in 1859, triggering the first oil boom and establishing the oil region as "the valley that changed the world."

His efforts not only made northwestern Pennsylvania the energy powerhouse that it is today, but it also sparked a cultural revolution that came as a result of the booming economy.

We are tremendously proud of our history and heritage in northwest Pennsylvania. We still celebrate these communities that bloomed from Colonel Drake's innovative idea today, and Drake Well continues to have a tangible impact on the area's economy.

In 2004, Congress designated the region as a national heritage area. There are only 49 of these areas across the country that are designated as places where natural, cultural, and historic resources combine to form a cohesive, nationally important landscape.

The Oil Region National Heritage Area was the Nation's 25th national heritage area, and it celebrates the birth of the petroleum industry.

The region is honored to have this important designation, but without action, it will sunset next year. That is why I introduced the Oil Region National Heritage Area Reauthorization Act.

The heritage area's coordinating entity, the Oil Region Alliance of Business, Industry, and Tourism, has taken a grassroots, community-driven approach to heritage, conservation, and economic development.

Through public-private partnerships, national heritage area entities support historic preservation, natural resource conservation, recreation, heritage tourism, and educational projects. These partnerships foster pride of place and an enduring stewardship ethic.

The Oil Region Alliance focuses on heritage development, economic development, and tourism destination marketing. All three of these areas have been successful, and, from 2005 to 2015, the ORA has been able to invest more than \$6.8 million in heritage development projects, invest more than \$6.7 million in economic development activities, and attract nearly 240,000 visitors annually. They have done an excellent job using innovative methods to stimulate the local economy, using a mixture of both Federal and private funds.

Last month, I was with my colleague Congressman MIKE KELLY at the home of the legendary investigative journalist Ida Tarbell. Born in Pennsylvania at the onset of the oil boom, Tarbell is best known for her 1904 book, "The History of the Standard Oil Company."

The ORA recently completed a full restoration of Ms. Tarbell's home, ensuring that it would be preserved for generations to come.

Congressman KELLY and I announced the Oil Region National Heritage Area Reauthorization Act at the Tarbell House as an example of why this designation is important. Our bill would extend Federal funding authorization of our heritage area through 2026.

Extending this funding is crucial for the ORA to continue its mission of preserving the Oil Region's history, stimulating the local economy, and allowing others to appreciate the beauty and the culture of Venango and Crawford Counties.

The ORA's efforts give us the ability to appreciate the rich history of northwestern Pennsylvania and understand the impact that our communities have had on American culture today. While the Tarbell home restoration is just one of the ORA's projects, they have completed countless other projects to support our communities, educate the public, and help local businesses grow and thrive.

I urge my colleagues to cosponsor this legislation, which will directly impact northwestern Pennsylvanians and preserve our rich heritage for all Americans.

PAYING CONGRESSIONAL INTERNS

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

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the congressional interns who serve in our offices here in Washington, D.C., in my State of Oregon, and around the country, and to ask all my colleagues to make internship opportunities available to more qualified applicants by paying interns for their work.

Congressional internships are highly desirable. They provide students and recent graduates with valuable experience, learning firsthand how Congress and how our government works.

Many current staff members and, in fact, many Members of Congress started their careers as congressional interns and were able to use the skills they learned and the connections they made to leverage future opportunities.

The reality is, however, that most young people do not have the option of coming to work on Capitol Hill as an intern because most internships are still unpaid. Many bright and motivated people simply cannot afford to take an unpaid internship, no matter how prestigious it might be, because they need to earn money to continue paying for college or to support themselves or their families.

No one who is qualified who wants to intern on Capitol Hill should be precluded because of financial barriers.

I am proud that I offer paid internships in my office, so students and recent graduates have an opportunity to work and learn and gain experience.

But paying interns doesn't just help them. It helps us, too. My staff and I benefit greatly from having interns from all backgrounds and all walks of life working in our office. The diversity of perspectives is critical as I consider legislation and think about how to best serve my constituents who are also from diverse backgrounds and all walks of life.

Many of my colleagues understand the importance of equitable intern opportunities and, through the leadership of Representative TIM RYAN and others, are working to increase funding and cut red tape so that all our offices will be able to offer and support paid internships.

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Capitol Hill is best served when our offices reflect the diversity of our districts and our country.

I will continue to work with my colleagues to make sure that all qualified applicants can apply for internships and serve as interns regardless of their financial situation. It helps our offices, it helps the interns, and it helps the country.

TAX REFORM 2.0

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

Mr. ARRINGTON. Mr. Speaker, in the short time since we have passed historic tax relief for the American people, we have already seen tremendous results.

By putting in place pro-growth, free market policies, we have unleashed a booming economy with higher wages and more job opportunities. With over 6 million job openings, the unemployment rate at an 18-year low and small business optimism at a 34-year high, our country's economic future looks as bright as it has ever been.