



United States  
of America

# Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 115<sup>th</sup> CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 164

WASHINGTON, TUESDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2018

No. 195

## House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania).

### DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,  
December 11, 2018.

I hereby appoint the Honorable GLENN THOMPSON to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

PAUL D. RYAN,  
*Speaker of the House of Representatives.*

### MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 8, 2018, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties. All time shall be equally allocated between the parties, and in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m. Each Member, other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip, shall be limited to 5 minutes.

### HONORING RAY ROGERS

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

Mr. HARPER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor my friend, Representative Ray Rogers of Pearl, Mississippi.

On November 17, 2018, Ray completed his 55th and final season of service as the Pearl High School Voice of the Pirates. For 55 years, Ray volunteered his time and energy as the public address announcer for the Pearl Pirate football games and was so committed that, in 55 years, he missed just one-half of one game in 55 seasons.

Now, the reason Ray missed the first half of that game was so that he could attend his daughter's wedding rehearsal dinner. After listening to the game on the radio during much of the dinner, Ray left as soon as the dinner was ended so he could announce the second half of the game.

Ray's commitment to the Pearl community was recognized several years ago when leaders of the Pearl Public School District decided to name the football stadium Ray Rogers Stadium.

Ray was one of the first students to attend Pearl High School when it opened in 1948 and was the first quarterback for the first football team in 1949.

Ray has been a public servant and leader for Pearl and Rankin County in many other ways. In 1983, he was elected to serve District 61 in the Mississippi House of Representatives and has been reelected every 4 years since, most recently in 2015.

Ray has spent 35 years in the State legislature working to improve our schools and infrastructure. As chairman of the Military Affairs Committee, he has been a tireless supporter of our National Guard and veterans and was instrumental in the effort to build three veterans homes in Mississippi with the help of then-Congressman Sonny Montgomery, who served the Third District of Mississippi.

Ray has been a long-time member of the Management and PEER Committees—a testament to the respect and trust that his fellow legislators have for him. He has served as a mentor and role model for many incoming representatives over the years, and Ray's example has been invaluable to me. He has taught me by the way he lives, by what he does, and by how he treats everyone with respect.

Ray Rogers has lived a life of service to others, and I know that he believes his most important service has been to God and his family. An active member

of McLaurin Heights United Methodist Church in Pearl, Mississippi, Ray is the father of three daughters, four grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren. While he is proud to be known as the representative and the Voice of the Pearl Pirates, he is proudest to be known as Daddy and Pop.

Ray's wife, Shirley, has shared his passion for serving others. Shirley served for two decades as the first city clerk for the city of Pearl and after that was a director of personnel for the Mississippi Department of Corrections. Like Ray, Shirley is an active member of their church, and she is a loving and supportive wife, mother, and grandmother.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate having the opportunity today to honor Ray Rogers—my State representative, the Voice of the Pirates, proud father and grandfather—and to congratulate him on his impressive record of public service.

Thank you, Ray, for your friendship and for setting an incredible example for all to follow.

### FORGING A BETTER NATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky). The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. ESTY) for 5 minutes.

Ms. ESTY of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I rise today for the last time as a Member of Congress. For the past 6 years, it has been an extraordinary honor to serve the residents of central and northwest Connecticut as their Representative in the House.

The title for this job is a humble one: Representative—not emperor, not knower of all things, but Representative.

Congress was not my dream, but making a difference was. In 2005, my then 15-year-old daughter challenged me to either run for the local town council or stop complaining. I ran. I

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



Printed on recycled paper.

H10031

found that I could get things done, first on the town council and then as a State representative.

I came to Congress with a desire to make a difference for people, to help solve their problems, fight for affordable quality healthcare, ensure education that addresses the needs of every child, work across the aisle for better jobs and better pay for Americans, and keep us all safe and free.

Yet I arrived in Congress in the aftermath of the terrible shootings of 20 6- and 7-year-old children and six educators in the town of Newtown in my district, 6 years ago this coming Friday. My task immediately became how to truly care for and represent those families and be an effective voice for taking action to prevent gun violence. At the time, I did not even know how to find the elevator to get to my attic office in the Cannon House Office Building.

John Dingell, the longest serving Member of Congress, took me under his wing and helped me navigate these Halls. He gave me invaluable advice. He said:

Elizabeth, always remember this: What you do is very important. But you are not important.

He also told me:

It is your job to know your district and vote your district.

How right he was. I learned my district. My team and I worked with others to get lots of legislation passed to help veterans and their families, to support STEM education for women, girls, and children of color; to modernize and upgrade our infrastructure; and to fight the scourge of opioid addiction. We helped thousands of individuals at home cut through red tape and get much-needed support. By working with people, we were able to help government work for people.

Here are some things that I have learned:

The American people are good, great, and eager to see our democracy work better;

Sharing credit is not only the right thing to do, but it works;

If you listen to others, if you look for and build on common ground, you can get things done even with people with whom you disagree on many issues.

The first step is often the hardest. In politics, Mr. Speaker, you need to earn support. You are not entitled to it. You will fail sometimes. You will not meet your own high expectations. You will disappoint people. You will lose an election, but you get up the next day and you try harder.

If there is nothing you would be willing to lose an election over, you shouldn't run for office. Democracy needs people who are prepared to lose their job to make a difference.

Democracy is not about perfection. Democracy is about doing your best every day and bringing out the best in others; and when we fail—which we will—we should not give up. We should get right back to work.

Mr. Speaker, you shouldn't run because you know you will win; you should run because there are things worth fighting for.

If we remember our common values rather than call into question each other's integrity, there is much we can do together. Democracy is something we do; it is not something we tweet about.

Democracy is hard. It is not a spectator sport. You don't need permission in this great country. Democracy gives us—each and every one of us—the opportunity and the right to run, to serve, and to make a difference.

American democracy is a great thing, but it requires us to pitch in and to do our part. We have the opportunity—and in these challenging times for our Nation and the world, I believe we have an obligation—to get involved.

I want to thank my amazing family for their love, their support, and their sacrifices over more than a dozen years of elected office. I thank the voters who entrusted me to work on their behalf. I thank my excellent staff who have worked so hard and ably. I thank the many colleagues who generously guided me and worked with me on issues of common concern for the American people.

In closing, John Dingell's words return to me:

If you ever look up at the Capitol Dome at night and it doesn't send shivers down your spine, you don't deserve to be here because you aren't sufficiently in awe of American democracy.

I can say without hesitation that the white of the Capitol Dome gleaming in the night still sends shivers down my spine. It always will, for we are fortunate enough to live in this amazing country where we have the right to choose our leaders, to raise our voices, and, together, to forge a better nation and a better future for all our children.

#### FARM BILL CONFERENCE REPORT

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I proudly signed the farm bill conference committee report because, after years of hard work, we are set to deliver a win for rural America. Quite frankly, it is a win for all Americans who count daily on access to affordable, high-quality, safe food.

We know that farm country is hurting. USDA recently announced that net farm income for this year is dropping by 12 percent to levels we have not seen since 2002. There is hope though. By passing the farm bill conference report, we can give producers and their lenders certainty. They will know what farm policy will be in place for the next 5 years.

We also made modest adjustments to the Marketing Assistance Loan program to help with cash flow after har-

vest and to providing marketing for U.S. commodities.

There are also important enhancements to dairy policy included in the conference report. Building upon investments made to the dairy safety net as part of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018, we are offering new coverage levels for the first 5 million pounds of production, which drastically reduces premiums on certain levels for larger producers.

These are just some of the many updates in the 2018 farm bill that will set our American farmers on a better path for the next 5 years.

The 2018 farm bill strengthens the farm safety net, protects crop insurance, maintains and preserves conservation funding, improves SNAP program integrity and incentivizes work, and, importantly, provides certainty to rural America.

This agreement reached between the House and the Senate strengthens and maintains important programs like the Price Loss Coverage, the Agriculture Risk Coverage, marketing loans, dairy margin coverage, livestock disaster programs, and crop insurance.

As vice chairman of the committee, I know that a lot of work went into building and negotiating a great bill for our farm families. I would like to thank Chairman MIKE CONAWAY and Ranking Member COLLIN PETERSON for their commitment to passing this bill in 2018.

This Congress, I proudly chaired the Nutrition Subcommittee. The House bill included provisions to give many Americans the skills needed to obtain a family-sustaining job.

While this conference report is a compromise, it does include significant incremental victories that will improve the integrity of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP, so it will be more effective for those who truly need it. The Nutrition Subcommittee hosted 21 hearings on SNAP and heard from more than 80 witnesses on how to improve the program and work toward the ultimate goal of ending hunger in America.

Mr. Speaker, make no mistake. The 2018 farm bill makes real improvements to our Nation's largest antihunger program. These provisions will only further enhance the program so it will be there for the most vulnerable among us, the truly needy.

Now, I am hopeful that we can continue this conversation and soon revisit numerous provisions from the House farm bill's nutrition title. Specifically, there is so much more that can be done through SNAP to help more Americans find good-paying, family-sustaining jobs—an ultimate food security. That is the American way.

The farm bill conference report also helps improve our response to natural disasters, including catastrophic wildfires that have ravaged parts of the Nation. To help encourage new markets for domestic forest products, the conference report invests in research

and development specifically for these new wood-based materials.

□ 1015

We put emphasis on connecting rural America through significant improvements to broadband delivery. We are dedicating funding to rural health projects to help Americans struggling with opioid addictions and other substance abuse disorders.

This is just some of what is included in the conference report. There is much more policy included that provides key wins for producers, rural communities, and American consumers.

I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of this conference report and deliver much-needed certainty to rural America and all Americans who are in need of affordable, high-quality, and safe food.

### ABOLISHING BIGOTRY

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

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, once again, I rise to stand in the well of the House of Representatives. As a proud American, it is always an honor to stand in the well of the House of Representatives.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak truth to power as well as speak truth about power. The power that I desire to speak truth to is the Speaker of the House, and I want to say something about the Speaker of the House.

Today, I acknowledge the Speaker's righteousness when he made a decision—I am not sure that it is one that he contemplated with any degree of time—but at some point, there was a decision made to allow Articles of Impeachment that I filed to move forward, such that there could at least be a vote to table it or not. He did not interfere with the process. He did not try to change the rules so that there would be no opportunity for a Member to move impeachment forward, to the extent that we did.

I am proud of Speaker RYAN for doing this because, as a result, I hold in my hand what I call the historic 58. Fifty-eight Members of Congress, some of whom were ranking members of full committees, voted to allow this process to move forward. On a second occasion, 66 Members, the historic 66, voted to allow the process to move forward.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. RYAN did not try to circumvent the process. For this, I say that I am grateful. I respect him for not trying to circumvent the process. Mr. Speaker, had he tried to circumvent it, I probably would be standing here saying some words that would not be similar in any way to what I am saying currently.

I am mentioning this because there is a question that has been put to me by many members of the press as to whether or not we will move forward again with impeachment. I am here to say without question, reservation, or

hesitation that we should not allow ourselves to get back to bigotry as usual. There seems to be a desire to avoid the question of bigotry emanating from the Presidency. There seems to be a desire to move on to something else; let's find another way to deal with the problem.

But that is not what the people who suffer from the bigotry have to endure, just the conversations. They have to deal with the actual bigotry, the actual ugliness that is being fostered across the length and breadth of this country as a result of the bigotry. There are people who are suffering.

The culture is changing. Bigotry is real, and people have to deal with it. Because they do, I don't think we should allow bigotry to go unnoticed as it emanates from the Presidency. Because I don't think so, I will make an announcement sometime next week, more than likely, as to whether or not we will have additional Articles of Impeachment brought before the House.

I have never interfered with the Mueller investigation; I don't intend to interfere with it. But I just believe that we ought not allow bigotry to go unnoticed. We ought not try to get to a point in this country where we will allow bigotry to be nothing more than a talking point. It ought to be an action item.

The greatest place to ascertain whether it is an action item is how we as Members of Congress not only talk about it, but how we vote when the issue is given an opportunity to be voted upon.

Mr. Speaker, I assure you that I will make an announcement sometime in the near future as to whether or not there will be another vote on bigotry emanating from the Presidency. I also, again, thank you for not circumventing the process. Republicans had a majority, and you could have done it without a single Democratic vote. You respected the right of individual Members. It is the right of the individual that you have protected under your leadership. I pray that protection will continue.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the President.

### HONORING CORY FRITZ

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

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a dedicated public servant and member of my senior staff, Cory Fritz. The Foreign Affairs Committee has benefited greatly from his sound judgment, skill, and passion for the values, including a free press, that have made America strong.

Cory got his start on the Hill writing speeches, advocating stronger U.S. relations with the former captive nations in Europe, for the late Senator Voinovich of Ohio. He later joined the con-

gressional office of then-Minority Leader John Boehner of Ohio. Working for John throughout his speakership, Cory played an important role on a number of foreign policy issues, including efforts to force the administration to step up the fight against ISIS.

Upon John's retirement, it was only fitting that Cory move to the Foreign Affairs Committee. As deputy staff director, Cory has elevated the committee's communications operations and played a key role in shaping strategy and policy.

Cory is one of my most trusted advisers. His counsel helped pave the way for a number of important accomplishments, including the landmark Russia, Iran, and North Korea sanctions enacted in 2017.

Also, I am proud to have inspired him to take special interest in conservation policy, which has long been a priority of mine. With Cory's assistance, I have advanced legislation to combat wildlife trafficking and poaching. We have also advanced legislation to preserve southern Africa's vital Okavango River Basin.

As I leave the House, I thank Cory for his 11 years of service to his home State of Ohio, to this Republic, and also to the Congress. I wish him and his wife, Sarah, all the best as they prepare to welcome their first child in the spring.

### PROTECT GOOD FRIDAY PEACE ACCORDS

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

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, one of the dominant news stories on both sides of the Atlantic was the announcement by British Prime Minister Theresa May that she was postponing a much-anticipated vote on accepting a preliminary Brexit package that had been negotiated with the European Union. Her decision, unfortunately, continues the turmoil in her own party and Parliament at large about how to implement a referendum that was narrowly passed instructing her government to leave the European Union that the United Kingdom joined 45 years ago, in 1973.

As a Member of the U.S. Congress that is also divided and struggling with its own ability to execute basic functions, I have a great deal of empathy, as I am sure many of my colleagues do, with the frustration that members of Parliament and the British public are feeling today.

Fundamentally, of course, this is a domestic question for Parliament, and it would be presumptuous for elected officials from the outside to weigh in on the agreement's proposals regarding residency, immigration, visa requirements, and how healthcare coverage will be coordinated if and when the U.K. exits the European Union. However, there is one issue, in which myself and many of my colleagues from

the U.S. have a very keen interest, and I raise it today in a friendly but firm voice. That is, namely, the status of Northern Ireland under the Good Friday peace accords.

Unfortunately, Mrs. May, in her announcement yesterday, indicated that that was the one issue, that her efforts to protect the Good Friday peace accords were going to be renegotiated and possibly dismantled.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to remind the House that the Good Friday peace accords, which were signed 20 years ago last April 10, have the active and supportive involvement of the U.S. Government and the U.S. Congress.

The Clinton administration in the 1990s, at the invitation of the Irish and British Governments, named former U.S. Senator George Mitchell as Special Envoy to Northern Ireland, and he chaired the all-party peace negotiation over a number of years, which led to the Good Friday peace accords. His work, along with his successor, Richard Haass, was crucial to the success of the talks and the execution of the agreement.

In the U.S. Congress, members of a bipartisan group of lawmakers, including our colleague RICHARD NEAL of Springfield, Massachusetts, were frequent visitors and participants during the negotiations.

To this day, Mr. NEAL and bipartisan members of the Friends of Ireland Caucus, of which I am a member, continue to monitor the progress and success of the Good Friday peace accords and are deeply, deeply concerned that Brexit, if it reinstates a hard border on the island of Ireland, will undo one of the great diplomatic successes of our time.

Mr. Speaker, the successful results of the peace agreement cannot be denied. During The Troubles, which preceded the accords, more than 3,600 residents of the six counties of the North lost their lives due to sectarian violence and 763 servicemembers of the British Government and the Northern Irish Government lost their lives. To put that in perspective, 464 U.K. troops have lost their lives in the long war in Afghanistan. The economic results have also been undeniable.

Mr. Speaker, I have a little bit of experience because in 1973 and 1974, I was a student in England and spent the Christmas break in Northern Ireland visiting a fellow student in the town of Enniskillen. I took the train from Dublin to Belfast. In the border town of Dundalk, where I was asleep, I was awoken by a British soldier heavily armed, poking me to look at my backpack.

While we visited in Enniskillen, there was a bombing in the village. Looking around, it was clearly a depressed economy because of the hard borders and because of the isolation of Northern Ireland.

Fast forward, I took a trade mission from the State of Connecticut to Belfast 2 years ago, and it is a transformed city. It is thriving. It is healthy. Clear-

ly, allowing the Northern Irish economy to participate both in the full island as well as Europe has had beneficial effects. That is why the people of Northern Ireland actually voted "no" on Brexit.

Mr. Speaker, we are at a point today where the British Government clearly has to make a decision about whether to preserve one of the great diplomatic successes, which provides a roadmap for sectarian violence all across the world. Diplomacy succeeded in Northern Ireland. It is imperative that those in charge there protect the hard-fought work and remember that there are stakeholders outside of England and Great Britain, including the United States Government and the United States Congress, which have skin in the game and have investment in terms of the great success over the last 20 years.

Protect the Good Friday peace accords. Protect the peace that has flowed from it. Protect the prosperity that has improved the lives of the people of Northern Ireland, the Irish Republic, and the world at large.

#### DEMOCRACY REFORM

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

Ms. SCANLON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank Speaker-designate PELOSI, Whip HOYER, and Representative SARBANES for honoring the will of the American people and pledging to make democracy reform a top priority for the 116th Congress.

One of the greatest promises of our democracy is that our government is of, by, and for the people. Our democracy has always been a messy experiment. It is not perfect. It is not a spectator sport. But it is our greatest hope. At this point in time, unfortunately, many of our democratic structures are under attack.

In my home, Pennsylvania, over the past decade, we have seen the impact of antidemocratic policies. The cards have been stacked against the voices of Pennsylvanians through unconstitutional gerrymandering, repressive voter ID laws, and restrictive absentee ballot deadlines. These tactics have been used to muzzle the voices of our constituents, as well as voters in North Carolina, Wisconsin, Georgia, and other citizens across the country.

□ 1030

The H.R. 1 package being advanced by Representative SARBANES and the Democracy Reform Task Force is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to restore the American people's faith in our institutions. History has shown us that our American experiment is at its best when we face complex challenges head-on and we are better for taking them up.

H.R. 1 is our path forward to a more perfect democracy. Our elections are

the bedrock of this Nation, and the sanctity of those elections must be protected from threats, both foreign and domestic.

We can make it easier, not harder, for eligible Americans to vote. We can end the dominance of Big Money in our politics. We can ensure that public officials, from the White House to Members of Congress, put the interests of the American people first. We can do all of those things, and we must.

Public opinion polls show that the American people's distrust of our governmental institutions is at staggering levels. We must work together, Democrats and Republicans, to change course and restore the people's faith. We have real work to do, and Members of the incoming class are ready to roll up our sleeves. The voters have charged us to restore the balance of our political institutions and make sure that everyday Americans have a seat at the table.

When we listen to people instead of special interests, we can raise the minimum wage and create good-paying jobs; we can lower prescription drug prices and give people better access to healthcare; we can make real investments in our infrastructure; we can reduce gun violence; and we can increase funding for job training programs and public education.

Mr. Speaker, we owe it to the generations before us who worked to establish this democracy and we owe it to the generations that follow to ensure that we have a Government that is truly by and for the people. We can work on this together. It is up to us to get it done, and this work starts now.

#### THANKING FIRST RESPONDERS TO THE CRANSTON FIRE

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

Mr. RUIZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the communities affected by the Cranston fire, one of the largest wildfires my congressional district and eastern Riverside County has ever seen.

While the Cranston fire was contained in August, many of my constituents are continuing to piece their lives back together, and anytime severe rain is forecasted, they once again go into high alert for mudslides from the burn scar.

The Cranston fire started on July 25, 2018, and within a matter of a few hours residents of Idyllwild and the mountain communities were immediately forced to evacuate from their homes. Without hesitation, first responders from the Idyllwild Fire Department, the Idyllwild Volunteer Fire Company, CAL FIRE, the California Highway Patrol, the U.S. Forest Service, and countless others from all over the Nation sprang into action.

Thanks to their efforts, no lives were lost and the fire was fully contained by August 10, having burned more than

13,000 acres. Months later, I am left with the image of police officers walking through smoldering neighborhoods with megaphones, making sure no one was left behind.

Today, Idyllwild continues to embody that spirit of community and togetherness. They are rebuilding homes, clearing debris, and preparing for the next wildfire that threatens our communities. Friends and neighbors continue to support one another, and I continue to be inspired by their compassion and determination.

Throughout this rebuilding, our communities have expressed something profound: gratitude. Rarely have I seen such an outpouring of support for our first responders.

I have seen fences papered with handwritten signs thanking the firefighters and countless tributes to their courage and sacrifice at local festivals and benefits.

The affected communities could not have made it this far without the support of religious groups, nonprofits, local businesses, and generous neighbors. During the fire, volunteers with the American Red Cross and the FIND Food Bank delivered food to evacuation centers. So did local restaurants, including Idyllwild Bake Shop & Brew, Cafe Aroma, Coyote Red's, the Mile High Cafe, and many others.

The Ace Hotel, V Palm Springs Hotel, and Grand Idyllwild Lodge were just a few of the businesses that generously opened their doors to displaced residents.

That generosity extended to our four-legged friends, too. I visited the San Jacinto Valley Animal Campus, where staff provided shelter for more than 160 local pets.

Their legacy of compassion lives on through community organizations like Young Idyllwild, who hosted a music festival and benefit to raise money for neighbors still struggling to piece their lives together.

I was particularly moved by the generosity of local musician Ernesto Ale and his family, who lost their home in the fire. In the midst of this hardship, Ernesto found the strength to perform, bringing music to his community and raising money for neighbors who, like him, lost so much in the fire.

Ernesto is proof of the kindness and strength exhibited by every neighbor, firefighter, police officer, and business owner who pitched in after the Cranston fire.

Government should follow the example of communities it serves, pulling together in times of crisis and lending a hand to those in need.

#### ADDRESSING THE HOUSE FOR THE FINAL TIME

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New Mexico (Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM) for 5 minutes.

Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I rise for

what will likely be the last time I address the House.

First, I thank the people of New Mexico for entrusting me to represent you in Washington, holding me accountable, and giving me direction. From my first day in Congress to my last, every constituent or stakeholder who stopped me on the street or walked into my office, your office, to tell me about their issues and priorities was my boss. It has been the honor of a lifetime to work with you.

Thank you to our team of brilliant, passionate staff who worked early mornings, late nights, and weekends because they knew just how important our work was to the people we served. Our team secured hundreds of millions of dollars in Federal investments in our State's economy and returned almost \$5 million in earned benefits to New Mexico veterans, seniors, and taxpayers.

Your dedication to New Mexico changed lives. Lastly, thank you to all the Members with whom I had the pleasure of serving who helped ensure that my time here was a success.

Whether it was Congressman MEADOWS helping me launch an investigation into SNAP mismanagement in New Mexico, Congressman COLE for helping pass Care Corps grants to assist caregivers, or Congressman O'HALLERAN for working with me to pass the first-ever economic development broadband grant program in the farm bill, I have worked with and learned from Members on every part of the political spectrum. And regardless of our differences, I have found a universal passion for solving problems and public service.

Every Member here understands the privilege and responsibility of working in the most powerful institution in the world and the immeasurable potential of this body to address the problems that we were elected to solve. Our shared values and commitment to each other is always and has been this institution's greatest strength.

To paraphrase Thomas Jefferson: Let us never forget that the differences of opinion are not differences of the fundamental principles that unite us as Americans. We are all Democrats. We are all Republicans.

I believe that we can embrace our differences of opinion in a shared effort to form a more perfect union while never allowing polarization, politics, and short-term political expediency to undermine our obligation to make a difference in the lives of those who sent us here.

Always remember that power is short lived, politics is cyclical, and one day someone else will fill our shoes.

As Congressman CUMMINGS used to say when I served with him on the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee: We only hold these positions of power, leadership, and trust for a short period of time. What better way to honor the great leaders who came before us and the people who

entrusted us to serve in their footsteps than by seizing every opportunity we have to work together and to pass the reins of our Nation to future leaders better than we found it.

To all the new Members: Stand tall, no matter how tall you are; be courageous; don't take "no" for an answer; and never stop working to tear down the roadblocks that stand in the way of advocating for your constituents who count on you every day.

And to the people of New Mexico, thank you for the honor of representing the First Congressional District, and thank you for entrusting me to revolutionize our education system, lead the Nation in clean energy development, and create an economy that prioritizes hardworking families as your next Governor. I look forward to continuing to work for you in your Roundhouse next year.

Mr. Speaker, although I yield back for the final time, I have never been more hopeful about our future and the next generation of Members who will stand here, address this Chamber, and commit to the shared values that form the foundation of progress after I am gone.

#### VOTER SUPPRESSION

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

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I want to talk about a troubling development, which is called voter suppression, and its use as a tool in political combat today. President Trump wrote the playbook on sham claims of voter fraud, and now, sadly, my friends on the other side of the aisle are putting that playbook to use.

During the 2016 Presidential election, then candidate Trump warned that the election would be rigged. Once in office, the President then made unsubstantiated assertions that there were more than 3 million illegal votes cast in the United States, just coincidentally the margin of popular advantage his opponent, Hillary Clinton, had over him.

The President then established a so-called election integrity commission that alleged substantial evidence of voter fraud, found none, and had to be disbanded. That purportedly independent commission was headed, by the way, by Kansas Secretary of State at the time Kris Kobach, a known proponent of voter fraud conspiracy theories that then justified voter suppression on a large scale.

The President used his bully pulpit to claim that midterm ballots were massively infected and called for a halt to vote counts in legally mandated recounts in Georgia and Florida.

Here is what is really going on. When an election is too close to call, rather than encourage the democratic process to play out by counting every vote, Republicans are flipping through Trump's voter fraud playbook to sow distrust in democratic processes.

In Florida, for example, Republican Governor Rick Scott, now Senator-elect, undermined confidence in the State's own recount process by making his own unsubstantiated claims of widespread voter fraud and filed lawsuits against and called for investigations into certain Democratic-leaning counties.

In Georgia, Secretary of State Brian Kemp refused to step down from his role overseeing his own election to be Governor of the State. Under his management, more than a half a million people were purged from voting rolls in July of 2017. That election was decided by just tens of thousands of votes. It makes a difference.

In North Carolina's Ninth Congressional District today, the State Elections Board is investigating whether a local GOP operative illegally collected absentee ballots and altered votes or never submitted them. It may yet lead to, frankly, the decertification of that election and a new special election to be called.

In Wisconsin and Michigan, the GOP-controlled, lame duck State legislatures have pushed through a series of measures that would strip the incoming Democratic Governor, Attorney General, and Secretary of State of key authorities and restrict access to early voting.

We have seen this before. It is part of a pattern, unfortunately, of voter suppression: purging voter rolls; difficult voter I.D. restrictions; eliminating early voting; outdated and insufficient voting machines; and long lines, especially in minority precincts.

In 2016, North Carolina closed early voting stations and, just coincidentally, reduced African American voting by 8.5 percent, clearly a dispositive difference.

Republican governors like Governor Scott of Florida have exercised their discretion to restore felon voting rights in as restrictive a manner as possible. His predecessor, Governor CHARLIE CRIST, now our colleague, restored voting rights to 155,000 individuals in Florida in 4 years. Governor Scott averaged just 400 per year.

In Wisconsin, a strict voter I.D. law has been credited with suppressing the vote of more than 200,000 Wisconsin voters who were otherwise eligible to cast a ballot in 2016.

Could that have made a difference in the electoral vote of the State of Wisconsin?

□ 1045

These tactics undermine democracy. They are not worthy of the party of Lincoln, and they further erode America's trust in government.

I implore my friends on the other side of the aisle: Let's win fair or square. Let's make sure every American's vote is counted and is treated as sacred. America will be the stronger for it.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to refrain from en-

gaging in personalities toward the President of the United States.

#### HONORING DONEGAL INDIANS FIELD HOCKEY TEAM

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

Mr. SMUCKER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate and to honor the young women of the Donegal Indians field hockey team, who won the PIAA State championship this year, their second in 3 years.

The Donegal Indians held an impressive 28-1 season record, with 235 points scored and only 19 points scored against them. They can be described in one word: dominating.

They finally met their match in the State championship game, where they were scoreless through regulation. When the team needed to score, they turned to one player, Captain Mackenzie Allesie, who holds the national record for scoring in girls high school field hockey.

Mackenzie racked up an impressive 351 goals during her tenure at Donegal. The last goal that Mackenzie scored lifted the Indians to their second championship.

The team members' drive is a trait that will serve them well in the future. I congratulate them, their coaches, and the community for their victory. I wish them all continued success.

#### RECOGNIZING CASEY KAUFHOLD

Mr. SMUCKER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the amazing accomplishments of Ms. Casey Kaufhold, a 14-year-old freshman at Conestoga Valley High School in Lancaster, Pennsylvania.

Casey is a winner and a world record holder. Last month, she competed with Olympic-class archers from around the world at the World Archery Indoor Series GT Open in Luxembourg. She earned 589 out of 600 possible points to win the gold medal for this event and set a world record for the highest score earned by an archer under the age of 17 during competition.

We are all incredibly proud of Casey's achievements, and we are looking forward to all that is in store for her in the future, which I believe will be as a future Olympian. And if she does so, she will represent our Nation well. We wish her continued success in all of her endeavors.

#### RECOGNIZING LINN MOEDINGER

Mr. SMUCKER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize a man synonymous with railroading in Lancaster County: Mr. Linn Moedinger.

After 51 years—51 years—working for the Strasburg Rail Road, Linn is retiring as president of the Strasburg Rail Road Company.

Strasburg Rail Road was founded in 1832. It is the oldest continuously operating railroad in the Western Hemisphere. After 125 years of declining rev-

enue, 24 individuals, including Linn's parents, decided to buy the railroad.

Today, it is a top tourist destination in the district that I represent. They brought new life to Strasburg Rail Road, turning it into a tourist railroad and helping educate and entertain thousands of visitors in our community each year.

Linn took his first paying job at the Strasburg Rail Road when he was 17. He cleaned the restrooms. Year after year, his responsibilities increased and so did his love for the railroad.

Linn was named president in 2000 and has overseen great expansion of the Strasburg Rail Road, and it is a historical marker in the State of Pennsylvania.

Thank you to Linn for his many years of service, and I wish him all the best in his retirement.

#### RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 49 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

#### AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

#### PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer: Loving and gracious God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

We ask today that You bless the Members of the people's House to be the best and most faithful servants of the people they serve.

May they be filled with gratitude at the opportunity they have to serve in this place. We thank You for the abilities they have been given to do their work to contribute to the common good.

As this second session of the 115th Congress draws near its end and legislative business once again weighs heavily on this Hill, withhold not Your spirit of wisdom and truth from this assembly. Give each Member clarity of thought and purity of motive so that they may render their service as their best selves.

May all that is done this day in the people's House be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

#### THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

## PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

## ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

## CONGRATULATING JUDGE CARYN CANNER SCHWARTZ

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I am so pleased to rise today in honor of Judge Caryn Canner Schwartz upon her retirement from the Eleventh Judicial Circuit Court of Florida where she has proudly served since 1993.

Throughout her long and distinguished career as a judge, she has worked in the Civil and Criminal Divisions of the Miami-Dade County Court and as an Acting Circuit Court Judge in the Civil, Criminal, Domestic Violence and Family Divisions of the Circuit Court.

When Caryn is not sitting on the bench, she volunteers her time and experience through many different charitable and educational organizations, including mentoring law students and young attorneys. In fact, for the first 10 years of her career, Caryn taught high school students science and math and worked tirelessly to educate our Nation's youth.

Our south Florida community has benefited substantially from Judge Schwartz's leadership and her public service; and for this I truly thank her.

Mr. Speaker, it is my distinct honor to join Caryn's family, her friends, and her peers as they honor the many accomplishments of her outstanding career. I wish her and the entire Schwartz family all the best in this new exciting chapter of her life.

## PRIORITIZE ISSUES THAT MATTER

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

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Mr. Speaker, I recently asked my constituents about their priorities, and we received more than 2,400 responses. Their top issues? Healthcare, gun safety, and the environment.

It is worth noting that on each of these issues this Congress has not only not made progress, we have moved backwards. On healthcare, this Con-

gress spent months fighting a failed fight to repeal the Affordable Care Act, and now the administration continues to cynically sabotage the law to weaken protections for pre-existing conditions and increase premiums.

On gun safety, this Congress sits idly by as senseless gun violence and mass shootings claim lives across the country. In fact, the only gun legislation we passed this year, concealed carry reciprocity, actually weakened our gun laws.

On climate, this Congress has not only not listened to the science that tells us to reduce emissions, and instead the administration, President Trump, recklessly withdrew the United States from the Paris Climate Accord.

It is time Congress put the interests of the American people first. In the coming new Congress, we have a new opportunity for progress. Let's listen and prioritize the issues that matter most to our constituents and our country: affordable healthcare, the safety of their children, and a sustainable planet.

## ADK FORTY-SIXERS CELEBRATE 100TH ANNIVERSARY

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

Ms. STEFANIK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the 100th anniversary of the Adirondack Forty-Sixers, an organization in my district whose 10,000-plus members have climbed all 46 peaks of the Adirondack Mountains.

Since their founding by brothers Bob and George Marshall, the Forty-Sixers have been central to promoting environmental stewardship, protecting our natural resources, and encouraging younger generations to enjoy the great outdoors.

The Adirondacks are an essential component of our tourism economy. The Forty-Sixers have done important work giving back to the mountains they love and making the peaks more accessible. They have also prioritized community outreach and volunteerism. Their all-volunteer trail maintenance program is critical to keeping trails available to hikers from across the world and, in turn, protecting our environment.

For the past century, young hikers have been mentored and trained by this dedicated group of environmental stewards, and I know that over the next 100 years, many more will be inspired to experience the Adirondack Mountains.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating the Adirondack Forty-Sixers on this incredible milestone.

## MEANINGFUL GUN SAFETY LAWS NOW

(Mr. HIGGINS of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, this Friday marks the sixth anniversary of the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting in Newtown, Connecticut.

On December 14, 2012, from 9:30 to 9:40 a.m., a lone gunman armed with an assault weapon killed 27 people, including 20 kids between the ages of 6 and 7 years old. Five minutes, one shooter, 27 people dead. Many of the kids had several bullet wounds in their bodies when they were recovered.

In the years since that tragedy, we have seen high-powered assault weapon attacks on schools, synagogues, nightclubs, churches, concerts, and in our neighborhoods. With each horrific attack, Congress responds with a moment of silence. We have had 50 moments of silence since Sandy Hook.

Silence is not a response. We need rational voices, congressional hearings, and meaningful gun safety laws now.

## TRIBUTE FOR PRESIDENT GEORGE H.W. BUSH

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, an extraordinary tribute for President George H.W. Bush was published by Krishnadev Calamur in *The Atlantic*: "Had George Herbert Walker Bush never become the 41st President of the United States, he would still be remembered as one of the great Americans of the 20th century. . . ."

"But it was his one-term presidency, from 1989 to 1993, that had a monumental impact on the world. Ronald Reagan, his predecessor, uttered the famous words: 'Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall,' yet it was Bush who presided over its orderly dismantling.

"Bush oversaw the collapse of the Soviet Union, the end of the Cold War, the birth of the post-Soviet republics, and the West's outreach to former members of the Warsaw Pact."

In my service in Congress, I have seen firsthand the expansion of freedom and democracy. Today the largest number of nations in world history are free and democratic, from Bulgaria to Lithuania, inspired by President George H.W. Bush.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

## OPEN ENROLLMENT

(Ms. WILD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. WILD. Mr. Speaker, with only 4 days until open enrollment closes for next year, I want to call on people in my community, across Pennsylvania, and in every part of our country to sign up for coverage on [healthcare.gov](http://healthcare.gov).

Because Pennsylvania chose to expand Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act, low-income individuals and



families in every corner of our district and State can obtain coverage, and nearly 700,000 Pennsylvanians are now covered.

Thanks to the Affordable Care Act, Americans of every background can choose from a range of plans to find one that works for them and their family free from discrimination over gender, sexual orientation, race, or pre-existing conditions. However, there is still work to be done.

Healthcare is a right, not a privilege. While the Affordable Care Act has brought us closer to universal coverage, we must build on this progress. In the coming months I look forward to working with my colleagues in the House to make clear that we need to move away from our profit-driven healthcare system toward a society where affordable, high quality care is the birthright of every single child, woman, and man in this country.

#### CONGRATULATING THE MCCOMB HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL TEAM

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

Mr. LATTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the McComb High School football team for winning the Ohio State Division VII Championship. The Panthers won their second title in school history with a 28-3 victory over Glouster Trimble.

McComb showed great fortitude in reeling off eight straight wins on their way to the title. Including freshmen, the Panthers dressed 27 players, about half the number of most of their opponents.

The Panthers' success can be tied to their stout defense which didn't surrender a single touchdown in the championship game. These student athletes gave it their all and had the backing of the entire school district. They exemplified the best of Ohio small-town football.

I know what the title means to McComb, as my dad played for McComb in the late 1930s. It is great to see the fans rally around these players.

Once again, congratulations to Coach Kris Alge and the rest of the McComb High School football team on a job well done.

#### RECOGNIZING SPECIAL OLYMPICS HAWAII

(Ms. GABBARD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. GABBARD. Mr. Speaker, today I am rising to recognize Special Olympics Hawaii celebrating 50 years of service to our community. Since its founding in 1968, Special Olympics has changed lives and served as an indispensable source of strength and empowerment for so many people.

Across our State today, it is serving 4,700 participants with the support of

nearly 12,000 coaches and volunteers delivering 10 Olympic-type sports and more than 50 competitions throughout the year.

They have taken on issues like inactivity, injustice, intolerance, and social isolation by encouraging and empowering people with intellectual disabilities. They have had an impact on our entire community and our State. They are combating negative stereotypes, bringing joy and a sense of achievement and creating a culture of respect and inclusion.

Mahalo to Special Olympics Hawaii and congratulations on reaching this 50th anniversary year.

#### A TRIBUTE TO SCOTTY BYRNE

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

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the legacy of longtime Brewton, Alabama, resident and my cousin, G.S. "Scotty" Byrne Jr., who passed away on November 18 at the age of 92.

Scotty was a veteran of World War II having served in the 351st Infantry Division under General Mark Clark and later went on to serve as sheriff of Escambia County for 24 years.

In college at the University of Southern Mississippi, Scotty was a premier two-sport athlete excelling in both baseball and golf. He was the first athlete to be inducted into the USM Sports Hall of Fame for two sports. Throughout his life, he was one of the most able golfers in our part of the State.

During his tenure as sheriff, he was a vocal supporter of the Alabama Sheriff's Boys Ranch, providing resources for children in need throughout our State. Without a doubt, Scotty was one of the most memorable citizens in Escambia County's long history.

So on behalf of Alabama's First Congressional District, I want to share our condolences with Scotty's family. He will be sorely missed.

#### 2018 FARM BILL

(Ms. ADAMS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. ADAMS. Mr. Speaker, after months of negotiation and conference, I am proud to come to the floor today to say the 2018 farm bill is now a strong, bipartisan bill which works for families, farmers, and communities.

The bill now avoids disastrous cuts to SNAP, a program which helps put food on the table for 44,000 people in Mecklenburg County alone. It also provides \$10 million in funding for urban agriculture research and mandatory funding for programs that support local food systems.

As co-founder and co-chair of the bipartisan HBCU Caucus, I am particularly proud to have helped secure key resources for 1890 land-grant univer-

sities in the bill. It authorizes \$50 million to create three centers of excellence at 1890s and ensures equity between land-grants by removing provisions that strip away unspent extension funds for 1890s, and it mandates a report that outlines research and extension funds for all land-grant schools.

I thank my colleagues on the conference committee, and I urge all of my colleagues to support the bill when it comes to the floor.

□ 1215

#### HONORING THE LIFE OF JACK MACKENZIE

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

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to honor the life of Quincy University soccer coach Jack Mackenzie of Quincy, Illinois.

Hired in 1969, Jack built Quincy University into a college soccer dynasty, guiding his program at all levels of college soccer, from the NAIA division through the NCAA's division II status, and even excelling at the NCAA's division I level.

For 43 years, Jack was at the helm of the Quincy soccer program. He was a pioneer and a legend, leading the team to nine national championships between 1970 and 1982, and amassing 516 victories, putting him 10th on the all-time wins list across all NCAA division levels.

Upon retirement in 2012, Jack remained involved in the Quincy University community and could still be found in the stands at every home game the Hawks played.

As the Quincy University community continues to mourn the loss of Coach Jack Mackenzie, may we never forget the positive impact he had on so many lives, the sport of soccer, and his tireless spirit in pursuit of excellence.

#### MOMENT OF SILENCE HONORING THE LIFE OF DON KRZYSIAK

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

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to honor the life of Don Krzysiak.

Don and his family are longtime members of the Bay City community. Sadly, he passed away on Friday, after a battle with pancreatic cancer. He is survived by his wife, Lois, and their children, Tom, Donnie, and Melanie.

Don founded Krzysiak's House Restaurant in 1979, with just a handful of employees, and grew it into the successful Bay City business that it is today. In fact, the very first event after I announced I was running for Congress was at Krzysiak's. He welcomed me with open arms and made me feel welcome in the neighborhood.

I remember always buying paczkis from Don on Fat Tuesday. Every year,



all the money he made from those sales was donated to the Salvation Army.

Don was not just a small-business owner, but also an important part of our community. He helped people struggling to find employment and supported people coming out of jail trying to start a new life.

Everyone who knew him at the family restaurant described him as more than a boss, but everybody's friend. He loved to spend time with his family and in his neighborhood, and he loved to listen to polka music.

Before opening the restaurant, he served in the U.S. Army. His commitment to our country will always be remembered.

Mid-Michigan lost a great friend and a bright spirit this week. The entire State of Michigan, the Bay City community, and I, personally, will miss him.

Thank you, Don, for everything you have done.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that the House join me in a brief moment of silence in Don's memory.

#### ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BARTON). Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or votes objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

The House will resume proceedings on postponed questions at a later time.

#### JOHNSON-O'MALLEY SUPPLEMENTAL INDIAN EDUCATION PROGRAM MODERNIZATION ACT

Mr. ESTES of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 943) to direct the Secretary of the Interior to conduct an accurate comprehensive student count for the purposes of calculating formula allocations for programs under the Johnson-O'Malley Act, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 943

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

#### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Johnson-O'Malley Supplemental Indian Education Program Modernization Act".

#### SEC. 2. INDIAN EDUCATION PROGRAM STUDENT COUNT UPDATE.

The Act of April 16, 1934 (25 U.S.C. 5342 et seq.) (commonly referred to as the Johnson-O'Malley Act) is amended by adding at the end the following:

#### "SEC. 7. COMPUTATION OF STUDENT COUNT.

"(a) DEFINITIONS.—For the purposes of this Act, the following definitions apply:

"(1) CONTRACTING PARTY.—The term 'contracting party' means an entity that has a contract through a program authorized under this Act.

"(2) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term 'eligible entity' means an entity that is eligible to apply for a contract for a supplemental or operational support program under this Act, as outlined in section 1.

"(3) EXISTING CONTRACTING PARTY.—The term 'existing contracting party' means a contracting party that has a contract under this Act that is in effect on the date of enactment of the JOM Modernization Act.

"(4) JOM MODERNIZATION ACT.—The term 'JOM Modernization Act' means the Johnson-O'Malley Supplemental Indian Education Program Modernization Act.

"(5) NEW CONTRACTING PARTY.—The term 'new contracting party' means an entity that enters into a contract under this Act after the date of enactment of the JOM Modernization Act.

"(6) SECRETARY.—The term 'Secretary' means the Secretary of the Interior.

"(b) DETERMINATION OF THE NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE INDIAN STUDENTS.—

"(1) INITIAL DETERMINATIONS.—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall make an initial determination of the number of eligible Indian students served or potentially served by each eligible entity in accordance with subparagraph (B).

"(B) PROCESS FOR MAKING THE INITIAL DETERMINATION.—

"(i) PRELIMINARY REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of the JOM Modernization Act, the Secretary shall publish a preliminary report describing the number of eligible Indian students served or potentially served by each eligible entity, using the most applicable and accurate data (as determined by the Secretary in consultation with eligible entities) from the fiscal year preceding the fiscal year for which the initial determination is to be made from—

"(I) the Bureau of the Census;

"(II) the National Center for Education Statistics; or

"(III) the Office of Indian Education of the Department of Education.

"(ii) DATA RECONCILIATION.—To improve the accuracy of the preliminary report described in clause (i) prior to publishing, the Secretary shall reconcile the data described in the preliminary report with—

"(I) each existing contracting party's data regarding the number of eligible Indian students served by the existing contracting party for the fiscal year preceding the fiscal year for which the initial determination is made; and

"(II) identifiable tribal enrollment information.

"(iii) COMMENT PERIOD.—After publishing the preliminary report under clause (i) in accordance with clause (ii), the Secretary shall establish a 60-day comment period to gain feedback about the preliminary report from eligible entities, which the Secretary shall take into consideration in preparing the final report described in clause (iv).

"(iv) FINAL REPORT.—Not later than 120 days after concluding the consultation described in clause (iii), the Secretary shall publish a final report on the initial determination of the number of eligible Indian students served or potentially served by each eligible entity, including justification for not including any feedback gained during such consultation, if applicable.

"(2) SUBSEQUENT ACADEMIC YEARS.—For each academic year following the fiscal year for which an initial determination is made under paragraph (1) to determine the number of eligible Indian students served or potentially served by a contracting party, the Secretary shall determine the number of eligible Indian students served by the contracting party based on the reported eligible Indian student count numbers identified through

the reporting process described in subsection (c).

"(c) CONTRACTING PARTY STUDENT COUNT REPORTING COMPLIANCE.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—For each academic year following the fiscal year for which an initial determination is made under subsection (b) to determine the number of eligible Indian students served or potentially served by a contracting party, the contracting party shall submit to the Secretary a report describing the number of eligible Indian students who were served using amounts allocated to such party under this Act during the previous fiscal year. The report shall also include an accounting of the amounts and purposes for which the contract funds were expended.

"(2) FAILURE TO COMPLY.—A contracting party that fails to submit a report under paragraph (1) shall receive no amounts under this Act for the fiscal year following the academic year for which the report should have been submitted.

"(3) NOTICE.—The Secretary shall provide contracting parties with timely information relating to—

"(A) initial and final reporting deadlines; and

"(B) the consequences of failure to comply outlined in paragraph (2).

"(4) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary, acting through the Director of the Bureau of Indian Education, shall provide technical assistance and training on compliance with the reporting requirements of this subsection to contracting parties.

"(d) ANNUAL REPORT.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall prepare an annual report, including the most recent determination of the number of eligible Indian students served by each contracting party, recommendations on appropriate funding levels for the program based on such determination, and an assessment of the contracts under this Act that the Secretary—

"(A) may include in the budget request of the Department of the Interior for each fiscal year;

"(B) shall submit to—

"(i) the Committee on Indian Affairs of the Senate;

"(ii) the Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies of the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate;

"(iii) the Committee on Education and the Workforce of the House of Representatives; and

"(iv) the Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies of the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives; and

"(C) shall make publicly available.

"(2) MANNER OF PREPARATION.—The Secretary shall prepare the report under paragraph (1) in a manner so as to prevent or minimize new administrative burdens on contracting parties receiving funds under this Act.

"(e) HOLD HARMLESS.—

"(1) INITIAL HOLD HARMLESS.—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided under subparagraph (B) and subject to subparagraphs (C) and (D), for a fiscal year, an existing contracting party shall not receive an amount under this Act that is less than the amount that such existing contracting party received under this Act for the fiscal year preceding the date of enactment of the JOM Modernization Act.

"(B) EXCEPTIONS.—

"(i) IN GENERAL.—An existing contracting party shall receive an amount under this Act for a fiscal year that is less than the amount that the existing contracting party received under this Act for the fiscal year preceding

the date of enactment of the JOM Modernization Act, if 1 or more of the following conditions is met:

“(I) FAILURE TO REPORT.—The existing contracting party failed to submit a complete report described in subsection (c) that was most recently due from the date of the determination.

“(II) VIOLATIONS OF CONTRACT OR LAW.—The Secretary has found that the existing contracting party has violated the terms of a contract entered into under this Act or has otherwise violated Federal law.

“(III) STUDENT COUNT DECREASE.—The number of eligible Indian students reported by such existing contracting party under subsection (c) has decreased below the number of eligible Indian students served by the existing contracting party in the fiscal year preceding the date of enactment of the JOM Modernization Act.

“(ii) AMOUNT OF FUNDING REDUCTION FOR EXISTING CONTRACTING PARTIES REPORTING DECREASED STUDENT COUNTS.—A reduction in an amount pursuant to clause (i)(III) shall not be done in such a manner that the existing contracting party receives an amount of funding per eligible Indian student that is less than the amount of funding per eligible Indian student such party received for the fiscal year preceding the date of enactment of the JOM Modernization Act.

“(C) RATABLE REDUCTIONS IN APPROPRIATIONS.—If the funds available under this Act for a fiscal year are insufficient to pay the full amounts that all existing contracting parties are eligible to receive under subparagraph (A) for the fiscal year, the Secretary shall ratably reduce those amounts for the fiscal year.

“(D) SUNSET.—This paragraph shall cease to be effective 4 years after the date of enactment of the JOM Modernization Act.

“(2) MAXIMUM DECREASE AFTER 4 YEARS.—Beginning 4 years after the date of enactment of the JOM Modernization Act, no contracting party shall receive for a fiscal year more than a 10 percent decrease in funding per eligible Indian student from the previous fiscal year.

“(f) FUNDING ALLOCATION AND REFORM.—

“(1) FUNDING REFORM.—The Secretary may make recommendations for legislation to increase the amount of funds available per eligible Indian student through contracts under this Act to equal to or greater than the amount of funds that were available per eligible Indian student through contracts under this Act for fiscal year 1995, and attempt to identify additional sources of funding that do not reallocate existing funds otherwise utilized by Indian students served—

“(A) by the Bureau of Indian Education; or

“(B) under title VI of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7401 et seq.).

“(2) INCREASES IN PROGRAM FUNDING.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subsection (e) and subparagraph (B), for any fiscal year for which the amount appropriated to carry out this Act exceeds the amount appropriated to carry out this Act for the preceding fiscal year, the excess amounts shall—

“(i) be allocated only to those contracting parties that did not receive their full per student funding allocation for the previous fiscal year; and

“(ii) be allocated first to new contracting parties that did not receive their full per student funding allocation for the previous fiscal year.

“(B) PARITY IN FUNDING.—Subparagraph (A) shall have no effect after the first fiscal year for which each contracting party receives their full per student funding allocation.

“(g) INCREASED GEOGRAPHICAL AND TRIBAL PARTICIPATION IN THE JOHNSON-O'MALLEY SUPPLEMENTARY EDUCATION PROGRAM.—To

the maximum extent practicable, the Secretary shall consult with Indian tribes and contact State educational agencies, local educational agencies, and Alaska Native organizations that have not previously entered into a contract under this Act—

“(1) to determine the interest of the Indian tribes, State educational agencies, local educational agencies, and Alaska Native organizations, in entering into such contracts; and

“(2) to share information relating to the process for entering into a contract under this Act.

“(h) RULEMAKING.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the date of enactment of the JOM Modernization Act, the Secretary, acting through the Director of the Bureau of Indian Education, shall undertake and complete a rulemaking process, following the provisions of subchapter II of chapter 5 of title 5, United States Code, to—

“(A) determine how the regulatory definition of ‘eligible Indian student’ may be revised to clarify eligibility requirements for contracting parties under this Act;

“(B) determine, as necessary, how the funding formula described in section 273.31 of title 25, Code of Federal Regulations (as in effect on the day before the date of enactment of the JOM Modernization Act) may be clarified and revised to ensure full participation of contracting parties and provide clarity on the funding process under this Act; and

“(C) otherwise reconcile and modernize the rules to comport with the activities of the contracting parties under this Act as of the date of enactment of the JOM Modernization Act.

“(2) REPORT.—Not later than 30 days after the date the rulemaking under paragraph (1) is complete, the Secretary shall submit a report to Congress describing the results of such rulemaking and necessary recommendations to ensure the full implementation of such rulemaking.

“(i) STUDENT PRIVACY.—The Secretary shall ensure that data is collected and each report is prepared under this section in a manner that protects the rights of eligible Indian students in accordance with section 444 of the General Education Provisions Act (commonly referred to as the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974) (20 U.S.C. 1232g).

“(j) GAO REPORT.—Not later than 18 months after the final report described in subsection (b)(1)(B)(iv) is published, the Comptroller General shall—

“(1) conduct a review of the implementation of this section during the preceding two-year period, including any factors impacting—

“(A) the accuracy of the determinations of the number of eligible Indian students under this section;

“(B) the communication between the Bureau of Indian Education and contracting parties; and

“(C) the efforts by the Bureau of Indian Education to ensure accurate and sufficient distribution of funding for Indian students;

“(2) submit a report describing the results of the review under paragraph (1) to—

“(A) the Committee on Indian Affairs of the Senate;

“(B) the Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies of the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate;

“(C) the Subcommittee on Indian, Insular and Alaska Native Affairs of the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives; and

“(D) the Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies of the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives; and

“(3) make such report publicly available.

“(k) EFFECT.—Nothing in this section—

“(1) creates a new program or duplicates program activities under this Act; or

“(2) replaces or diminishes the effect of regulations to carry out this Act existing on the day before the date of enactment of the JOM Modernization Act, unless expressly provided in this section.”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. ESTES) and the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GRIJALVA) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kansas.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ESTES of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on S. 943.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Kansas?

There was no objection.

Mr. ESTES of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of S. 943, the Johnson-O'Malley Supplemental Indian Education Program Modernization Act.

The Johnson-O'Malley Program was first established in 1934 to support the unique educational needs of American Indian students. Through the program, Native students have access to tutoring, Native language classes, cultural activities, afterschool programming, books and supplies, and other programs and items to support their educational pursuits.

For American Indian students, this program could be a lifeline. The Johnson-O'Malley Program has the ability to make the difference in a student's life, and it is essential that we take strides to make this program as efficient and effective as possible. As it turns out, there is much work to be done.

The Bureau of Indian Education contracts with Tribes, Tribal organizations, and sometimes States and public school districts to distribute program funds. The Johnson-O'Malley Act stipulates that funds be distributed to contractors based on the count of American Indian students and average per-pupil operating costs. The formula makes sense, except for the fact that the most recent student counts are from 1995.

After the 1995 freeze, the BIE ceased collecting student data and all information regarding Johnson-O'Malley projects and program outcomes. This has allowed contractors to collect funds based on data from over 20 years old. This kind of program mismanagement deprives students of educational opportunity in schools where student populations have grown and wastes taxpayer dollars in schools where student counts have declined.

Since fiscal year 2012, Congress has directed the BIE to count the actual

number of students who are eligible for and participating in the Johnson-O'Malley Program and recommend a methodology to distribute funds in the future. Yet, to date, the BIE has not conducted an accurate student count.

S. 943 amends the Johnson-O'Malley Act to require the Department of the Interior to update its count of students who are served by the Johnson-O'Malley Program each year. The legislation strengthens program accountability and oversight by requiring program contractors to report the amounts and purposes for which funds are spent. This will provide sufficient information to conduct the necessary oversight of the program.

The bill also directs program facilitators to submit an annual program assessment report to Congress, and establishes a consultation process between the Secretary of the Interior and Tribal schools so that students may be better served.

We owe it to Native students to make this well-intentioned program as effective as it can be, and I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I also rise in support of S. 943, the Johnson-O'Malley Supplemental Indian Education Program Modernization Act.

The abysmal conditions and status of education attainment and achievement of American Indian children and students continues. This educational gap for American Indian students continues to lag behind all other students in this country.

This bill would require the Department of the Interior to annually update the count of American Indian and Alaska Native students so the Department can more accurately distribute Johnson-O'Malley funds which supplement Indian education. The bill would also require grantees to report how funds are being used, helping to ensure Federal dollars support Native students' education.

The Federal Government has a responsibility to provide parity in resources to Native education. Currently, the Department is prevented from updating the count because of an effort, from over 20 years ago, to cut spending through the use of block grants.

Congress, at the time, determined one way to reduce funding for Indian education was to freeze efforts to count the number of Native students. As a result, the Department of the Interior continues to use the 1994 number of 272,000 Native students, even though it is estimated, based on Census reports, that there are now more than 750,000 Native students. This policy is just another in a long list of the second-class treatment of American Indians by our government.

I want to thank my colleague, BETTY MCCOLLUM, for introducing this version of the legislation and my Republican

colleagues, TOM COLE and DON YOUNG, for providing bipartisan support. My hope is that the passage of this bill is a first step, however small it may be, to righting a wrong to American Indian students.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support S. 943, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ESTES of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned, the last official count of eligible students was conducted in 1995, which determined that there were nearly 272,000 American Indian students who were qualified for the Johnson-O'Malley Program. However, in 2017, the Congressional Budget Office estimated that there were an additional 80,000 students who would qualify. Clearly, this bill is needed and overdue.

Currently, the program receives \$14.9 million, annually, in funding. Modernization of this act will cost an estimated \$13 million over the next 4 years. This is an important investment in the future of our country, and those students deserve our support.

This legislation improves and strengthens the Johnson-O'Malley Program, and I urge my colleagues to support S. 943.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. ESTES) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 943, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### ADVANCED NUCLEAR FUEL AVAILABILITY ACT

Mr. FLORES. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 6140) to require the Secretary of Energy to establish and carry out a program to support the availability of HA-LEU for domestic commercial use, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 6140

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

#### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Advanced Nuclear Fuel Availability Act".

#### SEC. 2. PROGRAM.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary shall establish and carry out, through the Office of Nuclear Energy, a program to support the availability of HA-LEU for domestic commercial use.

(b) PROGRAM ELEMENTS.—In carrying out the program under subsection (a), the Secretary—

(1) may provide financial assistance to assist commercial entities to design and license transportation packages for HA-LEU,

including canisters for metal, gas, and other HA-LEU compositions;

(2) shall, to the extent practicable—

(A) by January 1, 2021, have commercial entities submit such transportation package designs to the Commission for certification by the Commission under part 71 of title 10, Code of Federal Regulations; and

(B) encourage the Commission to have such transportation package designs so certified by the Commission by January 1, 2023;

(3) not later than January 1, 2020, shall submit to Congress a report on the Department's uranium inventory that may be available to be processed to HA-LEU for purposes of such program, which may not include any uranium allocated by the Secretary for use in support of the atomic energy defense activities of the National Nuclear Security Administration;

(4) not later than one year after the date of enactment of this Act, and biennially thereafter through September 30, 2025, shall conduct a survey of stakeholders to estimate the quantity of HA-LEU necessary for domestic commercial use for each of the five subsequent years;

(5) shall assess options available for the Secretary to acquire HA-LEU for such program, including an assessment, for each such option, of the cost and amount of time required;

(6) shall establish a consortium, which may include entities involved in any stage of the nuclear fuel cycle, to partner with the Department to support the availability of HA-LEU for domestic commercial use, including by—

(A) providing information to the Secretary for purposes of surveys conducted under paragraph (4); and

(B) purchasing HA-LEU made available to members of the consortium by the Secretary under the program;

(7) shall, prior to acquiring HA-LEU under paragraph (8), in coordination with the consortium established pursuant to paragraph (6), develop a schedule for cost recovery of HA-LEU made available to members of the consortium pursuant to paragraph (8);

(8) may, beginning not later than 3 years after the establishment of a consortium under paragraph (6), acquire HA-LEU, in order, to the extent practicable, to make such HA-LEU available to members of the consortium beginning not later than January 1, 2025, in amounts that are consistent, to the extent practicable, with the quantities estimated under the surveys conducted under paragraph (4); and

(9) shall develop, in consultation with the Commission, criticality benchmark data to assist the Commission in—

(A) the licensing and regulation of category II spent nuclear material fuel fabrication and enrichment facilities under part 70 of title 10, Code of Federal Regulations; and

(B) certification of transportation packages under part 71 of title 10, Code of Federal Regulations.

(c) APPLICABILITY OF USEC PRIVATIZATION ACT.—The requirements of subparagraphs (A) and (C) of section 3112(d)(2) of the USEC Privatization Act (42 U.S.C. 2297h-10(d)(2)) shall apply to a sale or transfer of HA-LEU by the Secretary to a member of the consortium under this section.

(d) FUNDING.—

(1) TRANSPORTATION PACKAGE DESIGN.—

(A) COST SHARE.—The Secretary shall ensure that not less than 20 percent of the costs of design and license activities carried out pursuant to subsection (b)(1) are paid by a non-Federal entity.

(B) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out subsection (b)(1)—

(i) \$1,500,000 for fiscal year 2019;

- (ii) \$1,500,000 for fiscal year 2020; and
- (iii) \$1,500,000 for fiscal year 2021.

(2) DOE ACQUISITION OF HA-LEU.—The Secretary may not make commitments under this section (including cooperative agreements (used in accordance with section 6305 of title 31, United States Code), purchase agreements, guarantees, leases, service contracts, or any other type of commitment) for the purchase or other acquisition of HA-LEU unless funds are specifically provided for such purposes in advance in subsequent appropriations Acts, and only to the extent that the full extent of anticipated costs stemming from such commitments is recorded as an obligation up front and in full at the time it is made.

(3) OTHER COSTS.—Except as otherwise provided in this subsection, in carrying out this section, the Secretary shall use amounts otherwise authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary.

(e) SUNSET.—The authority of the Secretary to carry out the program under this section shall expire on September 30, 2033.

### SEC. 3. REPORT TO CONGRESS.

Not later than 12 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commission shall submit to Congress a report that includes—

(1) identification of updates to regulations, certifications, and other regulatory policies that the Commission determines are necessary in order for HA-LEU to be commercially available, including—

(A) guidance for material control and accountability of category II special nuclear material;

(B) certifications relating to transportation packaging for HA-LEU; and

(C) licensing of enrichment, conversion, and fuel fabrication facilities for HA-LEU, and associated physical security plans for such facilities;

(2) a description of such updates; and

(3) a timeline to complete such updates.

### SEC. 4. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) COMMISSION.—The term “Commission” means the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

(2) DEPARTMENT.—The term “Department” means Department of Energy.

(3) HA-LEU.—The term “HA-LEU” means high-assay low-enriched uranium.

(4) HIGH-ASSAY LOW-ENRICHED URANIUM.—The term “high-assay low-enriched uranium” means uranium having an assay greater than 5.0 percent and less than 20.0 percent enrichment of the uranium-235 isotope.

(5) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of Energy.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. FLORES) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GENE GREEN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. FLORES).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. FLORES. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material in the RECORD on the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. FLORES. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, nuclear power is a clean and efficient source of zero-emissions energy. Today, it generates approxi-

mately 20 percent of our country’s “always-on, baseload” electricity for our homes and businesses.

Most nuclear reactors currently in use are very similar in nature and operate on a fuel that is generally enriched below 5 percent. The next generation of advanced reactors under development, however, vary in size and operation, and they will require flexibility and efficiencies from an advanced fuel. This fuel, known as high-assay, low-enriched uranium, or HA-LEU, is enriched at higher levels than what is available in the current commercial market.

The bipartisan Advanced Nuclear Fuel Availability Act, which I introduced with my friend, the gentleman from California (Mr. MCNERNEY), establishes a public-private partnership through the Energy Department’s Office of Nuclear Energy to support the availability of HA-LEU for domestic commercial use.

□ 1230

A March 2017 survey of 18 advanced reactor developers based in the United States found that the lack of availability of advanced fuels is the foremost factor that would impede the development and deployment of advanced reactor technologies.

Simply put, this bill would ensure that there is a supply of advanced fuel available for domestic commercial industry purchase for the advanced reactors of tomorrow.

Global energy demand will continue to increase, and emissions-free nuclear power is the ultimate source to meet those needs for the next generation of electricity. It is important to pass this bill to give American innovators a competitive edge in designing and deploying the reactors of tomorrow.

Mr. Speaker, I thank, again, Mr. MCNERNEY for working with me on this issue, as well as committee leadership and staff for their assistance in bringing this legislation forward.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bipartisan measure, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 6140. This bill is an effort to accelerate the availability of high-assay low-enriched uranium, the fuel needed for most advanced nuclear designs.

There is no existing commercial market for this fuel, so in order to ensure that the fuel is available for advanced reactors once they are licensed and ready to begin producing electricity, the Federal Government will need to coordinate efforts among agencies, and with the commercial nuclear sector, to ensure that high-assay low-enriched uranium can be licensed and safely transported.

You wouldn’t buy a lawnmower if you couldn’t buy gas to run it. Similarly, we need to develop a domestic market for fuel needed to power these

advanced nuclear reactor projects that are coming onto the market in the next decade.

I thank my colleagues on the Energy and Commerce Committee, both Representative FLORES and Representative MCNERNEY, for developing this thoughtful proposal.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. FLORES. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time until my other colleagues arrive.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. MCNERNEY), one of the cosponsors of the bill.

Mr. MCNERNEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. GREEN. I have had the pleasure of serving with Mr. GREEN for about 12 years now, and he has been an incredible colleague. One thing I can say about Mr. GREEN: He is good for his word. When he says he is going to provide something and produce something, he does. So I appreciate the gentleman’s friendship and collegiality.

Mr. Speaker, today, I rise in support of H.R. 6140, the Advanced Nuclear Fuel Availability Act. Every day, we are seeing the devastating effects of climate change, like the deadly wildfires we just had in California; severe flooding around the world; and our Nation’s persistent asthma rates, which continue to threaten public health.

The Federal Government has the responsibility to address climate change by investing in proactive measures to combat this prevailing threat. We need a diverse—and I repeat, diverse—energy mix, including nuclear power, which already generates 60 percent of our Nation’s zero-emissions electricity.

H.R. 6140 is the future of nuclear technology. It creates a pathway for tomorrow’s nuclear reactors so that we will be able to confront the realities of climate change.

This bill directs the Department of Energy to conduct studies, authorizes the Department of Energy to acquire materials, and requires the DOE to develop a schedule to recover these costs.

The availability of high-assay low-enriched uranium is critical to these efforts. Federal investments and protocols regarding the transportation, fuel fabrication, and enrichment to effectively bring this fuel to market are encouraging.

This bill updates the Nuclear Regulatory Commission’s policies and addresses the development of a robust regulatory regime, the options for requiring this type of uranium, and the preparation of the infrastructure required for this fuel.

As we look to the future, small modular reactors, or SMRs, as they are referred to, will be useful in a variety of settings, from microgrids to rural areas. And this type of fuel needs to be available by the time SMRs come to the market.

The consortium that is formed here is the type of partnership that will be useful in kick-starting this technology and then turning it over to let industry take the reins.

I thank my partners on this bill—Mr. FLORES, Mr. UPTON, Mr. WALDEN, and Mr. Pallone—for their leadership on this issue, and I thank our staffs for their work on this critical legislation.

Mr. Speaker, finally, I thank my friend and colleague Mr. GREEN, again, who is retiring this year. He has been a champion for bipartisanship and compromise, and an advocate for sound policy in this Chamber. He will be missed. I will also miss the Speaker who is sitting in the Chair right now.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 6140.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I have no other speakers, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. FLORES. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, it is simple. H.R. 6140 will set the stage for powering electricity in the future in a green manner by allowing for the development of those new-generation reactors, but we have to have the fuel to do it. This bill, by working with my good friend Mr. McNERNEY from California, does that.

This bill passed the subcommittee in the Committee on Energy and Commerce by a unanimous voice vote. It also passed the full committee by a voice vote. It is a bipartisan solution to address a real need to generate electricity, always-on, baseload electricity, in a zero-emissions manner.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to vote for this important piece of legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 6140, the “Advanced Nuclear Fuel Availability Act,” is a bipartisan bill sponsored by my Energy and Commerce colleagues, BILL FLORES of Texas, along with JERRY McNERNEY of California.

We considered this bill through regular order in Committee and the Full Committee reported the bill favorably, as amended, by a voice vote.

Imagine designing a new car that is safer, less expensive, and gets triple the mileage than anything we see on the road today. But when the vehicle is ready to hit the road, there is no gas to fill up the tank.

Nuclear innovators face a similar—and very critical—challenge as they work to bring several promising advanced nuclear technologies to the market. These new designs require fuels that have different attributes than what is used in today’s fleet of nuclear reactors, but the fuels are not commercially available.

H.R. 6140 addresses this challenge by ensuring nuclear innovators will have the advanced fuels needed to develop and demonstrate their products commercially.

The bill provides a direct path to align advanced nuclear fuel supply with initial demand for the deployment of next generation nuclear technologies. It provides for the development of the technical information necessary to assist the creation of the regulatory and licensing framework for these fuels.

The bill directs the Secretary of Energy to establish a temporary program, operating to

support a public-private partnership, that will make what is known as high-assay low-enriched uranium available for use in the first-of-a-kind advanced nuclear reactor designs. It provides for the surveys and information necessary to inform the new market development and cost recovery for initial federal investments.

In short, the Advanced Nuclear Fuel Availability Act takes practical, targeted steps to ensure the infrastructure will be in place in time to enable the development and deployment of a new generation of nuclear technologies in the United States.

This is an important bill for ensuring the nation’s international leadership on nuclear technology, for ensuring our energy security, and achieving our clean energy goals.

I urge all of my colleagues to support H.R. 6140.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. FLORES) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 6140, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### IMPROVING MEDICAID PROGRAMS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR ELIGIBLE BENEFICIARIES ACT

Mr. BARTON. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 7217) to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to provide States with the option of providing coordinated care for children with complex medical conditions through a health home, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 7217

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

#### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Improving Medicaid Programs and Opportunities for Eligible Beneficiaries Act” or the “IMPROVE Act”.

#### TITLE I—ACE KIDS

##### SEC. 101. STATE OPTION TO PROVIDE COORDINATED CARE THROUGH A HEALTH HOME FOR CHILDREN WITH MEDICALLY COMPLEX CONDITIONS.

Title XIX of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq.) is amended by inserting after section 1945 the following new section:

##### “SEC. 1945A. STATE OPTION TO PROVIDE COORDINATED CARE THROUGH A HEALTH HOME FOR CHILDREN WITH MEDICALLY COMPLEX CONDITIONS.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding section 1902(a)(1) (relating to statewideness) and section 1902(a)(10)(B) (relating to comparability), beginning October 1, 2022, a State, at its option as a State plan amendment, may provide for medical assistance under this title to children with medically complex conditions who choose to enroll in a health home under this section by selecting a designated provider, a team of health care professionals operating with such a provider, or a health team as the child’s health home

for purposes of providing the child with health home services.

“(b) HEALTH HOME QUALIFICATION STANDARDS.—The Secretary shall establish standards for qualification as a health home for purposes of this section. Such standards shall include requiring designated providers, teams of health care professionals operating with such providers, and health teams to demonstrate to the State the ability to do the following:

“(1) Coordinate prompt care for children with medically complex conditions, including access to pediatric emergency services at all times.

“(2) Develop an individualized comprehensive pediatric family-centered care plan for children with medically complex conditions that accommodates patient preferences.

“(3) Work in a culturally and linguistically appropriate manner with the family of a child with medically complex conditions to develop and incorporate into such child’s care plan, in a manner consistent with the needs of the child and the choices of the child’s family, ongoing home care, community-based pediatric primary care, pediatric inpatient care, social support services, and local hospital pediatric emergency care.

“(4) Coordinate access to—

“(A) subspecialized pediatric services and programs for children with medically complex conditions, including the most intensive diagnostic, treatment, and critical care levels as medically necessary; and

“(B) palliative services if the State provides such services under the State plan (or a waiver of such plan).

“(5) Coordinate care for children with medically complex conditions with out-of-State providers furnishing care to such children to the maximum extent practicable for the families of such children and where medically necessary, in accordance with guidance issued under subsection (e)(1) and section 431.52 of title 42, Code of Federal Regulations.

“(6) Collect and report information under subsection (g)(1).

“(c) PAYMENTS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—A State shall provide a designated provider, a team of health care professionals operating with such a provider, or a health team with payments for the provision of health home services to each child with medically complex conditions that selects such provider, team of health care professionals, or health team as the child’s health home. Payments made to a designated provider, a team of health care professionals operating with such a provider, or a health team for such services shall be treated as medical assistance for purposes of section 1903(a), except that, during the first 2 fiscal year quarters that the State plan amendment is in effect, the Federal medical assistance percentage applicable to such payments shall be increased by 15 percentage points, but in no case may exceed 90 percent.

“(2) METHODOLOGY.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The State shall specify in the State plan amendment the methodology the State will use for determining payment for the provision of health home services. Such methodology for determining payment—

“(i) may be tiered to reflect, with respect to each child with medically complex conditions provided such services by a designated provider, a team of health care professionals operating with such a provider, or a health team, the severity or number of each such child’s chronic conditions, life-threatening illnesses, disabilities, or rare diseases, or the specific capabilities of the provider, team of health care professionals, or health team; and

“(ii) shall be established consistent with section 1902(a)(30)(A).

“(B) ALTERNATE MODELS OF PAYMENT.—The methodology for determining payment for provision of health home services under this section shall not be limited to a per-member per-month basis and may provide (as proposed by the State and subject to approval by the Secretary) for alternate models of payment.

“(3) PLANNING GRANTS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Beginning October 1, 2022, the Secretary may award planning grants to States for purposes of developing a State plan amendment under this section. A planning grant awarded to a State under this paragraph shall remain available until expended.

“(B) STATE CONTRIBUTION.—A State awarded a planning grant shall contribute an amount equal to the State percentage determined under section 1905(b) (without regard to section 5001 of Public Law 111–5) for each fiscal year for which the grant is awarded.

“(C) LIMITATION.—The total amount of payments made to States under this paragraph shall not exceed \$5,000,000.

“(d) COORDINATING CARE.—

“(1) HOSPITAL NOTIFICATION.—A State with a State plan amendment approved under this section shall require each hospital that is a participating provider under the State plan (or a waiver of such plan) to establish procedures for, in the case of a child with medically complex conditions who is enrolled in a health home pursuant to this section and seeks treatment in the emergency department of such hospital, notifying the health home of such child of such treatment.

“(2) EDUCATION WITH RESPECT TO AVAILABILITY OF HEALTH HOME SERVICES.—In order for a State plan amendment to be approved under this section, a State shall include in the State plan amendment a description of the State’s process for educating providers participating in the State plan (or a waiver of such plan) on the availability of health home services for children with medically complex conditions, including the process by which such providers can refer such children to a designated provider, team of health care professionals operating such a provider, or health team for the purpose of establishing a health home through which such children may receive such services.

“(3) FAMILY EDUCATION.—In order for a State plan amendment to be approved under this section, a State shall include in the State plan amendment a description of the State’s process for educating families with children eligible to receive health home services pursuant to this section of the availability of such services. Such process shall include the participation of family-to-family entities or other public or private organizations or entities who provide outreach and information on the availability of health care items and services to families of individuals eligible to receive medical assistance under the State plan (or a waiver of such plan).

“(4) MENTAL HEALTH COORDINATION.—A State with a State plan amendment approved under this section shall consult and coordinate, as appropriate, with the Secretary in addressing issues regarding the prevention and treatment of mental illness and substance use among children with medically complex conditions receiving health home services under this section.

“(e) GUIDANCE ON COORDINATING CARE FROM OUT-OF-STATE PROVIDERS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than October 1, 2020, the Secretary shall issue (and update as the Secretary determines necessary) guidance to State Medicaid directors on—

“(A) best practices for using out-of-State providers to provide care to children with medically complex conditions;

“(B) coordinating care for such children provided by such out-of-State providers (including when provided in emergency and non-emergency situations);

“(C) reducing barriers for such children receiving care from such providers in a timely fashion; and

“(D) processes for screening and enrolling such providers in the respective State plan (or a waiver of such plan), including efforts to streamline such processes or reduce the burden of such processes on such providers.

“(2) STAKEHOLDER INPUT.—In carrying out paragraph (1), the Secretary shall issue a request for information to seek input from children with medically complex conditions and their families, States, providers (including children’s hospitals, hospitals, pediatricians, and other providers), managed care plans, children’s health groups, family and beneficiary advocates, and other stakeholders with respect to coordinating the care for such children provided by out-of-State providers.

“(f) MONITORING.—A State shall include in the State plan amendment—

“(1) a methodology for tracking avoidable hospital readmissions and calculating savings that result from improved care coordination and management under this section;

“(2) a proposal for use of health information technology in providing health home services under this section and improving service delivery and coordination across the care continuum (including the use of wireless patient technology to improve coordination and management of care and patient adherence to recommendations made by their provider); and

“(3) a methodology for tracking prompt and timely access to medically necessary care for children with medically complex conditions from out-of-State providers.

“(g) DATA COLLECTION.—

“(1) PROVIDER REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.—In order to receive payments from a State under subsection (c), a designated provider, a team of health care professionals operating with such a provider, or a health team shall report to the State, at such time and in such form and manner as may be required by the State, the following information:

“(A) With respect to each such provider, team of health care professionals, or health team, the name, National Provider Identification number, address, and specific health care services offered to be provided to children with medically complex conditions who have selected such provider, team of health care professionals, or health team as the health home of such children.

“(B) Information on all applicable measures for determining the quality of health home services provided by such provider, team of health care professionals, or health team, including, to the extent applicable, child health quality measures and measures for centers of excellence for children with complex needs developed under this title, title XXI, and section 1139A.

“(C) Such other information as the Secretary shall specify in guidance.

When appropriate and feasible, such provider, team of health care professionals, or health team, as the case may be, shall use health information technology in providing the State with such information.

“(2) STATE REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.—

“(A) COMPREHENSIVE REPORT.—A State with a State plan amendment approved under this section shall report to the Secretary (and, upon request, to the Medicaid and CHIP Payment and Access Commission), at such time and in such form and manner

determined by the Secretary to be reasonable and minimally burdensome, the following information:

“(i) Information reported under paragraph (1).

“(ii) The number of children with medically complex conditions who have selected a health home pursuant to this section.

“(iii) The nature, number, and prevalence of chronic conditions, life-threatening illnesses, disabilities, or rare diseases that such children have.

“(iv) The type of delivery systems and payment models used to provide services to such children under this section.

“(v) The number and characteristics of designated providers, teams of health care professionals operating with such providers, and health teams selected as health homes pursuant to this section, including the number and characteristics of out-of-State providers, teams of health care professionals operating with such providers, and health teams who have provided health care items and services to such children.

“(vi) The extent to which such children receive health care items and services under the State plan.

“(vii) Quality measures developed specifically with respect to health care items and services provided to children with medically complex conditions.

“(B) REPORT ON BEST PRACTICES.—Not later than 90 days after a State has a State plan amendment approved under this section, such State shall submit to the Secretary, and make publicly available on the appropriate State website, a report on how the State is implementing guidance issued under subsection (e)(1), including through any best practices adopted by the State.

“(h) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section may be construed—

“(1) to require a child with medically complex conditions to enroll in a health home under this section;

“(2) to limit the choice of a child with medically complex conditions in selecting a designated provider, team of health care professionals operating with such a provider, or health team that meets the health home qualification standards established under subsection (b) as the child’s health home; or

“(3) to reduce or otherwise modify—

“(A) the entitlement of children with medically complex conditions to early and periodic screening, diagnostic, and treatment services (as defined in section 1905(r)); or

“(B) the informing, providing, arranging, and reporting requirements of a State under section 1902(a)(43).

“(i) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) CHILD WITH MEDICALLY COMPLEX CONDITIONS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subparagraph (B), the term ‘child with medically complex conditions’ means an individual under 21 years of age who—

“(i) is eligible for medical assistance under the State plan (or under a waiver of such plan); and

“(ii) has at least—

“(I) one or more chronic conditions that cumulatively affect three or more organ systems and severely reduces cognitive or physical functioning (such as the ability to eat, drink, or breathe independently) and that also requires the use of medication, durable medical equipment, therapy, surgery, or other treatments; or

“(II) one life-limiting illness or rare pediatric disease (as defined in section 529(a)(3) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 360ff(a)(3))).

“(B) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this paragraph shall prevent the Secretary from establishing higher levels as to the



number or severity of chronic, life threatening illnesses, disabilities, rare diseases or mental health conditions for purposes of determining eligibility for receipt of health home services under this section.

“(2) **CHRONIC CONDITION.**—The term ‘chronic condition’ means a serious, long-term physical, mental, or developmental disability or disease, including the following:

- “(A) Cerebral palsy.
- “(B) Cystic fibrosis.
- “(C) HIV/AIDS.
- “(D) Blood diseases, such as anemia or sickle cell disease.
- “(E) Muscular dystrophy.
- “(F) Spina bifida.
- “(G) Epilepsy.
- “(H) Severe autism spectrum disorder.
- “(I) Serious emotional disturbance or serious mental health illness.

“(3) **HEALTH HOME.**—The term ‘health home’ means a designated provider (including a provider that operates in coordination with a team of health care professionals) or a health team selected by a child with medically complex conditions (or the family of such child) to provide health home services.

“(4) **HEALTH HOME SERVICES.**—

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—The term ‘health home services’ means comprehensive and timely high-quality services described in subparagraph (B) that are provided by a designated provider, a team of health care professionals operating with such a provider, or a health team.

“(B) **SERVICES DESCRIBED.**—The services described in this subparagraph shall include—

- “(i) comprehensive care management;
- “(ii) care coordination, health promotion, and providing access to the full range of pediatric specialty and subspecialty medical services, including services from out-of-State providers, as medically necessary;
- “(iii) comprehensive transitional care, including appropriate follow-up, from inpatient to other settings;
- “(iv) patient and family support (including authorized representatives);
- “(v) referrals to community and social support services, if relevant; and
- “(vi) use of health information technology to link services, as feasible and appropriate.

“(5) **DESIGNATED PROVIDER.**—The term ‘designated provider’ means a physician (including a pediatrician or a pediatric specialty or subspecialty provider), children’s hospital, clinical practice or clinical group practice, prepaid inpatient health plan or prepaid ambulatory health plan (as defined by the Secretary), rural clinic, community health center, community mental health center, home health agency, or any other entity or provider that is determined by the State and approved by the Secretary to be qualified to be a health home for children with medically complex conditions on the basis of documentation evidencing that the entity has the systems, expertise, and infrastructure in place to provide health home services. Such term may include providers who are employed by, or affiliated with, a children’s hospital.

“(6) **TEAM OF HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS.**—The term ‘team of health care professionals’ means a team of health care professionals (as described in the State plan amendment under this section) that may—

- “(A) include—
- “(i) physicians and other professionals, such as pediatricians or pediatric specialty or subspecialty providers, nurse care coordinators, dietitians, nutritionists, social workers, behavioral health professionals, physical therapists, occupational therapists, speech pathologists, nurses, individuals with experience in medical supportive technologies, or any professionals determined to be appro-

priate by the State and approved by the Secretary;

“(ii) an entity or individual who is designated to coordinate such a team; and

“(iii) community health workers, translators, and other individuals with culturally-appropriate expertise; and

“(B) be freestanding, virtual, or based at a children’s hospital, hospital, community health center, community mental health center, rural clinic, clinical practice or clinical group practice, academic health center, or any entity determined to be appropriate by the State and approved by the Secretary.

“(7) **HEALTH TEAM.**—The term ‘health team’ has the meaning given such term for purposes of section 3502 of Public Law 111-148.”

## TITLE II—OTHER MEDICAID

### SEC. 201. EXTENSION OF MONEY FOLLOWS THE PERSON REBALANCING DEMONSTRATION.

(a) **GENERAL FUNDING.**—Section 6071(h) of the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 1396a note) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)—

(A) in subparagraph (D), by striking “and” after the semicolon;

(B) in subparagraph (E), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(F) subject to paragraph (3), \$112,000,000 for fiscal year 2019.”

(2) in paragraph (2)—

(A) by striking “Amounts made” and inserting “Subject to paragraph (3), amounts made”; and

(B) by striking “September 30, 2016” and inserting “September 30, 2021”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(3) **SPECIAL RULE FOR FY 2019.**—Funds appropriated under paragraph (1)(F) shall be made available for grants to States only if such States have an approved MFP demonstration project under this section as of December 31, 2018.”

(b) **FUNDING FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE AND IMPROVEMENT; TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE; OVERSIGHT.**—Section 6071(f) of the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 1396a note) is amended by striking paragraph (2) and inserting the following:

“(2) **FUNDING.**—From the amounts appropriated under subsection (h)(1)(F) for fiscal year 2019, \$500,000 shall be available to the Secretary for such fiscal year to carry out this subsection.”

(c) **TECHNICAL AMENDMENT.**—Section 6071(b) of the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 1396a note) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(10) **SECRETARY.**—The term ‘Secretary’ means the Secretary of Health and Human Services.”

### SEC. 202. EXTENSION OF PROTECTION FOR MEDICAID RECIPIENTS OF HOME AND COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICES AGAINST SPOUSAL IMPOVERISHMENT.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 2404 of Public Law 111-148 (42 U.S.C. 1396r-5 note) is amended by striking “the 5-year period that begins on January 1, 2014,” and inserting “the period beginning on January 1, 2014, and ending on March 31, 2019.”

(b) **RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.**—

(1) **PROTECTING STATE SPOUSAL INCOME AND ASSET DISREGARD FLEXIBILITY UNDER WAIVERS AND PLAN AMENDMENTS.**—Nothing in section 2404 of Public Law 111-148 (42 U.S.C. 1396r-5 note) or section 1924 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396r-5) shall be construed as prohibiting a State from disregarding an individual’s spousal income and assets under a State waiver or plan amendment described in paragraph (2) for purposes of making determinations of eligibility for home and

community-based services or home and community-based attendant services and supports under such waiver or plan amendment.

(2) **STATE WAIVER OR PLAN AMENDMENT DESCRIBED.**—A State waiver or plan amendment described in this paragraph is any of the following:

(A) A waiver or plan amendment to provide medical assistance for home and community-based services under a waiver or plan amendment under subsection (c), (d), or (i) of section 1915 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396n) or under section 1115 of such Act (42 U.S.C. 1315).

(B) A plan amendment to provide medical assistance for home and community-based services for individuals by reason of being determined eligible under section 1902(a)(10)(C) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 1396a(a)(10)(C)) or by reason of section 1902(f) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 1396a(f)) or otherwise on the basis of a reduction of income based on costs incurred for medical or other remedial care under which the State disregarded the income and assets of the individual’s spouse in determining the initial and ongoing financial eligibility of an individual for such services in place of the spousal impoverishment provisions applied under section 1924 of such Act (42 U.S.C. 1396r-5).

(C) A plan amendment to provide medical assistance for home and community-based attendant services and supports under section 1915(k) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 1396n(k)).

### SEC. 203. REDUCTION IN FMAP AFTER 2020 FOR STATES WITHOUT ASSET VERIFICATION PROGRAM.

Section 1940 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396w) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(k) **REDUCTION IN FMAP AFTER 2020 FOR NON-COMPLIANT STATES.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—With respect to a calendar quarter beginning on or after January 1, 2021, the Federal medical assistance percentage otherwise determined under section 1905(b) for a non-compliant State shall be reduced—

“(A) for calendar quarters in 2021 and 2022, by 0.12 percentage points;

“(B) for calendar quarters in 2023, by 0.25 percentage points;

“(C) for calendar quarters in 2024, by 0.35 percentage points; and

“(D) for calendar quarters in 2025 and each year thereafter, by 0.5 percentage points.

“(2) **NON-COMPLIANT STATE DEFINED.**—For purposes of this subsection, the term ‘non-compliant State’ means a State—

“(A) that is one of the 50 States or the District of Columbia;

“(B) with respect to which the Secretary has not approved a State plan amendment submitted under subsection (a)(2); and

“(C) that is not operating, on an ongoing basis, an asset verification program in accordance with this section.”

### SEC. 204. DENIAL OF FFP FOR CERTAIN EXPENDITURES RELATING TO VACUUM ERECTION SYSTEMS AND PENILE PROSTHETIC IMPLANTS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 1903(i) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396b(i)) is amended by inserting after paragraph (11) the following:

“(12) with respect to any amounts expended for—

“(A) a vacuum erection system that is not medically necessary; or

“(B) the insertion, repair, or removal and replacement of a penile prosthetic implant (unless such insertion, repair, or removal and replacement is medically necessary); or”

(b) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall apply with respect to items and services furnished on or after January 1, 2019.



**SEC. 205. MEDICAID IMPROVEMENT FUND.**

Section 1941(b)(1) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396w-1(b)(1)) is amended by striking “\$31,000,000” and inserting “\$9,000,000”.

**SEC. 206. PREVENTING THE MISCLASSIFICATION OF DRUGS UNDER THE MEDICAID DRUG REBATE PROGRAM.**

(a) APPLICATION OF CIVIL MONEY PENALTY FOR MISCLASSIFICATION OF COVERED OUTPATIENT DRUGS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 1927(b)(3) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396r-8(b)(3)) is amended—

(A) in the paragraph heading, by inserting “AND DRUG PRODUCT” after “PRICE”;

(B) in subparagraph (A)—

(i) in clause (ii), by striking “; and” at the end and inserting a semicolon;

(ii) in clause (iii), by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon;

(iii) in clause (iv), by striking the semicolon at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(iv) by inserting after clause (iv) the following new clause:

“(v) not later than 30 days after the last day of each month of a rebate period under the agreement, such drug product information as the Secretary shall require for each of the manufacturer’s covered outpatient drugs.”; and

(C) in subparagraph (C)—

(i) in clause (ii), by inserting “, including information related to drug pricing, drug product information, and data related to drug pricing or drug product information,” after “provides false information”; and

(ii) by adding at the end the following new clauses:

“(iii) MISCLASSIFIED OR MISREPORTED INFORMATION.—

“(I) IN GENERAL.—Any manufacturer with an agreement under this section that knowingly (as defined in section 1003.110 of title 42, Code of Federal Regulations (or any successor regulation)) misclassifies a covered outpatient drug, such as by knowingly submitting incorrect drug category information, is subject to a civil money penalty for each covered outpatient drug that is misclassified in an amount not to exceed 2 times the amount of the difference, as determined by the Secretary, between—

“(aa) the total amount of rebates that the manufacturer paid with respect to the drug to all States for all rebate periods during which the drug was misclassified; and

“(bb) the total amount of rebates that the manufacturer would have been required to pay, as determined by the Secretary, with respect to the drug to all States for all rebate periods during which the drug was misclassified if the drug had been correctly classified.

“(II) OTHER PENALTIES AND RECOVERY OF UNDERPAID REBATES.—The civil money penalties described in subclause (I) are in addition to other penalties as may be prescribed by law and any other recovery of the underlying underpayment for rebates due under this section or the terms of the rebate agreement as determined by the Secretary.

“(iv) INCREASING OVERSIGHT AND ENFORCEMENT.—Each year the Secretary shall retain, in addition to any amount retained by the Secretary to recoup investigation and litigation costs related to the enforcement of the civil money penalties under this subparagraph and subsection (c)(4)(B)(ii)(III), an amount equal to 25 percent of the total amount of civil money penalties collected under this subparagraph and subsection (c)(4)(B)(ii)(III) for the year, and such retained amount shall be available to the Secretary, without further appropriation and until expended, for activities related to the oversight and enforcement of this section

and agreements under this section, including—

“(I) improving drug data reporting systems;

“(II) evaluating and ensuring manufacturer compliance with rebate obligations; and

“(III) oversight and enforcement related to ensuring that manufacturers accurately and fully report drug information, including data related to drug classification.”; and

(iii) in subparagraph (D)—

(I) in clause (iv), by striking “, and” and inserting a comma;

(II) in clause (v), by striking “subsection (f).” and inserting “subsection (f), and”; and

(III) by inserting after clause (v) the following new clause:

“(vi) in the case of categories of drug product or classification information that were not considered confidential by the Secretary on the day before the date of the enactment of the IMPROVE Act.”.

(2) TECHNICAL AMENDMENTS.—

(A) Section 1903(i)(10) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396b(i)(10)) is amended—

(i) in subparagraph (C)—

(I) by adjusting the left margin so as to align with the left margin of subparagraph (B); and

(II) by striking “, and” and inserting a semicolon;

(ii) in subparagraph (D), by striking “; or” and inserting “; and”; and

(iii) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(E) with respect to any amount expended for a covered outpatient drug for which a suspension under section 1927(c)(4)(B)(ii)(II) is in effect; or”.

(B) Section 1927(b)(3)(C)(ii) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396r-8(b)(3)(C)(ii)) is amended by striking “subsections (a) and (b)” and inserting “subsections (a), (b), (f)(3), and (f)(4)”.

(b) RECOVERY OF UNPAID REBATE AMOUNTS DUE TO MISCLASSIFICATION OF COVERED OUTPATIENT DRUGS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 1927(c) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396r-8(c)) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(4) RECOVERY OF UNPAID REBATE AMOUNTS DUE TO MISCLASSIFICATION OF COVERED OUTPATIENT DRUGS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—If the Secretary determines that a manufacturer with an agreement under this section paid a lower per-unit rebate amount to a State for a rebate period as a result of the misclassification by the manufacturer of a covered outpatient drug (without regard to whether the manufacturer knowingly made the misclassification or should have known that the misclassification would be made) than the per-unit rebate amount that the manufacturer would have paid to the State if the drug had been correctly classified, the manufacturer shall pay to the State an amount equal to the product of—

“(i) the difference between—

“(I) the per-unit rebate amount paid to the State for the period; and

“(II) the per-unit rebate amount that the manufacturer would have paid to the State for the period, as determined by the Secretary, if the drug had been correctly classified; and

“(ii) the total units of the drug paid for under the State plan in the period.

“(B) AUTHORITY TO CORRECT MISCLASSIFICATIONS.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—If the Secretary determines that a manufacturer with an agreement under this section has misclassified a covered outpatient drug (without regard to whether the manufacturer knowingly made the misclassification or should have known

that the misclassification would be made), the Secretary shall notify the manufacturer of the misclassification and require the manufacturer to correct the misclassification in a timely manner.

“(ii) ENFORCEMENT.—If, after receiving notice of a misclassification from the Secretary under clause (i), a manufacturer fails to correct the misclassification by such time as the Secretary shall require, until the manufacturer makes such correction, the Secretary may—

“(I) correct the misclassification on behalf of the manufacturer;

“(II) suspend the misclassified drug and the drug’s status as a covered outpatient drug under the manufacturer’s national rebate agreement; or

“(III) impose a civil money penalty (which shall be in addition to any other recovery or penalty which may be available under this section or any other provision of law) for each rebate period during which the drug is misclassified not to exceed an amount equal to the product of—

“(aa) the total number of units of each dosage form and strength of such misclassified drug paid for under any State plan during such a rebate period; and

“(bb) 23.1 percent of the average manufacturer price for the dosage form and strength of such misclassified drug.

“(C) REPORTING AND TRANSPARENCY.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall submit a report to Congress on at least an annual basis that includes information on the covered outpatient drugs that have been identified as misclassified, the steps taken to reclassify such drugs, the actions the Secretary has taken to ensure the payment of any rebate amounts which were unpaid as a result of such misclassification, and a disclosure of expenditures from the fund created in subsection (b)(3)(C)(iv), including an accounting of how such funds have been allocated and spent in accordance with such subsection.

“(ii) PUBLIC ACCESS.—The Secretary shall make the information contained in the report required under clause (i) available to the public on a timely basis.

“(D) OTHER PENALTIES AND ACTIONS.—Actions taken and penalties imposed under this paragraph shall be in addition to other remedies available to the Secretary including terminating the manufacturer’s rebate agreement for noncompliance with the terms of such agreement and shall not exempt a manufacturer from, or preclude the Secretary from pursuing, any civil money penalty under this title or title XI, or any other penalty or action as may be prescribed by law.”.

(2) OFFSET OF RECOVERED AMOUNTS AGAINST MEDICAL ASSISTANCE.—Section 1927(b)(1)(B) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396r-8(b)(1)(B)) is amended by inserting “, including amounts received by a State under subsection (c)(4),” after “in any quarter”.

(c) CLARIFYING DEFINITIONS.—Section 1927(k)(7)(A) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396r-8(k)(7)(A)) is amended—

(1) by striking “an original new drug application” and inserting “a new drug application” each place it appears;

(2) in clause (i), by inserting “but including a drug product approved for marketing as a non-prescription drug that is regarded as a covered outpatient drug under paragraph (4)” after “drug described in paragraph (5)”;

(3) in clause (ii), by striking “was originally marketed” and inserting “is marketed”; and

(4) in clause (iv)—

(A) by inserting “, including a drug product approved for marketing as a non-prescription drug that is regarded as a covered

outpatient drug under paragraph (4),” after “covered outpatient drug”; and

(B) by adding at the end the following new sentence: “Such term also includes a covered outpatient drug that is a biological product licensed, produced, or distributed under a biologics license application approved by the Food and Drug Administration.”.

(d) EXCLUSION OF MANUFACTURERS FOR KNOWING MISCLASSIFICATION OF COVERED OUTPATIENT DRUGS.—Section 1128(b) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1320a–7(b)) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(17) KNOWINGLY MISCLASSIFYING COVERED OUTPATIENT DRUGS.—Any manufacturer or officer, director, agent, or managing employee of such manufacturer that knowingly misclassifies a covered outpatient drug under an agreement under section 1927, knowingly fails to correct such misclassification, or knowingly provides false information related to drug pricing, drug product information, or data related to drug pricing or drug product information.”.

(e) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on the date of the enactment of this Act, and shall apply to covered outpatient drugs supplied by manufacturers under agreements under section 1927 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396r–8) on or after such date.

### TITLE III—MEDICARE

#### SEC. 301. EXCLUSION OF COMPLEX REHABILITATIVE MANUAL WHEELCHAIRS FROM MEDICARE COMPETITIVE ACQUISITION PROGRAM; NON-APPLICATION OF MEDICARE FEE-SCHEDULE ADJUSTMENTS FOR CERTAIN WHEELCHAIR ACCESSORIES AND CUSHIONS.

(a) EXCLUSION OF COMPLEX REHABILITATIVE MANUAL WHEELCHAIRS FROM COMPETITIVE ACQUISITION PROGRAM.—Section 1847(a)(2)(A) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w–3(a)(2)(A)) is amended—

(1) by inserting “, complex rehabilitative manual wheelchairs (as determined by the Secretary), and certain manual wheelchairs (identified, as of October 1, 2018, by HCPCS codes E1235, E1236, E1237, E1238, and K0008 or any successor to such codes)” after “group 3 or higher”; and

(2) by striking “such wheelchairs” and inserting “such complex rehabilitative power wheelchairs, complex rehabilitative manual wheelchairs, and certain manual wheelchairs”.

(b) NON-APPLICATION OF MEDICARE FEE SCHEDULE ADJUSTMENTS FOR WHEELCHAIR ACCESSORIES AND SEAT AND BACK CUSHIONS WHEN FURNISHED IN CONNECTION WITH COMPLEX REHABILITATIVE MANUAL WHEELCHAIRS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall not, during the period beginning on January 1, 2019, and ending on June 30, 2020, use information on the payment determined under the competitive acquisition programs under section 1847 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w–3) to adjust the payment amount that would otherwise be recognized under section 1834(a)(1)(B)(ii) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 1395m(a)(1)(B)(ii)) for wheelchair accessories (including seating systems) and seat and back cushions when furnished in connection with complex rehabilitative manual wheelchairs (as determined by the Secretary), and certain manual wheelchairs (identified, as of October 1, 2018, by HCPCS codes E1235, E1236, E1237, E1238, and K0008 or any successor to such codes).

(2) IMPLEMENTATION.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary may implement this subsection by program instruction or otherwise.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON). Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BARTON) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GENE GREEN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BARTON).

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BARTON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous materials in the RECORD on the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. BARTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, we are here today, the culmination of a 6-year journey. The IMPROVE Act is a combination of three bills. One bill is a bill that allows Medicare to follow the patient; another bill is a bill for spousal impoverishment, to prevent that; and the third bill, and the primary bill in this package, is a bill that we call the ACE Kids Act.

Mr. Speaker, there are, luckily, not a large number, about 2 million children in this country, who have multiple complex medical conditions that are life-threatening. These are the sickest of the sick of our young population. About 500,000 of these children are Medicaid eligible. In other words, their families qualify for low-income health insurance called Medicaid.

Mr. Speaker, under current law, the parents of these children have to create the healthcare network on a case-by-case basis for their child. They also cannot seek healthcare across State lines that is covered by Medicaid. So current law makes it very difficult on these sickest-of-the-sick children.

The ACE Kids Act changes that, Mr. Speaker. It allows the creation of a medical home that can cross State lines, that can coordinate care.

It is optional. The States do not have to participate in this program. The parents of the child do not have to participate in this program. But if they do wish to participate, you create a health home for the child wherein everything is coordinated.

In the pilot programs that have been run using this model, you get better quality healthcare at lower cost. We think the pilot programs show that, over time, if we adopt this model and if the States adopt it and the families adopt it, we get a lot better healthcare at a lower cost. So this is a win-win, Mr. Speaker.

As I said, we have worked on this for 6 years. It is a bipartisan bill. In the last Congress, we had a majority of the Congress that sponsored the bill. In this Congress, we have more than 130 cosponsors on a bipartisan basis.

We have had a hearing in the committee of jurisdiction, the Committee on Energy and Commerce. We have had

a markup in subcommittee. We have had a markup in full committee. Now, Mr. Speaker, we are bringing it to the floor.

We hope the House, later today, will vote affirmatively to pass this on suspension and send it to the Senate. We have preconference it with the Senate, and we have every reason to believe, if the House passes it today, the Senate will take it up expeditiously and pass it, and this is a bill that will become law.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 7217, the IMPROVE Act. This legislation contains several important policies related to Medicaid and Medicare.

First, I am a proud original cosponsor of the ACE Kids Act, and I am happy to see it included in H.R. 7217. The ACE Kids Act aims to improve care coordination for children with complex medical conditions served by Medicaid.

The legislation creates a Medicaid health home, State optional, specifically targeted for this population of children. It also requires the Secretary to issue best practices on coordinating out-of-State care for children with complex medical conditions.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the sponsors of the ACE Kids Act, Representative CASTOR and Congressman BARTON, both members of the Energy and Commerce Committee, for championing this issue for so many years.

The IMPROVE Act also provides new funding for the Money Follows the Person, the MFP, program. The MFP program helps individuals transition from institutional care to care in their community, where they can live more independent lives.

MFP also helps support States' home and community-based services infrastructure. Without this extension funding, we would start to see many of these MFP programs end in short order.

Mr. Speaker, I urge support for the program, which provides thousands of Americans with the choice to receive services in their home or community rather than in an institution.

□ 1245

The committee will continue to work on providing long-term funding to the MFP program in the next Congress.

I also voice my support for the extension of spousal impoverishment protections until April 2019. These protections will help ensure that a person can maintain enough income and assets to meet their basic living expenses while still allowing for their spouse to receive long-term care in their home or community under Medicaid.

The expiration of this policy would lead to people losing their long-term care services and the unnecessary institutionalization of people currently

receiving services in their homes or communities. The committee will continue to work on a long-term solution in the next Congress.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support passage of H.R. 7217, the IMPROVE Act, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BARTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. WALDEN), who is the current chairman of the Energy and Commerce Committee.

Mr. WALDEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. BARTON for his great leadership on the ACE Kids Act. I know this has been something he has been dedicated to for many years, and I am glad we could get this worked out and to the floor today. In fact, Mr. Speaker, these bills add to the 129 that the Energy and Commerce Committee has passed across this House floor.

Mr. Speaker, 92 percent of those bills have been bipartisan. I don't think the American people know that, because when we get along and do things, it doesn't get much coverage. But most of our work, 92 percent of our bills have been bipartisan, plus these today. 28 of those measures have become law.

I rise in strong support of this bipartisan H.R. 7217, which includes a number of different policies to improve and bolster the Medicaid and Medicare programs for vulnerable patients across our country, Mr. Speaker.

I recognize JOE BARTON and our colleague, KATHY CASTOR from Florida, who I know is going to speak in a moment. They have just worked relentlessly on the ACE Kids Act. This is an important bill, and it is included in this package and one I am proud the House will advance forward today.

They both should be commended for their work because, you see, Mr. Speaker, the ACE Kids Act is bipartisan. It is cost-effective legislation. It provides children and their families the treatment and coordinated care they so desperately need and deserve.

Representative BARTON, former chairman of the committee, has long been a champion on this issue, and, again, I thank him for his tireless efforts to advocate for improving care for our Nation's sickest children.

This bill also extends two key Medicaid programs: the Money Follows the Person Demonstration Program and the spousal impoverishment rules in Medicaid, both of which were due to expire or be out of money by the end of the year.

I am disappointed we weren't able to secure a longer term extension of these programs. I know many of my colleagues share that disappointment. Both sides negotiated in good faith, though, on how to pay for an extension, and I hope that the bipartisan work on the long-term bill will continue early in the new Congress. Today, we are moving forward with a 3-month extension to prevent these programs from expiring.

Finally, this package includes a small but critically important Medi-

care fix to ensure disabled seniors have access to necessary mobility devices, and that is fully offset and paid for.

Further boosting our efforts to advance public health, we have four other bills before us today. Collectively, these bills reauthorize several important programs, promote safe motherhood, and improve patient care.

Lastly, we will consider H.R. 6140. That is the Advanced Nuclear Fuel Availability Act. This bill, as you already know, Mr. Speaker, directs the Secretary of Energy to establish a program to make high-assay, low-enriched uranium available for use in the first-of-a-kind advanced nuclear reactor designs. This fuel will enable the development and deployment of a new generation of innovative nuclear technologies.

Nuclear energy is the largest source of emissions-free electricity in the United States, so a strong U.S. nuclear energy policy can ensure a reliable, clean U.S. energy sector for years to come and provide American families and businesses with affordable energy.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I thank Ranking Member PALLONE, Mr. GREEN, and the other members of the Energy and Commerce Committee. I urge my colleagues to support passage of all of these bills, especially H.R. 7217, on behalf of patients in Oregon and all across our country.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. CASTOR), a cosponsor of the ACE Kids Act and a great member of our Energy and Commerce Committee.

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman GREEN for being an outspoken advocate for his constituents, but especially for affordable healthcare for all Americans, especially children. It has been a privilege serving with him.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the families with children with complex medical needs all across America, I rise to urge approval of the IMPROVE Act, which includes a bill that I have been working on for a number of years with Representative JOE BARTON called the ACE Kids Act.

We drafted the Advancing Care for Exceptional Kids Act a few years ago with the simple but important goal of putting families and children first. The bill authorizes the creation of cost-saving and time-saving health homes where specialized care is coordinated in a high-quality setting.

Mr. Speaker, the children with complex medical conditions and their families are heroic.

Caroline West in Tampa, Florida, has a rare genetic condition, also cerebral palsy and a seizure disorder. She can't walk. It is very difficult for her to speak, but she is able to attend school part-time and enjoys the life of a typical teenager, in many respects.

Lucy Ferlita is the only living person in the United States with early onset myopathy with areflexia, respiratory

distress, and dysphagia. Very little is known about this disease, but what we know is that it is very difficult for her to eat. She has to have a feeding tube, a ventilator to breathe, and nursing care 24 hours a day, and yet she is a bright and social 6-year-old.

Jaden Velasquez has a congenital heart defect. He was born with it. The left side of his heart is severely underdeveloped. He has undergone numerous surgeries, yet he is a loving and happy 10-year-old, loves swimming, and is enjoying life.

Lakota Lockhart, with congenital central hypoventilation syndrome, a central nervous system disorder, causes him to not be able to breathe every time he tries to sleep.

I met these children in Tampa, Florida, at St. Joseph's Children's Hospital. They have the world-renowned Chronic-Complex Clinic that was started 16 years ago by a passionate pediatric doctor named Dr. Daniel Plasencia. The ACE Kids Act is modeled after the work being done at St. Joe's by the professionals at the Chronic-Complex Clinic and the 700 kids and families they currently serve and other children's hospitals all across the country.

The families have shared with us how difficult it is to get quality healthcare. It is oftentimes so fragmented and uncoordinated that they have to go from one office to another, and maybe the specialist is in another State. That is why we put together the ACE Kids Act, to help coordinate care in a single setting to help give these kids a better quality of life, and the ACE Kids Act will do just that.

The bill provides an incentive to States to establish health homes to better coordinate care for kids with medical complexities. It also directs HHS to provide guidance to States on best practices relating to providing care across State lines.

As so many of these families know all too well, coordinating care across State lines can be burdensome, so that is the aim of the ACE Kids Act: to lift that burden.

In addition to Congressman JOE BARTON, who has worked diligently for so many years to get this over the finish line, I thank all of the families with children with complex medical challenges. They deserve credit for moving this bill forward, coming to Congress, and helping to explain the importance of coordinating care.

I also thank Chairman WALDEN, Ranking Member PALLONE, Chairman BURGESS, and Ranking Member GREEN for their support, and our stalwart partners: Representatives HERRERA, BEUTLER, ESHOO, and REICHERT.

Thank you to America's children's hospitals, the March of Dimes, the American Academy of Pediatrics, and thanks to the professional staff at the committee for your dedication to these families, especially Rachel Pryor, Samantha Satchell, Tiffany Guarascio, and Josh Trent and Caleb Graff on the Republican side.

Additionally, this bill would not be where it is without the stellar work of Representative BARTON's staffers: Krista Rosenthal, Gable Brady, Sophie Trainor, and Jeannine Bender, and my LD, Elizabeth Brown.

Passage of this bill will be a gift to so many families during this holiday season and beyond, so I urge my colleagues here in the House and then over in the Senate to pass the ACE Kids Act contained within the IMPROVE Act.

Mr. BARTON. Mr. Speaker, before I yield to Dr. BURGESS, I echo what Congresswoman CASTOR just said about the staffs that have worked so hard. We couldn't have done this bill without all the individuals she just named.

I also thank her. When she said I have been tireless, she makes me look like a snail, and she is the rabbit working every day to make this possible.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS), the distinguished subcommittee chairman of the Health Subcommittee, my good friend.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 7217. This is a bipartisan Medicaid package that moves forward House priorities with responsible offsets. The Energy and Commerce Committee has been working to draft and perfect the legislation before us, and it is encouraging to see this reach the House floor.

Not only does this package include a new program to improve access to care, it reauthorizes important and effective programs from which Americans benefit each and every day. Title I of this package is based upon Representative JOE BARTON and Representative KATHY CASTOR's ACE Kids Act.

But I do want to assure families that have children with chronic illnesses that this legislation is intended to help them, if they want help, to obtain care coordination services. However, I also want to clarify that this legislation is not intended to limit families or their physicians from selecting their provider of medical services.

There is nothing in this legislation that restricts the child's family and their physician from deciding who is the best provider amongst those accepting Medicaid and qualified to offer the medical services. The Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services has provided assurances that current freedom-of-choice rules will apply to new care coordination activity.

As a doctor, I know that many children with chronic illnesses have a strong relationship with their doctors and with other members of their healthcare team. I want to make certain that this new law will help families coordinate their care without affecting the relationship that families have with their current medical care providers or with other providers in their communities from whom they may wish to receive their care.

This package also extends funding for the Money Follows the Person Dem-

onstration, an effort that was led by my Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Health Vice Chair BRETT GUTHRIE and Representative DEBBIE DINGELL from Michigan.

This Medicaid demonstration was established in 2005 for individuals in States across our Nation, including Texas, to receive long-term care services in their homes or other community settings rather than institutions such as nursing homes. The funding for this program has already expired, and a funding extension is already overdue. While it would have been nice to extend this for longer, it was essential to get this extension across the floor.

A 3-month extension for the protection for Medicaid recipients of home and community-based services against spousal impoverishment was also included. This effort was championed by Representatives FRED UPTON and DEBBIE DINGELL.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. BARTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 30 seconds to the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, in an effort to be fiscally responsible, this legislation includes several offsets to make this package, on net, a saver.

While it is largely a Medicaid package, there is one small but important Medicare provision. This provision excludes complex medical rehabilitative wheelchairs from Medicare's Competitive Acquisition Program. Currently, these chairs are not included, but because the statute did not provide the same clear exemption that power wheelchairs received, there is fear that this unintended omission can lead to them being included.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for the additional time, and I include my full statement in the RECORD.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 7217, a bipartisan Medicaid package that propels forward House priorities with responsible offsets. The Energy and Commerce Committee has been working diligently to draft and perfect the legislation before us, and it is encouraging to see this package reach the House floor. Not only does this package include an exciting new program to improve access to care, it reauthorizes important and effective programs from which Americans benefit each and every day.

Title I of this package is based upon Rep. JOE BARTON and Rep. KATHY CASTOR's ACE Kids Act. I want to ensure families who have children with chronic illnesses that this legislation is intended to help them, if they want help, to obtain care coordination services. However, I want to clarify that this legislation is not intended to limit families and their physicians from selecting the provider of medical services. There is nothing in this legislation that restricts the child's family, and their physician, from deciding who is the best provider among those accepting Medicaid and qualified to offer the medical services. CMS has provided assurances that current "freedom of choice" rules will apply to new care coordination activity. As a physician, I know that many children with chronic illnesses have a strong

relationship with their physician and with other providers. I want to make sure that this new law will help families coordinate their care without affecting the relationship that families have with their current medical care providers or with other providers in their communities from whom they may want to receive such care from."

This package also extends funding for the Money Follows the Person demonstration, an effort led by my E&C Subcommittee on Health Vice Chair, BRETT GUTHRIE, and Rep. DEBBIE DINGELL. This Medicaid demonstration, which was established in 2005, has enabled eligible individuals in states across our nation, including Texas, to receive long-term care services in their homes or other community settings, rather than in institutions such as nursing homes. The funding for this program has already expired, and a funding extension is already long overdue. While we would have like to extend the funding for longer, it was essential that we get an extension across the floor, even if a small one.

A 3-month extension for the Protection for Medicaid Recipients of Home and Community-Based Services Against Spousal Impoverishment program is also included. This effort was championed by Representatives FRED UPTON and DEBBIE DINGELL. Our seniors are among our most vulnerable citizens, and it is programs like this one that help to protect them from financial ruin.

In an effort to be fiscally responsible, this legislation includes several offsets that make this package on net a saver, which is something that Energy & Commerce insists upon and is critically important.

While this is largely a Medicaid Package, there is one small but important Medicare provision. This provision excludes manual Complex Rehabilitative wheelchairs from Medicare's Competitive Acquisition Program. Currently, these chairs are not included but because statute did not provide the same clear exemption that power wheelchairs received, there is fear this unintended omission could lead them to being included. This provision also delays the application of competitive bid pricing with CRT accessories used with a CRT manual chair for 18 months. This mirrors a similar protection last provided by Congress for power wheelchairs in the 21st Century Cures Act.

This package contains must-pass provisions that the Energy and Commerce Committee have long fought to pass. The provisions included in this legislation will improve access to care for Medicaid and Medicare beneficiaries, which is a laudable and important goal. Not only are these provisions imperative, but they are responsibly offset. I would particularly like to thank Energy and Commerce Committee staffer Caleb Graff, who has spent countless hours negotiating to get this package to the floor. I support this legislation, and I urge my fellow members and our friends in the Senate to do so as well.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. DINGELL), another member of the Energy and Commerce Committee.

□ 1300

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague, Ranking Member GENE GREEN, for yielding me the time.

I rise in support of H.R. 7217, the IMPROVE Act, and I thank Chairman WALDEN, Ranking Member FALLONE, and Representatives UPTON and GUTHRIE for their leadership in negotiating this important bill and for bringing it to the floor today.

I also thank and acknowledge my dear friend JOE BARTON for all of his leadership on the ACE Kids Act and congratulate him on his retirement. JOE has been a great friend to John and me over the years, and he will be dearly missed in the next Congress. Getting the IMPROVE Act signed into the law by the end of the year will be a fitting tribute to his decades of service in the Congress.

Ranking Member GREEN has also been critical to so many measures. Texas has had two valuable public servants.

Improving long-term care has been one of my top priorities since coming to Congress, and our system is completely broken. We need a broader overhaul of long-term care financing, and we also need to build off existing programs to make sure we are doing everything we can to ensure that we are enhancing the opportunities for independent living and supporting aging with dignity.

I am proud to have authored two important provisions in the IMPROVE Act that extend critical programs that are about to expire.

The first is a 3-month extension of the Money Follows the Person program. This very successful program provides grants to States to cover transitional services for individuals who voluntarily wish to leave a nursing home or other institution and transition to a community care setting. Money Follows the Person is a win for both beneficiaries and taxpayers, because the program has demonstrated significant savings over the years while bringing a real benefit to people's lives.

I am also pleased that legislation I authored with the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. UPTON), my good friend, the Protecting Married Seniors from Impoverishment Act, is also included in this bill. Extending spousal impoverishment protections for seniors in Medicaid is just common sense. Nobody should be forced to spend down all of their resources and have to go bankrupt just to get the care they need.

But these are only partial victories. Both programs are extended for 3 months. This is enough to keep these important programs alive for now, but all of us have a lot of work to do when we come back in the new year.

Let me be clear: I will continue to fight for long-term extensions of both programs in the next Congress, and I am confident that we can get that done with the Democratic majority. These programs clearly have bipartisan support, and they do so much good for so many people.

Once again, congratulations to my two dear friends from Texas for their leadership. I urge my colleagues to join me in support of this bill.

Mr. BARTON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Michigan for her kind words. I appreciate the nice gift I got yesterday from her and her husband, his new book, "The Dean." I look forward to reading it over Christmas.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. GUTHRIE).

Mr. GUTHRIE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of my legislation, the EMPOWER Care Act, which is included in H.R. 7217. It will ensure that Medicaid beneficiaries can receive the best long-term care possible in their communities or in their own homes.

The EMPOWER Care Act will extend the Medicaid Money Follows the Person program, which allows certain Medicaid beneficiaries, such as the elderly or individuals with disabilities, to transition from a healthcare facility to receiving care in their own homes. It does not force patients to leave a facility if they don't want to.

My home State of Kentucky is currently working to transition 50 individuals from healthcare facilities back into their own communities, empowering these individuals who have chosen to receive care in their community.

I thank my friend, Congresswoman DEBBIE DINGELL, for working with me on this bipartisan bill. I look forward to working with her to make the Money Follows the Person program permanent in the future.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Vermont (Mr. WELCH), another good member of our Energy and Commerce Committee.

Mr. WELCH. Mr. Speaker, I extend my congratulations as well to Mr. BARTON. It has been a pleasure working with you, sir. Thank you. Also, to Mr. GREEN, thank you very much for all your service. What an incredible career both of you have had.

My colleagues have talked about the underlying bill, and I am in agreement with what everyone has said.

I wanted to focus attention on an aspect of the bill that was sponsored by my colleague KURT SCHRADER and me, and that is a provision that addresses abusive practices of drug manufacturers who intentionally misrepresent their brand drugs as a generic in order to avoid providing a larger discount to the Medicaid program.

My colleagues, whatever our position on the best way to deliver healthcare, one thing we know is the case: It is too expensive. Whether it is taxpayers footing the bill, consumers, or employer-sponsored healthcare plans, it is too expensive. And one of the reasons is rip-off pharma practices.

This is a situation where, oftentimes, brand-name drugs try to keep generics off the market. But this is a case where a brand name tried to pretend they were a generic in order to get a lower price.

I will give an example. In 2016, Mylan misclassified the EpiPen as a generic

drug instead of a brand drug, and that allowed them to charge Medicaid a higher price for the drug. Mylan ended up paying \$465 million in a settlement to Health and Human Services, but the estimated malfeasance cost Medicaid—which is to say, taxpayers—more than \$1 billion.

Simultaneously, Mylan was raising its list price on EpiPen, which parents have to have for their kids who have an allergic reaction, from \$103 to \$608 over 7 years, a 500 percent increase.

Mylan is not alone. This practice of unrelenting drug price hikes is tried and true for manufacturers.

So I am very pleased that we have included in this bill an end to this abusive practice. We have to make healthcare affordable.

Representative SCHRADER and I, with this provision, are taking a small step. With the help of our Congress and the passage of this very good bill, we will be taking one more step in dealing with the cost crisis in our healthcare system.

Mr. BARTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. UPTON), the former full committee chairman and the current subcommittee chairman of the Energy Subcommittee.

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I stand in support of this legislation today.

I thank my colleague DEBBIE DINGELL. The two of us helped cosponsor the spousal impoverishment bill, which is part of this bill. There was no objection to that, and I am delighted that we are getting it done.

But I want to particularly take this time and just thank JOE BARTON for his leadership on the ACE Kids Act.

All of us come here to this House for particular causes that really grab our interest and attention. JOE BARTON has been so good—some would say like a dog to a Frisbee—in getting the ACE Kids Act to the House floor. This bill is going to save lives.

It was bipartisan. Frankly, I wanted to move it as part of the 21st Century Cures Act, but we didn't have a CBO score. We couldn't get it done.

We had plenty of meetings over the last couple of years on this, and here it is. We are going to get it done. Hopefully, the Senate is going to get it done, and we are going to get it to the President's desk.

This is probably the last time that JOE BARTON is actually managing a bill on the House floor, and it is appropriate that this is his bill, that it is his engine that is moving this train that really is going to make a difference for families across the country. So I say thank you, JOE BARTON.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. SCHRADER), a colleague from our committee.

Mr. SCHRADER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 7217, the IMPROVE Act.

I appreciate all the work that has been done on this bill over the years.

From improving care for kids with complex medical conditions to strengthening community-based, long-term care services for the disabled community, there is a lot to support in this bill.

I want to highlight one portion of the bill that my colleague and good friend PETER WELCH alluded to a few moments ago. A few years ago, families were shocked when the drug company Mylan raised the price on EpiPen, a common generic drug used to treat allergies in emergency situations, by more than 400 percent.

While patients were facing this sticker shock for a drug necessary to keep them alive, investigators in the Department of Health and Human Services and in our own House and Senate committees were doing some digging of our own.

In the course of their investigation, they found that not only was the manufacturer of EpiPen ripping off patients and their families, they were ripping off the American taxpayer, too. By misclassifying their drug as a generic when it was actually a brand drug, Medicaid was being overcharged for years.

Further investigations by HHS found that hundreds of other drugs were also misclassified, and Medicaid was overcharged by more than \$1 billion in the 4 years between 2012 and 2016. By passing this bill today, we can put an end to this waste and abuse in our Medicaid system.

Under this bill, if a drug company knowingly misclassifies their brand drug as a generic, CMS will have the power to fine that drug company double the normal rebate they would have had to pay the government. The bill strengthens CMS and congressional oversight of the program to prevent this from ever happening again.

I thank Mr. WELCH, and Senators WYDEN and GRASSLEY, for their active work on this one, as well as Mr. BARTON, Mr. GREEN, Chairman WALDEN, and Mr. PALLONE for including it in this great reform package.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all Members to support the bill.

Mr. BARTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS).

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 7217, the IMPROVE Act, which includes several important Medicaid provisions, including the ACE Kids Act. I have been a cosponsor of the ACE Kids Act since its first introduction.

Mr. Speaker, in the Tampa area, we have St. Joseph's Children's Hospital. They run a Chronic-Complex Clinic for children. This medical home is a great model that the ACE Kids Act is trying to build on.

This integrated care model, where the care is built around the needs of the patient, has made a huge difference in the lives of so many children. I am excited that, finally, we have reached the finish line on the ACE Kids Act.

I thank former full committee chairman and also, I guess—well, I am not sure, but he is a great guy. Yes, he is vice chairman of the committee. I thank him for all of his hard work on the ACE Kids and the IMPROVE Acts. I also thank my colleague KATHY CASTOR for being relentless. The two of them are relentless on behalf of our children.

I thank all the children that came up and advocated for this bill as well.

So, in any case, we are going to get this done. We couldn't do it without these two, so thank you very much.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, how much time do I have left?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas (Mr. GREEN) has 4½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from Texas (Mr. BARTON) has 6½ minutes remaining.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I think this is how we need to work together, and this is a good example of not only inter-State but also inter-party, to be able to solve these three problems that this bill corrects. I hope the next Congress will continue that effort of Republicans and Democrats talking to each other, Texans talking to Oklahomans, which is sometimes tough, to work together for the people we represent.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BARTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CARTER), a strong supporter.

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the IMPROVE Act. My colleagues on the Energy and Commerce Committee and I have been working to address a number of the issues that culminated under this legislation.

For instance, the ACE Kids Act, an effort championed by Representative BARTON, would make strides in addressing the challenges of children with medically complex conditions.

It sets standards for health home qualifications, so as to ensure better coordinated care for children in need.

It updates and streamlines the coordinated care provisions for health homes for children, so that they will have the system and framework in place to properly respond and work with health systems and professionals.

Additionally, it overhauls the data collection requirements for providers and updates the State reporting requirements, so as to maintain a more comprehensive network of care for children with complex medical conditions.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation is a culmination of a lot of hard work by my colleagues, particularly Representative BARTON and the staff of the Energy and Commerce Committee, and represents a commonsense step forward in assisting needy children. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

□ 1315

Mr. BARTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER), one of the tireless supporters of this bill from day one, who herself has a medically complex special needs child, who went through the nightmare of having to create her own network for her child, and who has been a cosponsor since day one.

Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman BARTON for his leadership on this.

I am so excited that we are here today to celebrate this. I have spent months of my life in a NICU for my own medically complex child, and I have stood bedside-to-bedside with many a family as they have faced the reality of having a sick kid and they have hit hard economic times. I can put too many faces and names to the reality that little kiddos often can't get the care they need, and today we are taking a step to fix it. I am so excited about this.

One in 25 children in the U.S. is medically complex. That means they have diagnoses like cancer or end-stage renal disease or congenital heart disease or other diagnoses that require consistent critical medical care. They need the expertise.

Out of those 3 million medically complex kiddos, 2 million of them rely on Medicaid, which means what we do with Medicaid significantly impacts them.

They are also less expensive than the other folks on Medicaid, so we can go a long way to make sure of getting them care.

So in order to enhance the critical care for these 2 million kiddos, the ACE Kids Act would create networks, anchored by children's hospitals, to help coordinate care, allowing families to seamlessly pursue the best doctors and facilities, even if it takes them out of State, and that is the key.

Right now under Medicaid, you can get stuck in your ZIP Code. So maybe there is a specialist for your child's rare disease in another State. Well, if you are on Medicaid, you are limited.

We are breaking open that limitation today to allow those kiddos to cross State lines and pursue the best doctors regardless of where they are. This just makes sense.

Here is the great thing: the efficiency and the better coordination is going to improve outcomes, number one, that is the best thing. But the next best thing is this is even going to save money, because we are not going to build that expertise in every single community, we are going to get those kids where they need to go.

It is really going to cut down on duplication and it is going to increase efficiency and it is going to be the right thing. So this is a win-win proposition. I am so excited about this.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote "yes."



And, again, Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman and Ms. CASTOR for their leadership here.

Mr. BARTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New York (Mr. ZELDIN).

Mr. ZELDIN. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. BARTON for yielding the time.

Mr. Speaker, today I rise to speak in support of language that was added to the IMPROVE Act that would protect access to critical equipment for individuals with disabilities.

In November of 2014, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services issued a rule stating that accessories used on complex rehabilitative wheelchairs would no longer be part of the fixed fee schedule and would be subject to competitive bidding pricing, decreasing access to customized wheelchairs and accessories relied on by adults and children with disabilities.

My language included in this legislation will include a commonsense clarification to ensure those in the Medicare Program do not have to go through the difficulty of adjusting to the new rules and pricing arbitrarily set by CMS. This will ensure that they have reliable and consistent access to the equipment they need.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to protect those with disabilities and their access to the resources they rely on.

Mr. BARTON. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire how much time I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas has 2½ minutes remaining.

Mr. BARTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, before I close, I want to set the record straight on one thing. There has been a report that this bill, the ACE Kids Act, expands Medicaid. That is factually incorrect.

The children that qualify for the ACE Kids Act are already covered by Medicaid.

There is no expansion. We do not create a new program. We do not expand an existing program. We do not change the definitions.

We simply make it possible, if this bill becomes law, for parents of children that qualify and that are already covered under Medicaid, they can choose a healthcare home for their child, and that healthcare home can cross State lines. But as Dr. BURGESS pointed out, it is not coercive. The States don't have to participate in the program, the families don't have to participate in the program. It is all voluntary. But the pilot programs that have been done on this model, they save money and they give better care. It has been proven.

CBO has scored this over time that it saves money, but we put pay-fors in the bill. If it did cost some extra money, it would be paid for. There is a 2-quarter, 6-month increase in the FMAP, the Federal matching that the Federal Government gives to States

that choose to participate. I think it is about 15 percent extra money for 6 months. That is the only cost.

Now, to close, I am going to read a list, and Congresswoman CASTOR read a lot of these, but these are the national groups that support our bill: the Adult Congenital Heart Association, America's Essential Hospitals, American Academy of Pediatrics, American Association of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry, American Board of Pediatrics, American College of Cardiology, American College of Surgeons, American Heart Association, American Psychological Association, American Society of Echocardiography, American Thoracic Society, Amicus Therapeutics, Association of American Medical Colleges, Association of Medical School Pediatric Department Chairs, Autism Society, Autism Speaks, ChildServe, Children's Cause for Cancer Advocacy, Children's Hospital Association, Epilepsy Foundation, Family Voices, Foundation to Eradicate Duchenne, International Pediatric Rehabilitation Collaborative, March of Dimes, Mended Little Hearts, MomsRising, National Association for Children's Behavioral Health. There are about seven or ten more.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the staff, especially Krista Rosenthal, Jeannine Bender, committee staff Caleb Graff, Josh Trent, and Ryan Long. And, again, I thank KATHY CASTOR and GENE GREEN.

Mr. Speaker, this has been a bipartisan effort. I ask for a strong "yea" vote.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I believe it is important to make very clear with this legislation that CMS should not waive any Medicaid state plan requirements that would limit the freedom to choose qualified Medicaid providers who can provide medical services to children with chronic conditions. Nothing in this bill modifies section 1902(a)(23) of the Social Security Act—related to freedom of choice requirements. Children and their families or guardians retain the right to elect care from a provider or supplier who is qualified and eligible to receive Medicaid payment for the services. It is the intent of this legislation to permit and guarantee the family, in consultation with their physician, in all instances, to be permitted to select the best provider/supplier who can meet the patient's needs. While I support this legislation to provide care coordination for these children, the ultimate choice of the who will provide direct medical services must remain with the family.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BARTON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 7217.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. BARTON. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further pro-

ceedings on this motion will be postponed.

# SICKLE CELL DISEASE AND OTHER HERITABLE BLOOD DISORDERS RESEARCH, SURVEILLANCE, PREVENTION, AND TREATMENT ACT OF 2018

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 2465) to amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize a sickle cell disease prevention and treatment demonstration program and to provide for sickle cell disease research, surveillance, prevention, and treatment.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 2465

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

## SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Sickle Cell Disease and Other Heritable Blood Disorders Research, Surveillance, Prevention, and Treatment Act of 2018".

## SEC. 2. DATA COLLECTION ON CERTAIN BLOOD DISORDERS.

Part A of title XI of the Public Health Service Act is amended by inserting after section 1105 (42 U.S.C. 300b-4) the following:

"SEC. 1106. SICKLE CELL DISEASE AND OTHER HERITABLE BLOOD DISORDERS RESEARCH, SURVEILLANCE, PREVENTION, AND TREATMENT.

"(a) GRANTS.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may award grants related to heritable blood disorders, including sickle cell disease, for one or more of the following purposes:

"(A) To collect and maintain data on such diseases and conditions, including subtypes as applicable, and their associated health outcomes and complications, including for the purpose of—

"(i) improving national incidence and prevalence data;

"(ii) identifying health disparities, including the geographic distribution, related to such diseases and conditions;

"(iii) assessing the utilization of therapies and strategies to prevent complications; and

"(iv) evaluating the effects of genetic, environmental, behavioral, and other risk factors that may affect such individuals.

"(B) To conduct public health activities with respect to such conditions, which may include—

"(i) developing strategies to improve health outcomes and access to quality health care for the screening for, and treatment and management of, such diseases and conditions, including through public-private partnerships;

"(ii) providing support to community-based organizations and State and local health departments in conducting education and training activities for patients, communities, and health care providers concerning such diseases and conditions;

"(iii) supporting State health departments and regional laboratories, including through training, in testing to identify such diseases and conditions, including specific forms of sickle cell disease, in individuals of all ages; and

"(iv) the identification and evaluation of best practices for treatment of such diseases and conditions, and prevention and management of their related complications.

"(2) POPULATION INCLUDED.—The Secretary shall, to the extent practicable, award grants



under this subsection to eligible entities across the United States to improve data on the incidence and prevalence of heritable blood disorders, including sickle cell disease, and the geographic distribution of such diseases and conditions.

“(3) APPLICATION.—To seek a grant under this subsection, an eligible entity shall submit an application to the Secretary at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Secretary may require.

“(4) PRIORITY.—In awarding grants under this subsection, the Secretary may give priority, as appropriate, to eligible entities that have a relationship with a community-based organization that has experience in, or is capable of, providing services to individuals with heritable blood disorders, including sickle cell disease.

“(5) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—In this subsection, the term ‘eligible entity’ includes the 50 States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the United States Virgin Islands, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, American Samoa, Guam, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of Marshall Islands, the Republic of Palau, Indian tribes, a State or local health department, an institution of higher education, or a nonprofit entity with appropriate experience to conduct the activities under this subsection.”

### SEC. 3. SICKLE CELL DISEASE PREVENTION AND TREATMENT.

(a) REAUTHORIZATION.—Section 712(c) of the American Jobs Creation Act of 2004 (Public Law 108-357; 42 U.S.C. 300b-1 note) is amended—

(1) by striking “Sickle Cell Disease” each place it appears and inserting “sickle cell disease”;

(2) in paragraph (1)(A), by striking “shall conduct a demonstration program by making grants to up to 40 eligible entities for each fiscal year in which the program is conducted under this section for the purpose of developing and establishing systemic mechanisms to improve the prevention and treatment of Sickle Cell Disease” and inserting “shall continue efforts, including by awarding grants, to develop or establish mechanisms to improve the treatment of sickle cell disease, and to improve the prevention and treatment of complications of sickle cell disease, in populations with a high proportion of individuals with sickle cell disease”;

(3) in paragraph (1)(B)—

(A) by striking clause (ii) (relating to priority); and

(B) by striking “GRANT AWARD REQUIREMENTS” and all that follows through “The Administrator shall” and inserting “GEOGRAPHIC DIVERSITY.—The Administrator shall”;

(4) in paragraph (2), by adding the following new subparagraph at the end:

“(E) To provide or coordinate services for adolescents with sickle cell disease making the transition to adult health care.”; and

(5) in paragraph (6), by striking “\$10,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2005 through 2009” and inserting “\$4,455,000 for each of fiscal years 2019 through 2023”.

(b) TECHNICAL CHANGES.—Subsection (c) of section 712 of the American Jobs Creation Act of 2004 (Public Law 108-357; 42 U.S.C. 300b-1 note), as amended by subsection (a), is—

(1) transferred to the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 201 et seq.);

(2) redesignated as subsection (b); and

(3) inserted at the end of section 1106 of such Act, as added by section 2 of this Act.

### SEC. 4. SENSE OF THE SENATE.

It is the Sense of the Senate that further research should be undertaken to expand the understanding of the causes of, and to find

cures for, heritable blood disorders, including sickle cell disease.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GENE GREEN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS).

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous materials in the RECORD on the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak in support of S. 2465, the Sickle Cell Disease and Other Heritable Blood Disorders Research, Surveillance, Prevention, and Treatment Act of 2018.

The policy included in this legislation is something on which Congress has been working towards for years, as improvements for individuals with sickle cell have largely remained stagnant.

This text is similar to H.R. 2410, which was introduced by Representative DANNY DAVIS and myself and passed this Chamber unanimously in February.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Representative DAVIS, in addition to Senator TIM SCOTT and Senator CORY BOOKER for working with me on this important policy.

Since the passage of the Sickle Cell Anemia Control Act of 1972, the first law to address sickle cell, individuals living with this disease have seen a substantial drop in mortality rates; however, there remains work to be done.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, there are approximately 100,000 individuals in the United States with sickle cell. Additionally, the disease occurs in 1 in 365 African American births, and in 1 in 13 African American births, the newborn has the sickle cell trait.

In the 1990s, the Food and Drug Administration approved hydroxyurea, which stimulates the body to resume production of fetal hemoglobin to treat sickle cell disease.

Last year the Food and Drug Administration approved Endari, which was the first new approved treatment in over 20 years.

I met with Dr. Janet Woodcock and Dr. Peter Marks to learn more about why the approvals have taken such a long time.

This bill would further our commitment to helping those with sickle cell by both continuing the Health Resources and Service Administration's Sickle Cell Disease Prevention and Treatment Demonstration Program and by allowing the Centers for Disease

Control and Prevention to conduct surveillance of the disease and other heritable blood disorders.

The CDC's surveillance activity will allow for identification of health disparities, analysis of utilization of existing therapies, and evaluation of genetic, environmental, behavioral, and other risk factors.

Having worked with patients with sickle cell disease while at Parkland Hospital, I have seen firsthand the real consequences that this disease can have on people.

This bill provides an important step forward in ensuring that we have the resources to better understand this illness and maintain access for services for those affected by the disease.

While sickle cell disease has been addressed in bills like the 21st Century Cures Act, among other rare diseases, it has been a long time since this illness was substantially addressed in legislation.

The future of sickle cell disease treatment is bright if we pass this legislation and send it to President Trump. Better understanding of the landscape of sickle cell disease across the Nation and investing in new research for new treatments holds much promise for individuals and families who spend every day managing their disease.

Think of the children who have been unable to play or had to quit competing, or who have had to struggle through school because they are frequently absent due to the complications or pain from their underlying sickle cell illness.

The support this bill provides will enable public-private partnerships to take the reins to fight this disease head-on in communities across the country.

Mr. Speaker, I urge Members to support this legislation so we can send it promptly to the President's desk.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S. 2465, the Sickle Cell Disease and Other Heritable Blood Disorders Research, Surveillance, Prevention, and Treatment Act.

This legislation will reauthorize the Sickle Cell Disease Treatment Demonstration Program at HRSA. This program enhances the prevention and treatment of sickle cell through coordination of service delivery, genetic counseling, testing, training of health professionals, and other related efforts.

The program is particularly important since individuals with sickle cell disease need comprehensive treatment throughout their lives in order to manage their symptoms and prevent their disease from worsening.

Over 100,000 Americans are living with sickle cell disease today. Each will need access to robust network providers with the knowledge and skills to treat this condition.

This is especially important now, for far too many individuals with sickle cell are unable to get the care they need, particularly those who present at emergency departments with intense pain associated with a sickle cell crisis.

In addition to reauthorizing that program, this bill would expand the activities related to sickle cell and other heritable blood disorders by strengthening surveillance and other public health efforts as well as encouraging more research into these health conditions.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Representative DANNY DAVIS, Representative G.K. BUTTERFIELD, and Representative BURGESS for their leadership on this issue.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support S. 2465, which will allow HHS to invest critical resources into research, surveillance, and public health initiatives of sickle cell disease as well as other heritable blood disorders. These investments will help bolster the sickle cell workforce and improve treatments for sickle cell patients of all ages.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1330

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CARTER).

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of S. 2465, the Sickle Cell Disease and Other Heritable Blood Disorders Research, Surveillance, Prevention, and Treatment Act.

This legislation, which has been sponsored by Senator SCOTT, makes important updates to statute so as to better help our medical professionals understand and treat sickle cell and other blood disorders.

Sickle cell is a terrible disease, inflicting extremely difficult effects on those who have this condition. Today's legislation will allow us to move forward and combat this and other heritable blood disorders so that we can provide a better quality of life to those who suffer from them.

We are very fortunate to have some world-class treatment options in my home State of Georgia at health systems like Emory University. They are doing incredible work in treating and understanding this disease so that we can improve the lives of all who suffer from these forms of diseases.

This legislation supports State health departments, establishes best practices, improves data collection efforts, and develops strategies that will hopefully allow us to eventually fully address these diseases.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues for their work on this, and I urge them to support this legislation.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

I want to point out, Mr. Speaker, that this bill we are passing today has already passed the Senate. While we did work on a similar bill well over a year ago, this bill has passed the Senate. With our passage today, this bill goes down the street to the White House for signature to become law: the first major sickle cell bill to be enacted in quite some time.

It is a banner day for this institution that we are providing this help to citizens, fundamentally, on this very crucial problem that affects so many of our fellow citizens.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all Members to vote in favor of this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my support for H.R. 2410, the Sickle Cell Disease Research, Surveillance, Prevention, and Treatment Act of 2017, that passed the U.S. House of Representatives on February 26, 2018. Today, the House of Representatives passed S. 2465, which is the Senate-amended version of H.R. 2410. As a co-sponsor of H.R. 2410 and the immediate past Chair of the Congressional Black Caucus, I rise to clarify the Congressional intent of this important legislation.

I commend my friends, Representative DANNY DAVIS from Illinois and Representative MICHAEL BURGESS from Texas, for introducing H.R. 2410. I have been a longtime advocate for those with sickle cell disease and I am a proud co-sponsor of the bill in this Congress and in previous Congresses.

There are approximately forty-four hundred people with sickle cell disease in my home state of North Carolina. My hope is that someday there will be none. Sixty-five percent of individuals with sickle cell disease in North Carolina have at least one emergency room visit per year—that is no way to live. We should do all we can to help improve patients' lives, advance treatment, and find a cure.

That is why we must reauthorize the Sickle Cell Disease Treatment Demonstration Program to enable the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services to support research that will increase our understanding of sickle cell disease, and create a grant program to study the prevalence of sickle cell and identify ways to prevent and treat sickle cell disease effectively.

S. 2465 makes changes to the House-approved language that warrant clarification. Notably, Sec. 2 of S. 2465 enables the awarding of grants related to heritable blood disorders, including sickle cell disease, for the purposes of research, surveillance, prevention, and treatment. It is imperative to stress that the intent of this language is to require that those grants be awarded for sickle cell disease research, surveillance, prevention, and treatment, at minimum. It is not the intent of the language for grants to be awarded related to other heritable blood disorders (e.g. hemophilia) instead of or in lieu of sickle cell disease.

Finally, Sec. 3 of S. 2465, reauthorizing the Sickle Cell Disease Treatment Demonstration Program, is intended to provide awards related only to sickle cell disease. It is not the intent of the legislation to allocate awards made under Sec. 3 for other heritable diseases.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation is intended to provide critical funding to assist those with sickle cell disease, and any awards made under Sec. 2 or Sec. 3 of this bill must be used for sickle cell disease response.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 2465.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### PREMATURITY RESEARCH EXPANSION AND EDUCATION FOR MOTHERS WHO DELIVER INFANTS EARLY REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2018

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 3029) to revise and extend the Prematurity Research Expansion and Education for Mothers who deliver Infants Early Act (PREEMIE Act).

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 3029

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

#### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Prematurity Research Expansion and Education for Mothers who deliver Infants Early Reauthorization Act of 2018” or the “PREEMIE Reauthorization Act of 2018”.

#### SEC. 2. RESEARCH RELATING TO PRETERM LABOR AND DELIVERY AND THE CARE, TREATMENT, AND OUTCOMES OF PRETERM AND LOW BIRTH-WEIGHT INFANTS.

Section 2 of the Prematurity Research Expansion and Education for Mothers who deliver Infants Early Act (42 U.S.C. 247b–4f) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (1)(A), by striking “clinical, biological, social, environmental, genetic, and behavioral factors relating” and inserting “factors relating to prematurity, such as clinical, biological, social, environmental, genetic, and behavioral factors, and other determinants that contribute to health disparities and are related”; and

(B) in paragraph (2), by striking “concerning the progress and any results of studies conducted under paragraph (1)” and inserting “regarding activities and studies conducted under paragraph (1), including any applicable analyses of preterm birth. Such report shall be posted on the Internet website of the Department of Health and Human Services.”;

(2) by striking subsection (c) and inserting the following:

“(c) PREGNANCY RISK ASSESSMENT MONITORING SURVEY.—The Secretary of Health and Human Services, acting through the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, shall—

“(1) continue systems for the collection of maternal-infant clinical and biomedical information, including electronic health records, electronic databases, and biobanks, to link with the Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS) and other epidemiological studies of prematurity in order to track, to the extent practicable, all pregnancy outcomes and prevent preterm birth; and

“(2) provide technical assistance, as appropriate, to support States in improving the collection of information pursuant to this subsection.”; and

(3) in subsection (e), by striking “except for subsection (c), \$1,880,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018” and inserting “\$2,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2019 through 2023”.

### SEC. 3. PUBLIC AND HEALTH CARE PROVIDER EDUCATION AND SUPPORT SERVICES.

Section 399Q of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 280g-5) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) by striking “conduct demonstration projects” and inserting “conduct activities, which may include demonstration projects”; and

(B) by striking “for babies born preterm” and inserting “mothers of infants born preterm, and infants born preterm, as appropriate”; and

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking “under the demonstration project”; and

(B) in paragraph (1)—

(i) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking “programs to test and evaluate various strategies to provide” and inserting “programs, including those to test and evaluate strategies, which, in collaboration with States, localities, tribes, and community organizations, support the provision of”; and

(ii) by redesignating subparagraphs (B) through (F) as subparagraphs (C) through (G), respectively;

(iii) by inserting after subparagraph (A), the following:

“(B) evidence-based strategies to prevent preterm birth and associated outcomes.”;

(iv) in subparagraph (C), as so redesignated, by inserting “, and the risks of non-medically indicated deliveries before full term” before the semicolon;

(v) in subparagraph (D), as so redesignated—

(I) in clause (ii), by inserting “intake” before the semicolon;

(II) in clause (iii), by striking “and” at the end;

(III) by redesignating clause (iv) as clause (vii); and

(IV) by inserting after clause (iii), the following:

“(iv) screening for and treatment of substance use disorders;

“(v) screening for and treatment of maternal depression;

“(vi) maternal immunization; and”;

(vi) in subparagraph (E), as so redesignated, by adding “and” after the semicolon;

(vii) in subparagraph (F), as so redesignated, by striking “; and” and inserting a period; and

(viii) by striking subparagraph (G), as so redesignated; and

(C) in paragraph (2), by inserting “, as well as prevention of a future preterm birth” before the semicolon.

### SEC. 4. ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON MATERNAL AND INFANT HEALTH.

Section 104(b) of the PREEMIE Reauthorization Act (42 U.S.C. 247b-4f note) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2)—

(A) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking “and recommendations to the Secretary concerning the following activities” and inserting “, recommendations, or information to the Secretary as may be necessary to improve activities and programs to reduce severe maternal morbidity, maternal mortality, infant mortality, and preterm birth, which may include rec-

ommendations, advice, or information related to the following”;

(B) in subparagraph (A), by striking “and improving the health status of pregnant women and infants” and inserting “, preterm birth, and improving the health status of pregnant women and infants, and information on cost-effectiveness and outcomes of such programs”;

(C) in subparagraph (C), by striking “Implementation of the” and inserting “The”; and

(D) by striking subparagraph (D) and inserting the following:

“(D) Implementation of Healthy People objectives related to maternal and infant health.

“(E) Strategies to reduce racial, ethnic, geographic, and other health disparities in birth outcomes, including by increasing awareness of Federal programs related to appropriate access to, or information regarding, prenatal care to address risk factors for preterm labor and delivery.

“(F) Strategies, including the implementation of such strategies, to address gaps in Federal research, programs, and education efforts related to the prevention of severe maternal morbidity, maternal mortality, infant mortality, and other adverse birth outcomes.”;

(2) by striking paragraph (3) and redesignating paragraph (4) as paragraph (3); and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(4) BIENNIAL REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of the PREEMIE Reauthorization Act of 2018, and every 2 years thereafter, the Advisory Committee shall—

“(A) publish a report summarizing activities and recommendations of the Advisory Committee since the publication of the previous report;

“(B) submit such report to the Secretary and the appropriate Committees of Congress; and

“(C) post such report on the Internet website of the Department of Health and Human Services.”.

### SEC. 5. INTERAGENCY WORKING GROUP.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Health and Human Services, in collaboration with other departments, as appropriate, may establish an interagency working group in order to improve coordination of programs and activities to prevent preterm birth, infant mortality, and related adverse birth outcomes.

(b) DUTIES.—The working group established under subsection (a) shall—

(1) identify gaps, unnecessary duplication, and opportunities for improved coordination in Federal programs and activities related to preterm birth and infant mortality;

(2) assess the extent to which the goals and metrics of relevant programs and activities within the Department of Health and Human Services, and, as applicable, those in other departments, are aligned; and

(3) assess the extent to which such programs are coordinated across agencies within such Department; and

(4) make specific recommendations, as applicable, to reduce or minimize gaps and unnecessary duplication, and improve coordination of goals, programs, and activities across agencies within such Department.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date on which the working group is established under subsection (a), the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall submit to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate and the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives a report summarizing the findings of the working group under subsection (b) and the specific rec-

ommendations to improve Federal programs at the Department of Health and Human Services under subsection (b)(4).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GENE GREEN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous materials in the RECORD on the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S. 3029, the PREEMIE Reauthorization Act of 2018. This bill passed the Senate with robust bipartisan support, and I expect it will do the same in this Chamber.

This bill reauthorizes a program that is vital to the health and well-being of premature babies and their mothers. It is fitting that we have called this legislation to the floor following Prematurity Awareness Month, which took place the month of November.

While we are taking up the Senate bill, which was led by the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee, Chairman LAMAR ALEXANDER and Senator MICHAEL BENNET, I would like to thank our House champions of this legislation, Representative ANNA ESHOO and Representative LEONARD LANCE. I am pleased that we were able to rally bicameral, bipartisan support around improving the health of premature infants.

Preterm and low birth weight, combined, make up the second leading cause of infant death following birth defects. This legislation will increase research relating to preterm labor and delivery and the care, treatment, and outcomes of preterm and low birth-weight infants.

Preemies and low birthweight infants are at risk for various health challenges and disabilities, and we still have much to learn about factors relating to prematurity. This bill allows for continued collection of maternal-infant clinical and biomedical information in conjunction with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System. Such data collection and surveillance will allow the CDC, and national, State, and local health officials to have a better picture of what prematurity, including its causes and impacts, looks like in our country.

This legislation also requires the Advisory Committee on Maternal and Infant Health to publicly publish and submit to Congress a report on its activities and recommendations. That advisory committee has been tasked with

developing strategies to address gaps in Federal research, programs, and education efforts related to the prevention of severe maternal morbidity, maternal mortality, infant mortality, and other adverse birth outcomes. This ties nicely into H.R. 1318, the Preventing Maternal Deaths Act, which will also be on the floor of this House this afternoon.

Additionally, this legislation establishes an interagency working group, directing the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services to collaborate with other departments to improve coordination of programs and activities to prevent preterm birth, infant mortality, and related adverse birth outcomes. The working group is required to submit a report to the House Committee on Energy and Commerce and the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support S. 3029, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S. 3029, the Prematurity Research Expansion and Education for Mothers Who Deliver Infants Early, or PREEMIE, Reauthorization Act of 2018.

Over the past 3 years, the preterm birth rate in the United States worsened, placing more mothers and babies at risk. Such preterm births are the largest contributors to infant death in the United States and, for those infants who survive, a major cause of long-term health problems throughout their lives.

While this preterm rate in the U.S. is 9.93 percent, mothers and infants in Texas are at even greater risk. In fact, in 2017, the most recent year for which data is available, 10.6 percent of live births were born preterm. The percentage is even greater for African American mothers and infants at 13.6 percent, a rate that is 39 percent higher than the rate among all women in Texas.

This legislation would help combat those negative trends by continuing support for federally supported activities that prevent premature births, such as research and programs at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, as well as activities that promote healthy pregnancies and preventing preterm birth at the Health Resources and Services Administration.

This reauthorization legislation also requires such efforts to address the determinants that contribute to the health disparities in preterm birth.

I thank Representative ESHOO and Representative LANCE for their leadership on this issue.

I encourage my colleagues to support S. 6085 to extend and expand Federal efforts to prevent and address preterm birth.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. LANCE), one of the authors of this legislation.

Mr. LANCE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for his leadership on this issue.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in very strong support of the PREEMIE Reauthorization Act. My partner in this effort over several years has been the distinguished Congresswoman from California, ANNA ESHOO.

There may be no greater calling than to help infants thrive in the early days of their lives. Working together and getting this legislation signed into law is a matter of essential importance. This is good and important work and the kind of positive difference Federal efforts can make in the lives of many.

We have a tremendous partner in the March of Dimes. For many families, the March of Dimes and its network and advocates across the country are beacons of light at dark moments. I thank the March of Dimes and their supporters for being the great defenders and fighters for mothers and for their infants.

This legislation will keep up the momentum to help pregnant women. We need to reauthorize the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's research and data collection efforts and improve the Health Resources and Services Administration. Doctors and the public need to have the best information and care options available, and this bill does that.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. ESHOO), the cosponsor of this bill and a member of the Energy and Commerce Committee and the Health Subcommittee.

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague and my classmate, Mr. GREEN, for his distinguished service here in the House. He is retiring, and I want to salute him.

I also want to salute my partner in this effort, Mr. LANCE from New Jersey. He is going to be missed at the committee and missed in the House. I think he has always been value added to the Congress, and we all wish him well.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this bipartisan legislation. The shorthand for it is the PREEMIE Act. It is legislation that I introduced with Congressman LANCE to expand research, education, and the prevention of preterm birth.

Preterm birth, or birth before 37 weeks of pregnancy, is the leading cause of newborn mortality and the second leading cause of infant mortality in our country. In 2016, over 388,000 infants were born too early; and, every year, over 20,000 babies in the United States will die before their first birthday, many of them from complications of preterm birth.

In addition to being the leading cause of newborn death, premature birth can

cause a lifetime of health challenges and intellectual disabilities for children who survive.

In addition to the emotional and physical toll of prematurity, there are significant healthcare costs to families, medical systems, and our overall economy. A report by the Institute of Medicine found the cost associated with preterm birth in the United States was \$26.2 billion annually—that is a staggering amount of money—or \$51,600 per infant born preterm. While employers, private insurers, and individuals bear about half the costs of healthcare for these infants, 40 percent of this amount is paid for by Medicaid.

Moms and babies face higher risks than ever before. After the statistics decreasing for over a decade, which is exactly what we wanted them to do, for the third year in a row now the preterm birth rate in our country has worsened, so the passing of this legislation has come at the right time.

I am proud of the work that we have done on this Reauthorization Act and that it is going to head to the President for his signature, and I am proud to have authored the original PREEMIE Act with Congressman FRED UPTON in 2006.

This updated reauthorization builds on the important investments that have been made, and we add to them. I think that is the most important thing to say.

With the incidence of preterm birth increasing across the United States, we need to do everything that we can for the mothers and for the newborns so that we improve the outcomes for them because it is their lives.

The PREEMIE Act did pass the Senate unanimously on September 12, and I have every confidence that the House is going to double the record.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding to me and, again, pay tribute to him for his exceptional service here in the House.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I have no additional speakers, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS).

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas for yielding.

I also want to commend the Subcommittee on Health and the Committee on Energy and Commerce for its outstanding work under the leadership of Dr. BURGESS.

□ 1345

Mr. Speaker, I am going to speak about sickle cell, a bill that has been worked on and passed. Of course, sickle cell disease is an inherited blood disorder characterized by affected red blood cells that mutate into the shape of a crescent or sickle. And as such, these cells are unable to pass through small blood vessels. It is a recessive-genetic condition that occurs when a

child inherits two sickle cell genes, or traits, from each parent.

The consequences and complications of this disease are extreme. The Sickle Cell Disease Association of America, whom we have worked with for many years on this legislation, have studied and reported that common complications with this disease include early childhood death from infection; stroke in young children and adults; lung problems similar to pneumonia; chronic damage to organs, including the kidney, leading to kidney failure; damage to the lungs, causing pulmonary hypertension; and severe, painful episodes. In fact, pain episode are a hallmark of sickle cell disease.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that we are at this juncture in passing S. 2465, a bill designed to help improve, treat, prevent, and conduct research on sickle cell disease and to include other blood diseases for surveillance and data collection.

While this legislation includes other blood diseases, its original intent and its continuing focus is to put major emphasis on sickle cell disease and issues related to it.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleagues, Representative MICHAEL BURGESS, and Representative G.K. BUTTERFIELD, Senator TIM SCOTT, and Senator CORY BOOKER for their tireless support and efforts to bring this bipartisan and bicameral bill to fruition.

There has been a great deal of back and forth on this bill. Therefore, I want to thank, again, Dr. BURGESS, the chief Republican cosponsor and advocate. I want to commend the leadership on the Committee on Energy and Commerce, Chairman GREG WALDEN and Ranking Member FRANK PALLONE.

Mr. Speaker, I want to highlight the work of my colleague and friend, Representative G.K. BUTTERFIELD, who carried the bill for this legislation in the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

Our staffs did outstanding work, and I commend all of them, especially my Health Subcommittee staffer, Dr. Caleb Gilchrist. I want to acknowledge and thank our advocate organizations, the Sickle Cell Disease Association of America, the American Society of Hematology, and other organizations, hospital providers, families, and those infected with the sickle cell disease.

Mr. Speaker, those who say that Congress does not work and is not working, I tell you, when we pass legislation of this sort, it tells me that America is on the right track and we are, indeed, moving forward to help make our communities as safe and healthy as they can possibly be.

I end by just thanking Dr. BURGESS, again, for his outstanding leadership on this issue.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I would just like to take a second and thank Representative DAVIS for his kind remarks, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, we have no further speakers

on this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to support S. 3029, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 3029.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

#### TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY PROGRAM REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2018

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 6615) to reauthorize the Traumatic Brain Injury program, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 6615

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

#### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Traumatic Brain Injury Program Reauthorization Act of 2018”.

#### SEC. 2. PREVENTION AND CONTROL OF INJURIES.

Part J of title III of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 280b et seq.) is amended—

(1) in section 393C (42 U.S.C. 280b-1d) by adding at the end the following:

“(c) NATIONAL CONCUSSION SURVEILLANCE SYSTEM.—The Secretary, acting through the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, may implement a national concussion surveillance system to determine the prevalence and incidence of concussion.”; and

(2) in section 394A (42 U.S.C. 280b-3)—

(A) in subsection (b)—

(i) by striking “393B and 393C” and inserting “393B, 393C(a), and 393C(b)”; and

(ii) by striking “\$6,564,000 for each of fiscal years 2015 through 2019” and inserting “\$6,750,000 for each of fiscal years 2019 through 2023”; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

“(c) NATIONAL CONCUSSION SURVEILLANCE SYSTEM.—To carry out section 393C(c), there are authorized to be appropriated \$5,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2019 through 2023.”.

#### SEC. 3. STATE GRANTS FOR PROJECTS REGARDING TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY.

Section 1252 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300d-52) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by inserting “, acting through the Administrator for the Administration for Community Living,” after “The Secretary”; and

(2) by striking subsection (e);

(3) by redesignating subsections (f) through (j) as subsections (e) through (i), respectively; and

(4) in subsection (i), as so redesignated, by striking “\$5,500,000 for each of the fiscal

years 2015 through 2019” and inserting “\$7,321,000 for each of fiscal years 2019 through 2023”.

#### SEC. 4. STATE GRANTS FOR PROTECTION AND ADVOCACY SERVICES.

Section 1253 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300d-53) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by inserting “, acting through the Administrator for the Administration for Community Living,” after “The Secretary”; and

(2) in subsection (1), by striking “\$3,100,000 for each of the fiscal years 2015 through 2019” and inserting “\$4,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2019 through 2023”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GENE GREEN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to insert extraneous materials in the RECORD on the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 6615, the Traumatic Brain Injury Program Reauthorization Act, and I would like to thank Representatives BILL PASCRELL and Representative THOMAS ROONEY for introducing this important legislation.

Traumatic brain injuries impact many families each and every year. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention released a report last month that found that young children have one of the highest rates of TBI-related emergency department visits.

These injuries can harm the developing brain and have the potential to impact a child’s cognitive abilities in the long term.

Whether the result of a hard hit during a football game as a teen, a car crash in middle age, or a fall as a senior, traumatic brain injuries pose various and serious risks to Americans.

This legislation reauthorizes the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention traumatic brain injury initiatives at a level of \$675 million per year for fiscal years 2019 through 2023.

Additionally, this bill authorizes the National Concussion Surveillance System at a level of \$5 million per year through fiscal year 2023. This is important in ensuring that we have adequate data regarding who is getting concussions, how they are treated, and if there are any trends.

This data will help identify where individuals are seeking healthcare treatment, if they are seeking treatment at all. Additionally, we do not currently have national estimates of the number of individuals living with disabilities due to brain injury, and this system will help to establish such estimates.

The Centers for Disease Control plans to conduct its data collection via telephone surveys and a pilot test to ensure that we will get the best data from a wide range of households. The bill also reauthorizes State grants for protection and advocacy services at the Administration for Community Living.

These services protect individuals with disabilities by providing them with legal support, especially when it comes to their ability to make certain lifestyle choices, such as living independently. This is particularly important given that individuals who suffer from traumatic brain injury, such as concussions, may experience a disability.

According to the CDC, more than 61 percent of children with moderate to severe traumatic brain injury experience a disability. We have yet to see what cost to these individuals and to society these disabilities convey in the long term.

The culmination of the programs that will be reauthorized by this legislation provides hope to individuals and families that are affected by traumatic brain injury. We still have much to learn about the risks and the short- and long-term effects of traumatic brain injury, and this legislation will chip away at our goal of increasing knowledge, awareness, and treatment of traumatic brain injury.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to support H.R. 6615, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 6615, the Traumatic Brain Injury Program Reauthorization Act of 2018, introduced by Representative PASCRELL and Representative THOMAS ROONEY. This legislation would reauthorize funding for Administration for Community Living's Traumatic Brain Injury Program, TBI, to fiscal year 2024.

The TBI program provides grants to States to support activities, such as improving screening to identify individuals with TBI, building a trained TBI workforce, providing resources to families, and funding protection and advocacy systems for people with TBI.

H.R. 6615 will also reauthorize programs at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to increase the incidence of traumatic brain injury and reduce the prevalence of TBI. These programs are important in improving our understanding of traumatic brain injury, and our ability to prevent and treat such injuries.

Recently, the CDC released new diagnostic guidelines focused on treating children with mild TBI and concussions, largely based on research and surveillance efforts funded by CDC's traumatic brain injury program.

Finally, this legislation also will reauthorize a new National Concussion Surveillance System to determine the prevalence and the incidence of concussions in the U.S. This is particularly

important for improving our understanding of long-term consequences of concussions, as well as efforts to prevent, diagnose, and treat concussions.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 6615, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I have no additional speakers, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PASCRELL), the cosponsor of this bill.

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to support H.R. 6615, the Traumatic Brain Injury Program Reauthorization Act of 2018, and I also would like to thank Chairman WALDEN and Ranking Member PALLONE for their work to move this important legislation forward. I am grateful to House leadership for bringing this for a vote. I want to associate myself with the words of Mr. BURGESS and Mr. GREEN.

Mr. Speaker, I commend Congressman GREEN and Congressman BURGESS for their steadfast work to improve our Nation's health landscape over the past several decades, and especially during Mr. GREEN's tenure on the Energy and Commerce Health Subcommittee. How time flies.

I would also like to give a special thanks to my colleague, TOM ROONEY, who sponsored this legislation with me. Congressman ROONEY has been a great partner as my co-chair of the Congressional Traumatic Brain Injury Task Force. Over 20 years ago, Mr. Speaker, we put together the task force on a bipartisan basis, and it is still going, and it is still very, very active.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman for all he has done for Americans living with brain injuries during his time in Congress.

I am glad to see this body come together in a bipartisan manner to support the work being done in our Federal agencies and across the country to expand research and prevention in the treatment of traumatic brain injury.

Traumatic brain injury knows no bounds. It affects people of all backgrounds and every ZIP Code. We are only at the precipice of understanding how prevalent that is. The passage of this legislation will fulfill a very critical obligation to Americans living with brain injuries, including our servicemembers, our athletes, and our children.

This reauthorization is especially important because it includes for the first time funding for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention so that they can determine how many Americans have sustained a brain injury. This will give us critical insight into the problem.

Dubbed the signature injury of servicemembers returning from Iraq and Afghanistan, TBI has continued to occur on the battlefield. TBI happens on the sports field as well, and we are working diligently to address this.

We have come a long way to improve safety screening and rehab since we first talked about TBI two decades ago, but much more must be done. This legislation makes the right investments in our Federal and State TBI initiatives; provides those living with brain injuries the supports that they need, and when we are supporting the brain injured, we are also supporting their families. It includes critical increases in funding and modernizes how the government oversees TBI.

Our legislation is endorsed by the Brain Injury Association of America, the National Association of State Head Injury Administrators, and the American Academy of Neurology.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to working with Congressman ROONEY, the membership of the Congressional Brain Injury Task Force, as well as Senator CASEY and Senator HATCH to send this legislation swiftly to the President's desk.

□ 1400

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 6615, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 6615, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### PREVENTING MATERNAL DEATHS ACT OF 2018

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1318) to support States in their work to save and sustain the health of mothers during pregnancy, childbirth, and in the postpartum period, to eliminate disparities in maternal health outcomes for pregnancy-related and pregnancy-associated deaths, to identify solutions to improve health care quality and health outcomes for mothers, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1318

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

#### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Preventing Maternal Deaths Act of 2018".

#### SEC. 2. SAFE MOTHERHOOD.

Section 317K of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 247b-12) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) by striking "purpose of this subsection is to develop" and inserting "purposes of this



subsection are to establish or continue a Federal initiative to support State and tribal maternal mortality review committees, to improve data collection and reporting around maternal mortality, and to develop or support”;

(ii) by striking “population at risk of death and” and inserting “populations at risk of death and severe”; and

(B) in paragraph (2)—

(i) by amending subparagraph (A) to read as follows:

“(A) The Secretary may continue and improve activities related to a national maternal mortality data collection and surveillance program to identify and support the review of pregnancy-associated deaths and pregnancy-related deaths that occur during, or within 1 year following, pregnancy.”; and

(ii) by inserting after subparagraph (C) the following:

“(D) The Secretary may, in cooperation with States, Indian tribes, and tribal organizations, develop a program to support States, Indian tribes, and tribal organizations in establishing or operating maternal mortality review committees, in accordance with subsection (d).”;

(2) in subsection (b)(2)—

(A) in subparagraph (A)—

(i) by striking “encouraging preconception” and inserting “pregnancy”; and

(ii) by striking “diabetics” and inserting “women with diabetes and women with substance use disorder” before the semicolon;

(B) in subparagraph (H)—

(i) by inserting “the identification of the determinants of disparities in maternal care, health risks, and health outcomes, including” before “an examination”; and

(ii) by inserting “and other groups of women with disproportionately high rates of maternal mortality” before the semicolon;

(C) in subparagraph (I), by striking “domestic” and inserting “interpersonal”;

(D) by redesignating subparagraphs (I) through (L) as subparagraphs (J) through (M), respectively;

(E) by inserting after subparagraph (H) the following:

“(I) activities to reduce disparities in maternity services and outcomes.”; and

(F) in subparagraph (K), as so redesignated, by striking “, alcohol and illegal drug use” and inserting “and substance abuse and misuse”;

(3) in subsection (c)—

(A) by striking “(1) IN GENERAL—The Secretary” and inserting “The Secretary”;

(B) by redesignating subparagraphs (A) through (C) as paragraphs (1) through (3), respectively, and adjusting the margins accordingly;

(C) in paragraph (1), as so redesignated, by striking “and the building of partnerships with outside organizations concerned about safe motherhood”;

(D) in paragraph (2), as so redesignated, by striking “; and” and inserting a semicolon;

(E) in paragraph (3), as so redesignated, by striking the period and inserting “; and”; and

(F) by adding at the end the following:

“(4) activities to promote physical, mental, and behavioral health during, and up to 1 year following, pregnancy, with an emphasis on prevention of, and treatment for, mental health disorders and substance use disorder.”;

(4) by redesignating subsection (d) as subsection (f);

(5) by inserting after subsection (c) the following:

“(d) MATERNAL MORTALITY REVIEW COMMITTEES.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—In order to participate in the program under subsection (a)(2)(D), the applicable maternal mortality review com-

mittee of the State, Indian tribe, or tribal organization shall—

“(A) include multidisciplinary and diverse membership that represents a variety of clinical specialties, State, tribal, or local public health officials, epidemiologists, statisticians, community organizations, geographic regions within the area covered by such committee, and individuals or organizations that represent the populations in the area covered by such committee that are most affected by pregnancy-related deaths or pregnancy-associated deaths and lack of access to maternal health care services; and

“(B) demonstrate to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention that such maternal mortality review committee’s methods and processes for data collection and review, as required under paragraph (3), use best practices to reliably determine and include all pregnancy-associated deaths and pregnancy-related deaths, regardless of the outcome of the pregnancy.

“(2) PROCESS FOR CONFIDENTIAL REPORTING.—States, Indian tribes, and tribal organizations that participate in the program described in this subsection shall, through the State maternal mortality review committee, develop a process that—

“(A) provides for confidential case reporting of pregnancy-associated and pregnancy-related deaths to the appropriate State or tribal health agency, including such reporting by—

“(i) health care professionals;

“(ii) health care facilities;

“(iii) any individual responsible for completing death records, including medical examiners and medical coroners; and

“(iv) other appropriate individuals or entities; and

“(B) provides for voluntary and confidential case reporting of pregnancy-associated deaths and pregnancy-related deaths to the appropriate State or tribal health agency by family members of the deceased, and other appropriate individuals, for purposes of review by the applicable maternal mortality review committee; and

“(C) shall include—

“(i) making publicly available contact information of the committee for use in such reporting; and

“(ii) conducting outreach to local professional organizations, community organizations, and social services agencies regarding the availability of the review committee.

“(3) DATA COLLECTION AND REVIEW.—States, Indian tribes, and tribal organizations that participate in the program described in this subsection shall—

“(A) annually identify pregnancy-associated deaths and pregnancy-related deaths—

“(i) through the appropriate vital statistics unit by—

“(I) matching each death record related to a pregnancy-associated death or pregnancy-related death in the State or tribal area in the applicable year to a birth certificate of an infant or fetal death record, as applicable;

“(II) to the extent practicable, identifying an underlying or contributing cause of each pregnancy-associated death and each pregnancy-related death in the State or tribal area in the applicable year; and

“(III) collecting data from medical examiner and coroner reports, as appropriate;

“(ii) using other appropriate methods or information to identify pregnancy-associated deaths and pregnancy-related deaths, including deaths from pregnancy outcomes not identified through clause (i)(I);

“(B) through the maternal mortality review committee, review data and information to identify adverse outcomes that may contribute to pregnancy-associated death and pregnancy-related death, and to identify trends, patterns, and disparities in such ad-

verse outcomes to allow the State, Indian tribe, or tribal organization to make recommendations to individuals and entities described in paragraph (2)(A), as appropriate, to improve maternal care and reduce pregnancy-associated death and pregnancy-related death;

“(C) identify training available to the individuals and entities described in paragraph (2)(A) for accurate identification and reporting of pregnancy-associated and pregnancy-related deaths;

“(D) ensure that, to the extent practicable, the data collected and reported under this paragraph is in a format that allows for analysis by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; and

“(E) publicly identify the methods used to identify pregnancy-associated deaths and pregnancy-related deaths in accordance with this section.

“(4) CONFIDENTIALITY.—States, Indian tribes, and tribal organizations participating in the program described in this subsection shall establish confidentiality protections to ensure, at a minimum, that—

“(A) there is no disclosure by the maternal mortality review committee, including any individual members of the committee, to any person, including any government official, of any identifying information about any specific maternal mortality case; and

“(B) no information from committee proceedings, including deliberation or records, is made public unless specifically authorized under State and Federal law.

“(5) REPORTS TO CDC.—For fiscal year 2019, and each subsequent fiscal year, each maternal mortality review committee participating in the program described in this subsection shall submit to the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention a report that includes—

“(A) data, findings, and any recommendations of such committee; and

“(B) as applicable, information on the implementation during such year of any recommendations submitted by the committee in a previous year.

“(6) STATE PARTNERSHIPS.—States may partner with one or more neighboring States to carry out the activities under this subparagraph. With respect to the States in such a partnership, any requirement under this subparagraph relating to the reporting of information related to such activities shall be deemed to be fulfilled by each such State if a single such report is submitted for the partnership.

“(7) APPROPRIATE MECHANISMS FOR INDIAN TRIBES AND TRIBAL ORGANIZATIONS.—The Secretary, in consultation with Indian tribes, shall identify and establish appropriate mechanisms for Indian tribes and tribal organizations to demonstrate, report data, and conduct the activities as required for participation in the program described in this subsection. Such mechanisms may include technical assistance with respect to grant application and submission procedures, and award management activities.

“(8) RESEARCH AVAILABILITY.—The Secretary shall develop a process to ensure that data collected under paragraph (5) is made available, as appropriate and practicable, for research purposes, in a manner that protects individually identifiable or potentially identifiable information and that is consistent with State and Federal privacy law.

“(e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

“(1) the terms ‘Indian tribe’ and ‘tribal organization’ have the meanings given such terms in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act;

“(2) the term ‘pregnancy-associated death’ means a death of a woman, by any cause,



that occurs during, or within 1 year following, her pregnancy, regardless of the outcome, duration, or site of the pregnancy; and “(3) the term ‘pregnancy-related death’ means a death of a woman that occurs during, or within 1 year following, her pregnancy, regardless of the outcome, duration, or site of the pregnancy—

“(A) from any cause related to, or aggravated by, the pregnancy or its management; and

“(B) not from accidental or incidental causes.”; and

(6) in subsection (f), as so redesignated, by striking “such sums as may be necessary for each of the fiscal years 2001 through 2005” and inserting “\$58,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2019 through 2023”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GENE GREEN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS).

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous materials in the RECORD on the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS)?

There was no objection.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1318, the Preventing Maternal Deaths Act. I am glad that we are finally calling up this bill for a vote, as it is a truly important bill that will impact the lives of pregnant women and new mothers across this country. The media's attention to the issue of maternal morbidity and mortality has shed light on serious problems within our healthcare system in terms of pre- and postpartum care and complications in the delivery room.

I thank Representative JAIME HERRERA BEUTLER and Representative DIANA DEGETTE for their leadership on this critical legislation. Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER testified before the Energy and Commerce Committee's Subcommittee on Health this September in support of her bill, which she and her staff have been working on daily to get across the finish line. She and I have shared a goal to improve maternal outcomes, and I am grateful that we had an opportunity to continue to push this priority forward together.

I also thank the committee staff, which has been working through the language with the various stakeholders over the course of the past year. Their work has been imperative in getting this bill to the floor.

Having spent nearly three decades as an OB/GYN, I believe it should be a national goal to eliminate all preventable maternal deaths. A single one is too many.

The alarming trend in our country's rate of maternal mortality first came to my attention in September 2016 when I was reading in my professional

journal called *The Green Journal*, the journal of Obstetrics & Gynecology. The original research found that the maternal mortality rate had increased in 48 States and Washington, D.C., from 2000 to 2014 while the international trend was moving in the opposite direction. Since reading that article, I have spoken with providers, hospital administrators, State task forces, and public health experts. The more I dove into this troubling issue, the more I realized how little we understand about how our data is lacking.

The Health Subcommittee has held both a member briefing and a hearing on the issue of maternal mortality. Our hearing this past September had a varied panel of witnesses, including Charles Johnson, who lost his wife, Kira, following the birth of their second child in 2016. Mr. Johnson's wife was a healthy and energetic woman, yet he now has to explain to his two sons why their mother is never coming home.

The Johnson family is not alone in living through such tragedy. However, if we pass this bill today and send it to the President's desk, we will be taking a step in the right direction toward preventing future maternal deaths.

This is a problem that we cannot address without accurate data. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the United States' maternal mortality rate was 7.2 deaths per 100,000 live births in 1999 and increased to 18 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2014. These are statistics that deserve our full attention.

Representative JAIME HERRERA BEUTLER's bill will address the complex issue of maternal mortality by enabling States to form maternal mortality review committees to evaluate, improve, and standardize their maternity death data. Once we fully understand the problem, there will be an opportunity to use the data to implement best practices.

Texas is an excellent example of a State that has created and sustained a maternal mortality and morbidity task force. Texas has put time, effort, and funding into reviewing maternal deaths in order to identify trends and causes.

Most of the pregnancy-related and pregnancy-associated deaths—or many, I should say—are preventable, but they are all tragic. We should not be losing women to such a fixable problem, leaving their newborn babies and their families to have to wake up each day to face the unsolved mystery of why the mother did not make it home from the hospital or died shortly thereafter.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 1318, the Preventing Maternal Deaths Act, sponsored by Representatives JAIME HERRERA BEUTLER and DIANA DEGETTE.

This is an important first step to addressing the maternal mortality crisis

that is claiming the lives of too many new mothers in our country. Hundreds of women die each year from pregnancy-related and pregnancy-associated complications in the U.S. More than 60 percent of these deaths are preventable.

The Preventing Maternal Deaths Act encourages States to implement maternal mortality review committees that track maternal deaths and identify their underlying causes. Together, the data generated by these review committees will help experts identify trends, patterns, and disparities that contribute to preventable maternal deaths in order to save lives in the future.

It is shocking that the maternal mortality rate in the United States has increased while in most of the rest of the developed world it has fallen. It is also shocking that women of color, low-income women, and women in rural areas are disproportionately more likely to face pregnancy-related complications. This must change.

But in order to reverse this unconscionable trend, we must have the necessary data so providers can monitor their practices and improve their care delivery.

The mortality rate is a critical indicator of the quality of our healthcare system, as well as how we prioritize women's health in this country. While much more work still must be done, including improving access to care, I am proud to support this bill and believe it will set us on a path to understanding why women are dying and how we can stop it.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this important piece of legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER), who is the principal author of the bill.

Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman BURGESS for his tireless commitment on this issue. It is not just the gentleman's career, but it has been something that the gentleman has fought for here in Congress as well, and I am very grateful to be standing here today. I also want to thank my co-conspirator, DIANA DEGETTE, for her work on this bipartisan legislation that has more than 180 cosponsors.

So why is this bill important to you, Mr. Speaker, or to those who are listening? Well, you either are a mom or you have got a mom. This bill impacts you.

I stand in strong support of the Preventing Maternal Deaths Act, a bill to save mothers' lives and prevent more parents, husbands, grandparents, and children from the profound loss of their mother.

Today in the 21st century United States of America, the U.S. is ranked fourth globally for maternal mortality. Many are shocked to learn that the

U.S. not only has the worst maternal mortality rate in the entire developed world, but that these rates are on the rise. Seriously, Mr. Speaker, we are worse than Iran.

Every year, between 700 and 900 maternal deaths occur in the United States, and I have seen tears brought to the eyes of many a colleague when they learn that more than 60 percent of these deaths could have been prevented, according to the CDC. It is difficult to imagine the grief felt by these families when a life is cut short and they learn that it could have been prevented.

As a mom, as an American, and as a lawmaker, we must do better. Combating maternal mortality must become a national priority, which is why I urge my colleagues to support this bill. The Preventing Maternal Deaths Act represents the biggest step taken by Congress to date on this issue. It would enable States to establish and strengthen maternal mortality review committees, which bring together experts in public health, in maternal health, and in infant health to investigate each and every pregnancy-related death to understand what went wrong and how to save future mothers' lives.

Currently, the available data is woefully inadequate, which hinders our ability to understand why moms are dying and why certain women are more at risk. Right now, African American women are three to four times more likely to die from pregnancy-related causes, and women living in rural areas are also facing higher risk. This bill will not only improve data collection, but it will empower States to participate in national information sharing, increase collaboration, and develop best practices.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I would like to dedicate this bill to the mothers whom we have lost, moms like Kira Johnson who lost her life just hours after giving birth to a healthy baby boy.

I will never forget hearing from Kira's husband, Charles, who has been a tireless advocate on this issue. He is a single father of two boys and now lives by the motto: "Wake up, make mommy proud, repeat."

Stories like Kira's have struck at the hearts of many of us and have compelled us to action today. Today, we honor the lives of these moms and the loved ones who remember them.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on the Preventing Maternal Deaths Act.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I have no other speakers. I thank both Congresswoman DEGETTE and Congresswoman HERRERA BEUTLER for bringing this issue to our committee and also to the House.

Mr. Speaker, I urge a positive vote today, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia

(Mr. CARTER), who is a valuable member of the Health Subcommittee.

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1318, the Preventing Maternal Deaths Act.

Unfortunately, we know all too well in Georgia the need to address maternal mortality rates in the Nation. My home State of Georgia has one of the highest maternal mortality rates in the country, and we learned about the challenges leading to this statistic on September 27 in the Energy and Commerce Committee when we were able to hear from my colleague and the sponsor of the bill, Congresswoman HERRERA BEUTLER.

As my colleague noted in the hearing, we are seeing an estimated number of between 700 and 900 maternal deaths per year, a number that is unacceptable in today's world. A 2015 World Health Organization report noted that nearly half of these deaths were preventable.

From 1987 to 2009, the number of pregnancy-related deaths per 100,000 births nearly doubled. That is why this legislation is so important.

Whether it is updates to maternal mortality data collection or mental treatment options, or the reforms and changes for the maternal mortality review committees, this legislation is necessary to helping us curb this trend and reduce the number of maternal mortality deaths.

We can and we should do more, and I hope that this will be one of our many steps to help us save the lives of mothers across the country.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Colorado (Ms. DEGETTE).

Ms. DEGETTE. Mr. Speaker, I know that the ranking member already yielded back, so I thank Mr. BURGESS for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I wanted to hurry down here to speak in favor of this bill because I have been working on it for many years with my colleague and friend, JAIME HERRERA BEUTLER.

According to the CDC, maternal mortality rates rose by 26 percent in the U.S. between 2000 and 2014. These deaths are preventable, and they should not be happening in 2018. So to combat this alarming trend, 33 States have established maternal mortality review committees made up of healthcare professionals who review individual maternal deaths and then recommend policy decisions.

Our bill provides Federal support for these committees and supports efforts to standardize them. It has 190 cosponsors. It has received support from 90 national public health organizations.

It is really a great example of how the Energy and Commerce Committee works in a bipartisan way. So I thank everybody for being here and thank the chairman for his comity.

□ 1415

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Just in addition to all the other people who have been thanked, I want to acknowledge the work of my personal staff, Mr. Ed Kim and Elizabeth Allen, who have worked so hard on this bill, as well as Dr. Kristen Shatynski on the Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Health staff, who really helped push this along and made sure that we got here today in a successful manner.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1318, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### CALLING ON THE GOVERNMENT OF BURMA TO RELEASE BURMESE JOURNALISTS WA LONE AND KYAW SOE OO

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 1091) calling on the Government of Burma to release Burmese journalists Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo sentenced to seven years imprisonment after investigating attacks against civilians by Burma's military and security forces, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

#### H. RES. 1091

Whereas in recent decades the Rohingya people have lost, through systematic discrimination by Burmese national, state, and local authorities, a range of civil and political rights, including citizenship, and face barriers today such that they have been rendered stateless;

Whereas the Burmese military and security forces have committed numerous crimes against civilians over many years in Burma's Rakhine, Shan, Kachin, and Karen States;

Whereas beginning August 25, 2017, the Burmese military and security forces, as well as civilian mobs, carried out widespread attacks, rapes, killings, and the burning of villages throughout Rakhine State resulting in approximately 730,000 Rohingya fleeing to Bangladesh and bringing the total Rohingya refugee population in Cox's Bazar to over 900,000;

Whereas on November 14, 2018, Vice President Mike Pence said, "This is a tragedy that has touched the hearts of millions of Americans. The violence and persecution by military and vigilantes that resulted in driving 700,000 Rohingya to Bangladesh is without excuse."

Whereas to date, though the refugee crisis is not of their making, the Government of Bangladesh has generously accommodated the rapid and massive influx of Rohingya refugees into Cox's Bazar;

Whereas the Government of Bangladesh continues to express concern about the lack of accountability for the perpetrators of these crimes and the need to find durable solutions;

Whereas in June 2018, it was announced that the United Nations and the Government of Burma had reached an agreement for the “voluntary, safe, dignified and sustainable” return of Rohingya to Burma;

Whereas that agreement was contingent upon the provision of unimpeded access to northern Rakhine by United Nations High Commission on Refugees (UNHCR) and United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in order to verify the necessary conditions on the ground for such voluntary, safe, dignified, and sustainable returns;

Whereas Burma’s civilian government, led by State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi and President Win Myint, has not yet taken the necessary steps to address the violence directed against the Rohingya and has failed to create the necessary conditions for returns, including by actively impeding access to northern Rakhine by UNHCR, UNDP, humanitarian organizations, and journalists;

Whereas on August 24, 2018, the United Nations International Fact Finding Mission on Myanmar released a preliminary report stating that, “The Mission concluded . . . that there is sufficient information to warrant the investigation and prosecution of senior officials in the Tatmadaw chain of command, so that a competent court can determine their liability for genocide in relation to the situation in Rakhine State.”;

Whereas on August 25, 2018, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said “A year ago, following deadly militant attacks, security forces responded by launching abhorrent ethnic cleansing of ethnic Rohingya in Burma”, and continued “The U.S. will continue to hold those responsible accountable. The military must respect human rights for Burma’s democracy to succeed.”;

Whereas the Department of the Treasury announced sanctions on five Tatmadaw officers and two Tatmadaw units for human rights abuses in Rakhine, Kachin, and Shan States;

Whereas on September 24, 2018, the Department of State released a report entitled “Documentation of Atrocities in Northern Rakhine State” that stated the military “targeted civilians indiscriminately and often with extreme brutality” and that the violence in northern Rakhine State was “extreme, large-scale, widespread and seemingly geared toward both terrorizing the population and driving out the Rohingya residents” and that the “scope and scale of the military’s operations indicate that they were well-planned and coordinated”;

Whereas Reuters, a highly respected worldwide news organization, discovered evidence of mass murder in the village of Inn Din as part of its ongoing reporting on the Burmese military’s campaign against the Rohingya, and deployed journalists Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo to fact-check and interview eyewitnesses to these and other events;

Whereas on December 12, 2017, Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo were arrested by Burmese security forces in a suburb of Yangon and remain in custody to date;

Whereas on April 20, 2018, a key witness for the prosecution, Police Captain Moe Yan Naing, testified that he was ordered by his superiors to “trap” Wa Lone;

Whereas on September 3, 2018, Yangon Northern District Judge Ye Lwin ruled that Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo breached the colonial-era Official Secrets Act during their investigation into the massacre in Inn Din and subsequently sentenced them each to 7 years in prison with hard labor, despite admissions by the police under oath in court

that the documents in question were planted with the journalists as a front for their arrest;

Whereas United States Secretary of State Mike Pompeo met with Burma’s Foreign Minister, Kyaw Tin, at the ASEAN Foreign Ministers’ Meeting in August 2018 and called for the immediate release of Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo;

Whereas on September 4, 2018, Vice President Mike Pence stated, “Wa Lone & Kyaw Soe Oo should be commended—not imprisoned—for their work exposing human rights violations [and] mass killings. Freedom of religion [and] freedom of the press are essential to a strong democracy.”;

Whereas Members of Congress, professional journalist organizations, human rights groups, and other distinguished leaders from around the world have called on the Burmese authorities to release Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo from their unjust imprisonment; and

Whereas the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, signed at Paris December 9, 1948 declares that “means any of the following acts committed with the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such: (a) Killing members of the group; (b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; (d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group” and “The following acts shall be punishable: (a) Genocide; (b) Conspiracy to commit genocide; (c) Direct and public incitement to commit genocide; (d) Attempt to commit genocide; (e) Complicity in genocide.”; Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That it is the sense of the House of Representatives that—

(1) the atrocities committed against the Rohingya by the Burmese military and security forces since August 2017 constitute crimes against humanity and genocide;

(2) the Secretary of State should—

(A) determine, based on available evidence, whether the actions by the Burmese military in northern Rakhine State in 2017 constitute crimes against humanity, genocide, or other crimes under international law; and

(B) fully support efforts to collect, preserve, and make available evidence related to the commission of these crimes;

(3) all those responsible for these crimes against humanity and genocide should be tracked, sanctioned, arrested, prosecuted, and punished under applicable international criminal statutes and conventions;

(4) every Government and multinational body should call such atrocities by their rightful names of “crimes against humanity”, “war crimes”, and “genocide”;

(5) the Governments of Bangladesh, the United States, and China, as well as the UNHCR and other actors, should only support repatriations to Burma when the conditions for safe, voluntary and dignified returns are achieved, including that of removing any impunity for Burma’s military, security forces, and vigilantes with respect to their actions contributing to the systemic deprivation of the human rights, such as physical safety, citizenship, freedom of movement, and livelihoods, of the Rohingya;

(6) the President should impose additional sanctions on senior members of the Burmese military and security forces who are responsible for genocide and human rights abuses, including Tatmadaw Commander-In-Chief Min Aung Hlaing;

(7) independent and professional journalism play a central role in strengthening democratic governance, upholding the rule

of law, mitigating conflict, and informing public opinion around the world; and

(8) the Burmese military and Government should—

(A) provide immediate, unimpeded access to northern Rakhine by UNHCR, UNDP, other humanitarian actors, and journalists, in order to verify that the necessary conditions exist for voluntary, safe, dignified, and sustainable returns by displaced Rohingya in a manner consistent with internationally recognized human rights and principles for refugee protection;

(B) change the laws and policies that have contributed to insecurity in the Rakhine State; and

(C) rescind any laws that obstruct the freedom of the press; and

(9) State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi and President Win Myint should pardon and immediately release from prison Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo, as well as all other journalists and political prisoners.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material in the RECORD.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, with this resolution, the House will take the important step of naming the atrocities committed against the Rohingya people in Burma for what they are. The word for that is “genocide.”

The Rohingya people, predominantly of Burma’s Rakhine State, are often called the world’s most persecuted minority. The Rohingya are essentially stateless people, as the Burmese Government refuses to recognize them as citizens, despite the fact that the Rohingya people have lived in Burma for generations. Further, institutional restrictions on the Rohingya have impacted their rights to study, work, travel, access healthcare services, practice religion, and even to marry.

The most recent wave of persecution began in August 2017, when Burmese security forces and civilian mobs began a horrific wave of attacks. Mass murder, rape, and destruction of villages throughout Rakhine State has been well documented. We have talked to the survivors.

These atrocities have driven 700,000 Rohingya from their homes to Bangladesh, bringing the total Rohingya refugee population in that country to nearly 1 million. Bangladesh has been very generous in accepting all these refugees in the face of such dire circumstances.

A year and a half later, the evidence is overwhelming. As I said at our hearing on the subject this past September,

it is time that we take the next step in declaring that these crimes amount to genocide.

In September, the State Department released a report on the stomach-turning, systematic, and widespread acts of violence against the Rohingya in northern Rakhine State, but failed to label these atrocities genocide.

The State Department's investigation revealed countless heart-wrenching pieces of evidence, like the account of one woman who hid in bushes as she watched Burmese soldiers throw infants and toddlers into a river to drown and shot the mothers of these infants who tried to save them.

The United States has a moral obligation to call these crimes genocide. Failing to do so gives the perpetrators cover and hinders efforts to bring those accountable to justice. With this resolution, the House fulfills its part of that duty.

The measure also accomplishes a number of other important goals. It provides a thorough accounting of the crisis, calls out the complicit Burmese Government, urges the Secretary of State to join us in formally declaring genocide, and promotes multilateral agreement on that declaration.

Importantly, the resolution also calls for the immediate pardon and release of two journalists who were framed and jailed by Burmese authorities for shining a light on some of the atrocities by government forces.

Congress has a proud legacy of declaring genocide when warranted, just as we did over 2 years ago when the House voted unanimously to declare ISIS' atrocities against religious minorities in Iraq and in Syria genocide. It is time to take this sober step again.

I urge all of my colleagues to join me in supporting this measure and fulfilling our responsibility to reinforce the universal values we hold dear.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this measure.

First of all, I want to thank Mr. CHABOT for authoring this resolution. I also want to thank Representative JOE CROWLEY for his extraordinary dedication to all the people of Burma, including the Rohingya people. I thank Chairman ROYCE for bringing this resolution forward and for his leadership on this crucial issue throughout the years.

This resolution calls on the Government of Burma to release Burmese Reuters journalists Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo, who have been sentenced to 7 years following their investigation into the attacks on Rohingya civilians by the Burmese military and security forces. There is overwhelming evidence that these journalists were entrapped by the Burmese Government, who targeted them because of their reporting of the military's horrific crimes.

Their jail sentence is a part of a broader issue. Despite elections in 2015

that brought a pro-democracy civilian government to power, the Burmese Government still operates on antiquated laws that lead to locking up prisoners of conscience, even when their only crimes are reporting information that is unflattering or inconvenient for the government or for the military.

This resolution rightly calls on the civilian government in Burma to repeal the laws that have been used to crack down on civil society and free expression and to pardon prisoners of conscience who have been imprisoned under these unjust laws.

We must take a moment and reflect on the context of these arrests.

The journalists were investigating what we now know were the crimes against humanity and genocide of the Rohingya people. They should not be sitting in a prison cell. They should be celebrated for faithfully carrying out their obligation to report the truth.

This resolution does something else that is very important. It states that, in the opinion of the House, the atrocities inflicted on the Rohingya people by the Burmese military constitute genocide.

It is important that we call it by name. It is a critical step towards justice for the victims. So we need to use the word "genocide."

I am glad that this resolution urges the Trump administration to call this atrocity what it is and pursue accountability for this heinous violence.

With this resolution, Congress continues to assert our leadership and show that we stand with the Rohingya people. We will not be silent as the Burmese Government allows or tacitly encourages attacks on the press and on civil society. We will call out injustice when we see it.

So I support this measure, and I urge all Members to do the same.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN), the chairwoman emeritus of the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of my friend STEVE CHABOT's resolution, H. Res. 1091, which calls for the release of two Burmese journalists who were unjustly imprisoned for what crime? Courageously reporting on the genocide against the people known as the Rohingya.

In September, I joined Jan Schakowsky and STEVE CHABOT in sending a letter to Secretary of State Pompeo expressing our grave concern for the 7-year sentence given to these brave journalists. Unfortunately, the stories of these men are just two of the many, many sad examples of the erosion of press freedom and other basic rights in Burma.

At a time when these brave men should be rewarded for helping make the evidence available to the U.N. commission investigating these crimes,

they get jail time. This resolution sends a strong message that the world is paying attention.

In 2012, I was worried that it was too soon for the Obama administration to ease sanctions on Burma. Unfortunately, it has proven to be too soon. In the aftermath of the massacre of the Rohingya, we must hold all individuals responsible for these crimes against humanity accountable. I call on the Burmese Government to release these journalists and reform the law so that freedom of the press is not obstructed.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank, once again, our chairman, ED ROYCE, and ELIOT ENGEL for their continued commitment to bringing forth bipartisan and important bills to the floor.

I urge my colleagues to support Mr. CHABOT's resolution.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN), who retires this year and leaves an extraordinary legacy in this Chamber.

(Mr. LEVIN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this resolution calling for the release of the two journalists imprisoned after investigating attacks against the Rohingya ethnic minority in Burma, also known as Myanmar.

As I said in the resolution I introduced in early September calling for their release: "The Burmese police captain involved in their arrest reportedly admitted during the trial that his superior ordered him to entrap the journalists."

The atrocities committed against the Rohingya—mass killings; rape perpetrated on a massive scale; whole villages burned to the ground, with people being burned alive in their homes; and over 700,000 fleeing the violence to neighboring Bangladesh—have been so extreme that the United Nations issued a report earlier this year calling for Burma's military leaders to be investigated and prosecuted on the charges of genocide. There can be no doubt about the culpability of Burma's military in the oppression and violence inflicted on the Rohingya.

I had the privilege of meeting Aung San Suu Kyi a few years ago as part of a delegation led by NANCY PELOSI, joining in admiration for her perseverance and triumph over oppression. There has been a hesitation by some to criticize Suu Kyi, worrying that it could make it more likely the military would take over the civilian government she leads. But her words and actions in the face of what, in reality, has been genocide have been deeply disturbing, contrary to her past example as a beacon of freedom.

□ 1430

In 2017, the late John McCain and RICHARD DURBIN introduced in the Senate and I introduced in the House a resolution that encouraged "Aung San Suu Kyi to live up to her inspiring

words upon receiving the 2012 Nobel Peace Prize with respect to ethnic reconciliation in Burma, and in particular to address the historic and brutal repression of the Rohingya in Rakhine State."

Unfortunately, that resolution was not acted upon.

When Aung San Suu Kyi later said: "We believe that, for the sake of long-term stability and security, we have to be fair to all sides," it was a disturbing message of minimization.

Suu Kyi later said: "In a way we can say that we understand our country better than any other country does, and I'm sure you will say the same of yours, that you understand your country better than anybody else."

As Bishop Desmond Tutu said in a letter to Suu Kyi: "My dear sister: If the political price of your ascension to the highest office in Myanmar is your silence, the price is surely too steep."

This resolution speaks out against the genocide and crimes against humanity that occurred in Rakhine State. All of humanity must speak out clearly and decisively.

Mr. Speaker, I urge unanimous support for this resolution.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. CHABOT), a senior member of the Foreign Affairs Committee. He is the author of this measure.

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Chairman ROYCE and Ranking Member ENGEL for their leadership on this issue, H. Res. 1091, which I introduced to commit the House to a determination that the Burmese military's atrocities against the Rohingya minority in Rakhine State were genocide and to call for the release of the two Reuters journalists who have been unjustly imprisoned by the Burmese government for their investigation into these atrocities.

On August 25 last year, the Burmese military began a barbaric campaign against the Rohingya people in Rakhine State. This premeditated operation resulted in 700,000 Rohingya fleeing from Burma into Bangladesh. In September, Congressman CROWLEY and I wrote to then-Secretary Tillerson to raise our serious concerns about the violence.

Since then, sufficient evidence has been brought to light to fill in many gruesome details of what exactly happened. Much of this evidence is contained in two reports released in September.

First, the U.N. Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar released its final report that argued that the Burmese military had genocidal intent against the Rohingya.

Second, the State Department released a report summarizing a survey of Rohingya survivors in Bangladesh that it had commissioned. The State Department's report is particularly disturbing. It calls the violence extreme, large-scale, widespread, and states that "the scope and scale of the

military's operations indicate they were well planned and coordinated."

Of the 1,000 Rohingya interviewed, about 80 percent witnessed killings and the destruction of villages. In total, 400 villages were burned to the ground. About half of those surveyed witnessed a rape.

I could go on, but the gruesomeness of the eyewitness accounts I would rather not repeat in a civilized setting.

Senior administration officials and numerous Members of Congress have all condemned these atrocities in harsh, unmistakable terms. In light of this evidence, I am asking my colleagues today to join me in making a legal determination by labeling these crimes what they were: genocide and crimes against humanity.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentleman an additional 1 minute.

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I also urge the administration and the Senate to make determinations similar to the one in this resolution so that we send a clear, unequivocal message to the Burmese Government and to the world that these barbaric and vicious atrocities will not be tolerated.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, as co-chair of the House Freedom of the Press Caucus, I also want to draw attention to the second half of the resolution, which condemns the Burmese Government's decision to jail two Reuters journalists for trying to uncover the facts about the massacre in Rakhine State.

Tomorrow marks the anniversary of their arrest, so it is especially timely that we are considering this resolution and calling for their release.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN), a senior member of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs and the ranking member of the Asia and the Pacific Subcommittee.

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, for reasons well explained by the preceding speakers, I am pleased to join in supporting this resolution and to commend Mr. CHABOT for introducing it. I was pleased to introduce it along with him and along with the chair, the ranking member, and several other Members of this House.

This resolution deals with Burma, whose government chooses to call itself Myanmar, but we officially take the position that the country retains its name of Burma. This resolution calls out the Burmese military for their acts of ethnic cleansing against the Rohingya and highlights the cases of two journalists who were imprisoned for simply trying to shed light on these historic stories.

One of my priorities as ranking member of the Asia and the Pacific Subcommittee has been to focus attention on the 700,000 Rohingya who have been forced to flee Burma and relocate to

Bangladesh, one of the world's poorest countries.

They have not fled because they wanted to leave home. They have not fled because Bangladesh is someplace where it is easy to make a living. They have fled to refugee camps because they have no choice, for the Rohingya communities have faced widespread attacks, rapes, killings, and burning of villages, all orchestrated by the Burmese military.

Not only that, but the Burmese State takes the position that the Rohingya are not citizens of their country because they can't prove that their great-grandparents were born in the country.

So, if someone is born in Burma, their parents were born in Burma, they could even prove their grandparents were born in Burma, they are denied a Burmese passport.

Now, this resolution uses the term "genocide," not a word we should throw around, but in this case it is clearly a test that has been met.

In reports by the Public International Law & Policy Group and by our own Holocaust museum, the evidence is there that the United Nations' definition of genocide has been met.

The United Nations' Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide defines "genocide" as acts committed with the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial, or religious group. That is exactly what the Burmese military is doing, and denying citizenship is just part of that effort.

This resolution sends an important message to the Burmese military, and it also focuses on two Reuters journalists who exposed the mass murder in the village of Indin. Those two journalists are Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo, who were interviewing eyewitnesses to this crime. This is part of the Burmese genocide of the Rohingya.

But instead of applauding their bravery, the Burmese Government arrested them and accused them of violating the Official Secrets Act. Of course, we understand that a government that is committing genocide wants to declare that genocide to be a state secret.

And so, for that as their only crime, these two journalists have been sentenced to 7 years of hard labor in prison.

There is only one just outcome here. State Counselor Aung San Suu Kyi and President Win Myint must pardon these journalists. They must acknowledge that the Burmese military is committing atrocities against the Rohingya. They must provide the Rohingya papers of citizenship.

We need to pass this resolution, hopefully unanimously, to say that genocide must be stopped and the two journalists must be released.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. YOHO), chairman of the Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific.

Mr. YOHO. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Res. 1091. This resolution

calls the atrocities committed against the Rohingya what they are—genocide—and asks the government of Burma to release two innocent journalists who were framed for helping to bring these crimes to light.

I want to thank my predecessor, as chair of the Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific, Congressman CHABOT, and Ranking Member ENGEL for introducing this resolution.

Since August 2017, 700,000 Rohingya have fled their homes in Rakhine to neighboring Bangladesh to escape the horrible violence perpetrated by the Burmese military. In total, almost a million Rohingya refugees have been driven out of their homes in northern Rakhine and are sheltering in Bangladesh.

They, the Rohingya, didn't just decide to pick up all their belongings one day and leave. They are fearing for their lives, and so they left.

The United Nations released a report just months ago asserting that the Burmese military systematically targeted civilians in a manner consistent with genocidal intent. This fact-finding mission and other international NGOs have documented the violence, including torture; rape; killing unarmed civilians, including women and children; and burning down the Rohingya villages.

Make no mistake; this is genocide.

In a recent committee hearing on Burma, I spoke about the importance of journalists documenting these atrocities. However, we are seeing journalists inside Burma being punished and jailed for doing the basic requirements of their job.

This resolution rightly calls for the release of Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo, the two Reuters journalists who were framed wrongfully and sentenced by the Burmese government to over 7 years in jail after investigating the very violence we are calling a genocide here today.

How many more times do we and the world allow this to happen again? We either stand together as civilized nations, call this what it is—genocide—or we look the other way again as nations of the world did in World War II in Nazi Germany, or during the Darfur genocide.

We either are serious about this or not.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to join my fellow colleagues as an original cosponsor on this resolution and urge the rest of the House to join in support. When we say never again, we must mean never again. The House is today taking an important first step and speaking clearly on these atrocities.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time to close.

Mr. Speaker, I want to, again, thank my colleagues and Chairman ROYCE for their hard work on this measure, as always. This is an important resolution. It gives a name to the atrocities that occurred in Rakhine State, calling them genocide, and urges the Trump

administration to take appropriate action to hold the Burmese military accountable for these crimes.

I agree with what everybody has mentioned. The resolution also calls for the release of two journalists wrongly imprisoned in Burma; and by passing this resolution today, we not only speak on behalf of these two journalists, but call for an open, civil, transparent, and increasingly democratic society in Burma.

Mr. Speaker, I hope all Members will join me in supporting this measure, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I would like to thank my colleagues on the committee for actually, again, speaking with one voice on this issue, especially the author, Representative CHABOT, but also Representatives ENGEL, SCHIFF, YOHO, SHERMAN, COMSTOCK, and CROWLEY for joining as original cosponsors.

Mr. Speaker, this past September our committee convened another hearing to examine the desperate living conditions of Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh, and again we heard the story of survivors, all describing the same methodical, unthinkable acts of terror perpetrated by the Burmese military and by the security forces. Witnesses had no doubt that, based on all the evidence, genocide had occurred.

It is time Congress, the administration, and the rest of the world called these atrocities by their rightful name, and that is genocide.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 1091, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays. The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

□ 1445

#### RECOGNIZING THE UNITED STATES-REPUBLIC OF KOREA ALLIANCE

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 1149) recognizing that the United States-Republic of Korea alliance serves as a linchpin of regional stability and bilateral security, and exemplifies the broad and deep military, diplomatic, economic, and cultural ties shared between the United States and the Republic of Korea.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 1149

Whereas the United States Armed Forces and South Korean troops fought together to defend the Korean peninsula from Communist aggression before the Korean Armistice Agreement was signed in 1953, and the United States of America and the Republic of Korea have continued this camaraderie since signing the Mutual Defense Treaty Between the United States and the Republic of Korea that same year;

Whereas the Republic of Korea is a model for alliance burden-sharing, currently hosting 28,500 American active-duty military personnel, funding fifty percent of the total non-personnel costs of the U.S. troop presence on the Korean peninsula, fielding the world's seventh-largest military, and spending over 2.5 percent of its gross domestic product on defense;

Whereas the Republic of Korea is among the closest allies of the United States, having contributed troops in support of United States operations during the Vietnam war, Gulf war, and operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, while also supporting numerous United Nations peacekeeping missions throughout the world;

Whereas United States forces on the Korean Peninsula are critical not only to the security of the Republic of Korea but also to protect against adversaries that threaten regional stability and the United States homeland;

Whereas the U.S.-ROK Combined Forces Command is the most integrated and effective combined military command in the world and, taken together with the United Nations Command, has formed a structure that has provided effective defense and deterrence on the Korean Peninsula for decades;

Whereas North Korea has the world's fourth-largest military, in addition to potentially as many as 60 nuclear weapons and between 2,500 and 5,000 metric tons of chemical weapons;

Whereas the United States supports the Republic of Korea's efforts at peace and reconciliation on the Korean Peninsula and recognizes the critical importance of close policy coordination between Washington and Seoul;

Whereas in February 2017, a United Nations investigatory body confirmed that North Korea attempted to sell key materials for constructing miniaturized nuclear warheads, and found that ballistic missile cooperation between Iran and North Korea was "significant and meaningful";

Whereas the United States and South Korea share a commitment to democracy, human rights, and free market principles, as laid out in the 2009 U.S.-ROK Joint Vision Statement as the foundation for a 21st century "strategic alliance" based on shared values;

Whereas the Republic of Korea actively contributes to peacekeeping, cybersecurity, non-proliferation, overseas development assistance, climate change mitigation, counterterrorism, and post-conflict stabilization;

Whereas the Republic of Korea suffered economic retaliation from China for installing the United States Theater High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) ballistic missile defense system, a measure necessitated by North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile belligerence;

Whereas Korea is the world's eleventh-largest economy and the sixth-largest goods trading partner of the United States, and



creates bilateral trade and investment which supports 400,000 American jobs;

Whereas the United States is the largest foreign direct investor in the Republic of Korea, and Korean investment in the United States is increasing;

Whereas the Republic of Korea evolved from authoritarian governance to a vibrant, model democracy that embraces human rights and the rule of law in a region increasingly challenged by authoritarianism, which stands in stark contrast to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which commits human rights violations "that do not have any parallel in the contemporary world" according to a 2014 United Nations report;

Whereas the Republic of Korea has become a key stakeholder and an active and constructive participant in various international organizations, including the United Nations, G-20, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum, Association of Southeast Asian Nations Regional Forum, International Monetary Fund, World Bank, and World Trade Organization;

Whereas Korean American Day commemorates the first arrival of Koreans to the United States in 1903 and honors the great contributions of Korean Americans across all aspects of society, which will only continue to grow as this population now numbers nearly two million citizens and as Korean students constitute the third-largest source of foreign students in the United States; and

Whereas the Korean-American community remains one of the most important bridges between the Republic of Korea and the United States and has helped foster deeper ties between the two nations: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

(1) recognizes that the United States-Republic of Korea alliance serves as a linchpin of regional stability and bilateral security, and exemplifies the broad and deep military, diplomatic, economic, and cultural ties shared between the United States and the Republic of Korea;

(2) reiterates that the Republic of Korea and the United States share an interest in the continued strength of the bilateral alliance, and in further deepening the bilateral relationship;

(3) emphasizes that the United States-Republic of Korea alliance remains not only a bulwark for peace and stability in Northeast Asia, but also an exemplar of democratic values, free market principles, commitment to universal human rights, and the rule of law throughout the Indo-Pacific and globally;

(4) reaffirms the need for the United States and the Republic of Korea to stand shoulder-to-shoulder in continuing to apply the economic and financial pressure necessary to help peacefully end the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's dangerous nuclear and missile programs; and

(5) emphasizes that, regardless of the outcome of attempted negotiations with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the United States-Republic of Korea alliance will continue to deter, defend against, and defeat any outside aggressors, uphold the peace, and guard the prosperity built by our two nations.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material in the RECORD.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, strengthening U.S.-Korea ties has been one of my top priorities in Congress. As a southern Californian, I have seen firsthand how Korean Americans serve as pillars not only for their communities in the U.S., but also for the friendship between the U.S. and South Korea.

It was an honor to see my former staff member, Young Kim, represent my Orange County neighbors and myself in the California State Assembly. She served ably and energetically. Her story is the same as so many South Koreans who have come to this country and thrived.

The United States has no better partner in the Asia Pacific than the Republic of Korea. We signed the KORUS Free Trade Agreement, which went into effect in 2012. Since enactment of the KORUS Free Trade Agreement in 2012, trade has flourished, creating jobs in America and South Korea. In fact, South Korea is now our sixth largest trading partner, and, today, this partnership remains as important as ever as we look at the growing challenges across Asia.

We stood by Seoul as it was wrongfully punished by China for installing the THAAD ballistic missile defense system. And we continue to lead in helping to address the grave and immediate threats North Korea poses to Seoul and poses to the United States and our neighboring partners.

Despite recent diplomatic efforts, it was recently reported that North Korea has expanded a missile base along the Chinese border. A nearby second facility was also uncovered, while numerous undeclared missile bases have now been identified. And last month, North Korea's official news media reported that it successfully tested a new "state-of-the-art weapon that has been long developed . . . significantly improving the combat power of our people's army." That is their quote.

These provocations and developments should underscore the threat we face from North Korea. That is why it is so important that we continue to press forward together with a campaign of maximum financial and diplomatic pressure. We must remain clear-eyed that the third generation of the Kim regime poses just as significant of a threat to us, our partners, and, most acutely, the North Korean people as ever.

Again, the U.S. has no better friend in Asia or anywhere else in the world

than South Korea. We must continue to strengthen this partnership, particularly in the face of the threats we continue to face.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and I rise in support of this measure.

Mr. Speaker, let me once again start by thanking Chairman ROYCE. He has been one of Congress' most active leaders, if not the most active leader, on policy related to the Korean Peninsula. He leaves behind a great legacy after a distinguished career in this Chamber and a remarkable record of bipartisanship and leadership on the Foreign Affairs Committee.

The measure before us today affirms that the United States-Republic of Korea alliance will continue to defend against outside aggressors, uphold the peace, and guard the prosperity built by our two nations.

This resolution is before us at a critical time. The American alliance with South Korea is under intense strain. It is critical that we coordinate with our partners in Seoul when it comes to North Korea, but we see the administration and our South Korean partner are not on the same page when it comes to this important security issue. I am deeply concerned about the potential consequences of this gap between our administration and our ally, and many of us in both parties share the concern.

Now, the question of how we handle American policy toward North Korea is very important. This resolution rightly lays out that we should continue to apply economic pressure to the Kim regime, but we need to remember sanctions are a tool, not a complete strategy. We need to fully articulate a diplomatic strategy to accompany sanctions and enable them to work properly.

I also think it is important that our sanctions policy provides specific humanitarian exemptions. Life-saving humanitarian aid has never been held hostage to the political whims of the Kim family. We need to continue that tradition and not allow the impoverished, mistreated people of North Korea to pay the price for their dictator's political machinations.

I agree with the chairman that we need to put economic pressure on the North Korean regime. But Congress should continue to provide space for diplomacy and humanitarian assistance, as we do now in our current sanctions policy. The resolution before us today would be a stronger piece of legislation if it contained mention of this principle.

Although I wish the resolution laid out more explicitly the importance of a holistic strategy to accompany sanctions, it is a good measure that I am proud to support.

Our alliance with Korea is of paramount importance to our strategic and security interests, and I am glad this



measure reaffirms our strong commitment to that partnership.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all Members to join me in supporting this resolution, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. YOHO), chairman of the Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific.

Mr. YOHO. Mr. Speaker, with this resolution, the United States recognizes its longstanding and multifaceted relationship with the Republic of Korea, one that runs much deeper than the headlines of today's news may convey.

Once among the world's poorest countries and devastated by war less than 70 years ago, you would find it difficult to believe the stories of Korea's past by visiting Seoul today. I led a bipartisan codel to Seoul this September to meet with members of the parliament, Foreign Affairs, Trade, and Defense Ministries, and North Korean defectors. The U.S.-South Korea partnership is so much more than a military alliance. Our partnership cultivated the Miracle on the Han River and showed the world how a nation can transition from aid to trade.

As stated, South Korea is now our sixth largest trading partner and tenth largest importer of agricultural products. South Korea has lived under the threat of war since its founding, but it has managed to lift its people out of extreme poverty and become an aid donor, a leader in international fora, one of the greatest sources of investment in the United States, and a shining example to many other countries in the region.

As revisionist powers challenge the vision and values that underpin the South Korean miracle, the United States needs partners more today than ever before, partners that embody and promote the open border from which we have both deeply benefited.

With this resolution, the House recognizes the United States' special bond with the Republic of Korea, and the need to deepen and cultivate this partnership to promote peace and prosperity of both nations well into the future.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN), one of our most senior and ranking members on the House Committee on Foreign Affairs. He is ranking member of the Asia and the Pacific Subcommittee.

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman ROYCE for introducing H. Res. 1149, which recognizes the importance of our alliance with South Korea.

As ranking member of the Asia and the Pacific Subcommittee and a member of the Congressional Caucus on Korea, I am pleased to cosponsor this resolution with several other Members of Congress.

The U.S. and South Korea share common values—democracy, commitment to justice—but we also share a unique

bond of history. The United States military and South Korean troops fought side by side to defend the Korean Peninsula before the Armistice Agreement of 1953. Today, we continue to cooperate in order to defend the Korean Peninsula. In fact, South Korea currently hosts 28,500 American Active Duty military personnel.

Only 35 miles separate Seoul from North Korea, and when I was there with the chairman, we noticed that property values are considerably lower on the north side of Seoul than on the south side of Seoul. While we have substantial conventional forces there, no number of soldiers can deal with the biggest threat from North Korea; namely, its nuclear arsenal.

Now, I know it has been tweeted that we no longer face a nuclear threat from North Korea, would that that be so. Secretary of State Pompeo has recently stated that North Korea continues to make more fissile material, no doubt using that to make more nuclear bombs, even several every year. And satellite imagery shows that North Korea is continuing to build and expand bases for intercontinental ballistic missiles.

So we are standing shoulder to shoulder with South Korea, but we face a real threat from North Korea, and we will not be able to deal with that threat without the assistance of both South Korea and Japan.

This resolution reaffirms the need for the United States and South Korea to stand shoulder to shoulder in continuing to apply necessary economic pressure on North Korea. Toward that end, I would say that we have scaled back in substance, if not in legal form, our sanctions against North Korea, perhaps falsely believing that a few words exchanged in Singapore are a reason to do so.

Recently, we have sent a letter to the administration, a bipartisan letter urging them to sanction major Chinese banks, not just small ones, that have done business with North Korea in violation of U.S. law and U.N. sanctions.

Now, it is important also to look at the Korean American community, and I am pleased that the resolution recognizes the importance of the bridges created by the American Korean community between the United States and the Republic of Korea.

I recently led a letter urging President Trump and President Moon to make a major priority among North Korea, the United States, and South Korea allowing American citizens, some 100,000 of them, who have relatives in North Korea to at least be allowed to visit their relatives and, even before that, at least be allowed to talk to them over the phone. We must recognize the potential for the Korean American community to serve the cause of peace and to help establish a dialogue.

Again, I thank Chairman ROYCE for his leadership on this measure and urge its adoption.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Let me say, Mr. Speaker, I again thank Chairman ROYCE for his years of leadership on the Foreign Affairs Committee and his remarkable legacy on setting the agenda for American policy in the Korean Peninsula.

The United States-South Korea alliance is essential to our strategic posture in Asia. Our commitment to the Republic of Korea will persevere as a critical part of American foreign policy. It should be our utmost priority to deepen and strengthen our cooperation, and this resolution continues and aids that strong partnership.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the passage of this resolution, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, first of all, I again recognize and thank ELIOT ENGEL for his work on all of these measures, and I also recognize the importance of the U.S.-South Korean partnership. I have discussed the importance of that defense relationship as we stood shoulder to shoulder during the Korean war and how our economic partnership, bolstered by the enactment of the KORUS FTA, supports 400,000 American jobs.

□ 1500

While we discuss the importance of this partnership, I want to recognize that there is no greater bridge between our countries than the Korean American community. Since first arriving in the United States in 1903, they have worked tirelessly to form closer bonds between the United States and South Korea. And looking forward, the U.S. will remain committed to this important relationship.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LARSEN of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I rise to voice my strong support for H. Res. 1149 and the alliance between the United States and the Republic of Korea.

Our two nations have forged an important military alliance and strong economic and diplomatic friendship built on shared support for democracy, free markets and human rights. I have long advocated for increasing the American commitment to the Indo-Asia-Pacific region, with the important U.S.-Korean relationship central to that strategy.

Both of our nations are threatened by North Korea's nuclear program. With nuclear talks at an apparent standstill, the current reduction in bilateral military exercises may be harming joint readiness with little to show for it. I will continue to urge the administration to conduct exercises when militarily necessary and separate our military cooperation with South Korea from ongoing negotiations about North Korea's nuclear program.

The United States and the Republic of Korea share a desire to eliminate the threat posed by North Korea's nuclear and missile

programs and secure a lasting peace on the Korean Peninsula. By working together as allies and friends we increase the likelihood of making these aspirations into reality.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BOST). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 1149.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

# REAFFIRMING THE STRONG COMMITMENT OF THE UNITED STATES TO THE COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS REGION

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 1157) reaffirming the strong commitment of the United States to the countries and territories of the Pacific Islands region.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

## H. RES. 1157

Whereas the Pacific Islands countries and territories are home to more than 10 million culturally diverse people and are rooted in a unique culture and history spanning thousands of years;

Whereas the South Pacific region, of which the Pacific Islands countries and territories are an integral part, is endowed with a resource-rich ocean stretching over 20 million square miles;

Whereas the United States partnership with the countries of the Pacific Islands region dates back to the battles of World War II on the shores of Tarawa, Pelelieu, and Guadalcanal, where Pacific Islanders and Americans alike sacrificed for our collective security;

Whereas the United States territories of American Samoa, Guam, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands are located in the South Pacific region and some of these relationships date back to the Spanish-American War;

Whereas the United States is committed to the future security and prosperity of the Pacific Islands countries and territories and is responsible for security and defense matters in and relating to Palau, the Federated States of Micronesia, and the Republic of the Marshall Islands under their respective Compacts of Free Association;

Whereas the Compacts of Free Association arrangements with the Federated States of Micronesia and the Republic of the Marshall Islands were renewed in 2003 for a period of 20 years and negotiations regarding the subsequent renewal of these agreements should be concluded in advance of their expiration in 2023;

Whereas the South Pacific region is critical to United States national security and defense, and there are several United States military bases and testing sites in the region, including the Ronald Reagan Ballistic Missile Defense Test Site on the Marshall Islands;

Whereas the United States cooperates closely with Pacific Islands countries and

territories as a partner committed to a common future that advances national security, regional cooperation, and trust and collaborating on a wide range of important issues such as addressing environmental and public health threats, distributing humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, and promoting peace and prosperity in the region;

Whereas in the Boe Declaration of 2018, leaders of Pacific Islands countries and territories reaffirmed that the threat of climate change imperils the livelihoods, security, and well-being of the peoples of such countries and territories;

Whereas a major priority of Pacific Islands countries and territories is addressing environmental and sustainability challenges, including responding to national disasters, and implementing environmental programs to address mitigating their unique vulnerabilities to the effects of rising sea levels, combatting ocean acidification, and protecting natural resources, and extreme weather events remains a priority for and point of collaboration between the United States and Pacific Islands countries;

Whereas the United States works closely with Australia and New Zealand and other like-minded partners in the South Pacific region, and there is opportunity for enhancing such cooperation as all three countries look for opportunities to increase their focus on this important region;

Whereas China's increased influence in the South Pacific region and the possibility of a future Chinese military presence in this region could expand its monitoring and surveillance capabilities, threatening the United States military presence in the region;

Whereas media reports revealed that Chinese scientists placed acoustic sensors in the Mariana Trench near Guam and near the island of Yap in the Federated States of Micronesia, which could be used to monitor United States submarine activity in the region;

Whereas planned casino resort developments by Chinese investors on the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands could complicate Department of Defense plans on the islands for extensive training and exercises resulting from the relocation of Marines from Okinawa, Japan;

Whereas a bilateral agreement between the United States and Japan will relocate approximately 4,100 United States Marines from Okinawa, Japan to Guam, significantly bolstering United States national security in the region;

Whereas official Chinese Government statements and policy documents indicate that the Pacific Islands are a component of the Belt and Road Initiative, which according to the Department of Defense aims "to develop strong economic ties with other countries, shape their interests to align with China's, and deter confrontation or criticism of China's approach to sensitive issues";

Whereas the Lowy Institute found that China has pledged \$5.88 billion worth of aid to the region since 2011, yet despite these large commitments, China has only spent \$1.26 billion so far and concerns remain over the types of loans extended and whether the commitments will be kept;

Whereas recent debt sustainability analysis by the World Bank shows that nine Pacific Islands countries and territories are currently classified as either at high or moderate risk of debt distress;

Whereas China continues to shrink the number of Taiwan's international partners around the globe by inducing countries to switch recognition through financial incentives and six of Taiwan's remaining diplomatic allies in the Pacific Islands region advocate on Taiwan's behalf at the United Nations and other international fora;

Whereas the United States plays an active role in regional fisheries management through its involvement in the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission and in maintaining programs to help Pacific Island countries combat illegal fishing, including bilateral "shiprider" agreements that allow law enforcement officers of host partner countries onboard United States Coast Guard ships and aircraft to patrol national exclusive economic zones;

Whereas the United States, through more than 17 departments and agencies, committed more than \$350 million in fiscal year 2017 to engagement with Pacific Islands countries;

Whereas the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2018 and the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2018 authorized and appropriated \$123.8 million in funding through 2024 for the 2010 Palau Compact Review Agreement;

Whereas every two years, the United States Navy's Pacific Fleet hosts the world's largest international maritime exercise, known as the "Rim of the Pacific", for which this past year Tongan Marines traveled to Hawaii with Australia's Navy to participate and Fiji has been invited to join the exercise in 2020; and

Whereas in September 2018 at the 30th Pacific Islands Forum in Nauru, Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke stated the United States "see[s] all of the Pacific Islands as an essential part of our free and open Indo-Pacific policy"; Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

(1) reaffirms its strong commitment to United States engagement with all countries and territories of the South Pacific region, including the Cook Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, French Polynesia, Kiribati, Nauru, New Caledonia, Niue, the Republic of Palau, Papua New Guinea, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, the Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu;

(2) reaffirms its strong support to the United States Pacific Island territories of Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and American Samoa, home to nearly 300,000 United States citizens;

(3) supports continued efforts to deepen cooperation with countries and territories of the Pacific Islands in areas of mutual interest, such as addressing the negative impacts of climate change, promoting sustainable economic development, and supporting regional organizations and stability;

(4) calls for the United States to increase the frequency of high-level bilateral and multilateral visits with leaders of Pacific Islands;

(5) promotes and supports efforts by Australia, New Zealand, France, and other like-minded partners to strengthen Pacific Islands countries' sovereignty and development through economic and security assistance; and

(6) encourages continued support for the Compacts of Free Association which enhance the strategic posture of the United States in the Western Pacific, reinforce United States regional commitment, preempt potential adversaries from establishing positional advantage, and further self-governance, economic development, and self-sufficiency of the Freely Associated States.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

## GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include any extraneous material in the record.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I want to recognize Representative BORDALLO for introducing this measure on an important but often overlooked part of the world, and that is the South Pacific.

Mr. Speaker, the Pacific Islands are an essential part of the South Pacific region. Today we express our commitment to these countries' and territories' security and to their prosperity.

Our country has a long history with the Pacific Islands and territories. Today we have 300,000 United States citizens that reside in the territories of Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and in American Samoa.

The U.S. is engaged in this important region through a variety of programs which promote national security and also regional cooperation. They address conservation and public health threats. They distribute humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, and they promote peace and prosperity.

The United States has supported these endeavors under the Compacts of Free Association with Palau, the Federated States of Micronesia, and the Republic of the Marshall Islands. These important arrangements have allowed the U.S. to project a presence in the region for 30 years, but these compacts expire in 2023.

The United States must continue to reassure the Pacific Island countries of our enduring commitment to having a continuing presence in the region and negotiate compact renewals before they expire.

Our relationship with this region is unfolding against the backdrop of a shifting strategic environment where Beijing and others seek to wield a greater influence in the South Pacific.

For these reasons, I urge my colleagues to join me in support of this measure which reaffirms the importance of continuing to engage and cooperate with the Pacific Island countries and territories.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this measure.

First of all, I want to acknowledge the gentlewoman from Guam (Ms. BORDALLO), my colleague, for her long-standing advocacy of American engagement in the Pacific region. I thank her for introducing this resolution.

This measure supports cooperation with the Pacific Islands in the areas

where we both have critical interests, including support for regional organizations and promotion of sustainable economic development.

The resolution rightly focuses on a critical threat facing the Pacific Islands and the United States, which is climate change.

In September of this year, Pacific Island leaders reaffirmed in a joint declaration that "climate change remains the single greatest threat to the livelihoods, security, and well-being of the peoples of the Pacific."

I wish that the President and the administration would act on that threat, but, instead, the United States refuses to acknowledge climate change at recent international conferences. The refusal to acknowledge established scientific fact is really wrong and dangerous.

Our country has a critical role to play in the effort to address climate change, and when we abdicate that responsibility, we endanger future generations and the regions most at risk, like the Pacific Islands.

So this is a good resolution, affirming America's commitment to advance self-government, economic development, and self-sufficiency for all the people of this strategically important region.

It is important to note that this resolution expresses our continued support for our compact agreements with the Freely Associated States. The Pacific Islands remain a region critical to our interests and the interests of our partners, including Australia, New Zealand, and Japan. It makes sense that we would continue to support investments that enhance our partnership with the Pacific Islands.

I support this measure, and I urge all Members to do the same.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN).

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, as ranking member of the Asia and the Pacific Subcommittee, I rise to support H. Res. 1157, which reaffirms the strong commitment of the United States to the countries and territories of the Pacific Islands region. I want to applaud Representative BORDALLO for introducing this, and I am proud to join with others as a cosponsor.

First, this resolution sends an important message to the 300,000 Americans who call the region home. Our fellow Americans in Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, and American Samoa, for them, this measure recognizes that they are a critical part of our Nation's fabric.

Indeed, when North Korea threatened to launch missiles at a U.S. territory, it said that it would hit Guam. We cannot forget about these Pacific territories and, in Congress, we have an ob-

ligation to make sure that their voices are heard in these Halls.

This resolution also specifically encourages continued support for the Compacts of Free Association which we currently have with the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and Palau. Currently, the United States provides, under these compacts, essential governmental functions, including defense.

While our compact with Palau was recently renewed, the Compacts of Free Association with the Federated States of Micronesia and the Marshall Islands will expire in 2023. We in Congress should not wait. We should ensure that the compacts are expeditiously renewed. These arrangements not only help encourage the development of Palau, Micronesia, and the Marshall Islands, but also serve our core national security interests.

I know firsthand that we cannot take our Pacific partnerships for granted—not just in the compact states, but across the region, because other states around the region are facing entreaties from the Chinese Government.

The Chinese Government states that the Pacific Islands are a core component of their One Belt, One Road initiative, which seeks to ensnare small nations into Beijing's debt traps.

We know that China is stepping up its military involvement in the region, recently placing acoustic sensors in the Mariana Trench to track American submarine movements.

As the resolution recognizes, the solution to this challenge is for the U.S. to strengthen its engagement. We must "increase the frequency of high-level bilateral and multilateral visits with leaders of Pacific Islands" and find issues to work on in common.

For example, many of the Pacific Island nations face an existential threat from rising sea levels. Accordingly, this resolution calls for us to work with these countries to address the negative impacts of climate change. Many of the territories or islands of these countries actually face submergence as a result of rising sea levels. In doing so, we would work with our partners around the world.

While China employs bully tactics to unilaterally assert itself in the Pacific, the United States sets an example by working closely with the island nations and with Australia and New Zealand to promote sustainable development across the region.

I want to thank Representative BORDALLO again for her leadership on this issue. This resolution is an overdue affirmation of our commitment to the prosperity of the American territories in the Pacific and to the strengthening of the relationships between the United States and the nations of the region.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I want to again thank Congresswoman BORDALLO for introducing this resolution.

American engagement in the Pacific Islands region is critical to our strategic posture in the Western Pacific. With its passage, we reaffirm our commitment to the islands. I support this resolution, and I encourage my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, with the shifting strategic environment of the South Pacific, it is really more important than ever that we engage Pacific Island nations and the Pacific Islands Forum to solve regional problems and to promote prosperity.

We must maintain support for the Compacts of Free Association which enhance the strategic posture of the U.S. and the Western Pacific, which also reinforce our regional commitment and preempt potential adversaries from establishing positional advantage there.

This resolution signals our resolve to maintain and deepen our collaboration with our friends and allies in the Pacific Islands and territories. I, therefore, urge my colleagues to join me in support of this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 1157.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### CONDEMNING THE ASSAD REGIME AND ITS BACKERS FOR THEIR CONTINUED SUPPORT OF WAR CRIMES AND CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY IN SYRIA

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 1165) condemning the Assad regime and its backers for their continued support of war crimes and crimes against humanity in Syria.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

##### H. RES. 1165

Whereas Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, with the support of Iran and the Russian Federation, has committed widespread atrocities against the people of Syria, leading to one of the worst humanitarian crises in over 70 years, including the deaths of more than 500,000 people, the destruction of more than 50 percent of Syria's critical infrastructure, and the forced displacement of more than 14 million people;

Whereas the Assad regime, with the support of Iran and the Russian Federation, has conducted violent attacks against humanitarian aid workers, supplies, facilities, transports, and assets, and impeded the access and secure movement of humanitarian personnel, and has used chemical weapons against the Syrian people on numerous occasions;

Whereas since the introduction of Russian forces into Syria in September 2015, Russia has deployed over 68,000 Russian personnel to help sustain the Assad regime, and has reportedly transferred the S-300 surface-to-air missile system to Syria, giving Russia, Iran, Hezbollah, and other Iranian-backed militias additional cover for their activities in Syria;

Whereas Iran is estimated to have deployed over 3,000 Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) and regular Iranian military advisers to Syria and approximately 20,000 militia fighters, including 'Asaib ahl al-Haq, Harakat Hezbollah al-Nujaba, Fatimeyoun, and Zainabiyoun, which continue to expand their presence in Syria;

Whereas Director of National Intelligence Dan Coats has stated "it's unlikely Russia has the will or capability to fully implement and counter Iranian decision and influence" in Syria;

Whereas Iran's positions in Syria, which Iran has used to launch rockets and drones toward Israel, are critical to Iran's efforts to create a "land bridge" from Iran through Iraq and Syria to Lebanon so that it can arm Hezbollah in Lebanon with rockets and missiles, and increase the accuracy of Hezbollah's munitions;

Whereas Iranian-backed militias have demolished civilian areas, implemented sieges, and evicted civilian residents throughout Syria in a campaign of forced displacement, where Iranian-funded reconstruction plans to sell housing developments to foreign militias risk establishing a permanent Iranian presence and obstacle for return of thousands of Syrian families who fled Syria; and

Whereas the Syrian Government has reportedly signed agreements with Iran and IRGC controlled companies with respect to military cooperation: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

(1) supports a political solution to the conflict which will result in the air space of Syria no longer being utilized by the Assad regime or Russia to target civilians, an end to the sieges carried out by Assad, Russia, Iran, Hezbollah, and other Iranian-backed militias, and the release of all political prisoners;

(2) opposes international reconstruction funds from supporting projects in Syria in areas controlled by the Assad regime as long as the Assad regime remains in power;

(3) condemns the Assad regime, the Government of the Russian Federation, the Government of Iran, and Hezbollah and other Iranian-backed militias for their continued support of war crimes and crimes against humanity in Syria, including the widespread use of torture, summary executions, prolonged sieges, forced relocations, and indiscriminate targeting of civilians and humanitarian actors;

(4) recognizes that as long as the Assad regime remains in power, it will continue to oppress the Syrian people, the Russian Federation will continue to expand its influence in the Middle East, and Iran will remain entrenched in Syria;

(5) calls upon the President and Secretary of State to work towards a sustainable political transition in Syria that results in a government in Syria that is not a danger to its own people, abandons its chemical weapons program, allows for the safe, dignified, and voluntary return of displaced persons, and

does not provide Iran with a platform to threaten Syria's neighbors;

(6) urges the President and the Secretary of State develop a strategy to prevent a permanent Iranian presence in Syria, understanding that the Russia Federation has not proven to be a viable partner to help in this effort;

(7) urges the Secretary of State to investigate and determine whether the forced displacement of Syrian civilians from their homes through brutal sieges, starvation, and indiscriminate targeting of civilians, and repopulation with foreign fighters constitutes sectarian or ethnic cleansing; and

(8) calls on the President and Secretary of State to determine whether militias operating in Syria under the command of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), including Harakat Hezbollah al-Nujaba, Fatemiyoun, Zainabioun, and 'Asaib ahl al-Haq are terrorist organizations and meet the criteria for sanctions pursuant to Executive Order 13460 or 13582.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

##### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on this measure.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution represents a broad bipartisan agreement that there will be no peace in Syria as long as the Assad regime remains in power and as long as Russia and Iran continue their entrenchment in that country.

For 7 years, the world has watched the brutal dictator, Bashar al-Assad, inflict untold suffering on the Syrian people. Since the beginning of the conflict, half a million people have been killed and 13 million, largely women and children, remain in dire need of basic humanitarian assistance in Syria.

The brutal Assad regime continues its onslaught on the civilian population in Syria, aided by the Iranian Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps on the ground and the Russian Air Force in the sky.

Rather than working to eject Iran from Syria, Russia has been directly coordinating with Hezbollah, with the IRGC, and with other Iranian-backed militias that have expanded significantly throughout Syria.

□ 1515

Russia has even now reportedly transferred the S-300 surface-to-air missile system to Syria, giving these militias additional cover for their activities in Syria.

Despite signing a deescalation agreement with President Trump last year

promising a cease-fire in southern Syria, Russia directly assisted Iranian-backed militias in their takeover of southern Syria, moving these militias right up to the border with Israel.

This resolution makes clear that it is unrealistic to believe that Russia will ever be a reliable partner to counter the Iranian presence in Syria.

As Director of National Intelligence Dan Coats has stated so clearly:

It's unlikely Russia has the will or capability to fully implement and counter Iranian decision and influence in Syria.

This resolution also states that Iranian-backed militias should be investigated for the war crime of sectarian cleansing for their forced displacement of civilians in the Damascus suburbs, which has included demolishing civilian areas, implementing brutal sieges, and selling housing developments and then turning them over, once they have been occupied by these militias, to Iranian-backed militias, including Hezbollah.

Finally, this resolution calls for the administration to act quickly to develop a strategy towards a political transition in Syria where the Assad regime leaves power and all Iranian and Russian forces leave the country.

The Assad regime's atrocities, which include the use of chemical weapons, barrel bombs, and brutal sieges, helped create the conditions whereby ISIS emerged in the first place.

The regime's continued survival, along with the Iranian influence in Syria, will only perpetuate the cycle of violence, once again creating the conditions for the reemergence of ISIS or al-Qaida and other radical Islamist groups.

After 7 years of horror, U.S. policy in Syria should be guided by this key reality: there is no solution to the conflict in Syria as long as the brutal Assad regime remains in power.

Efforts to legitimize the regime through so-called constitutional reform negotiations or in allowing Assad to run in elections are unrealistic and are doomed to fail.

Mr. Speaker, lastly, I want to thank my colleague and friend, the ranking member of this committee, Mr. ENGEL, for his efforts over the years in order to try to focus our attention.

From the beginning, when this process of people protesting in Damascus began with people walking through the street saying, "Peaceful, peaceful," and we watched on CNN as the automatic weapons of Assad's forces opened up on those peaceful protesters, from that day on, Mr. ENGEL worked to try to get engagement and to head off some of this crisis, the magnitude of which we deal with today as a result of the Iranian militias.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume, and I rise in support of this measure.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Mr. MAST of Florida, who authored this

measure, and I want to, again, extend my thanks to Chairman ROYCE, particularly for his very kind and generous words.

We have worked for the last several years, so many years, on the Foreign Affairs Committee to try to bring peace to Syria. We have been frustrated in watching the dictator kill hundreds of thousands of his own people, innocent men, women, and children.

I think one of the most horrific days that I have ever spent in Washington was when we had Caesar, the photographer who was part of the regime but defected and escaped with his pictures of genocide and pictures of unbearable, unthinkable atrocities that kind of scarred my brain forever, and I know the same goes for the chairman. We will never forget it. And we will keep trying to fight for the people of Syria and try to bring the dictator and the people who allow him to do these horrific things to justice.

It has been very difficult, because the Russians have embraced Assad, but it is absolutely disgraceful.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Mr. ROYCE for his kind words. He has said a lot of things about what I did, but it couldn't have possibly been done without him as the chairman working side by side, the two of us, pushing these important issues, and Syria has certainly been a situation that needed our attention.

I just regret that we weren't able to do more to stop the slaughter in Syria, but I want to thank Chairman ROYCE, who has just been fantastic in terms of having a moral compass to say that what is going on should not stand and calling attention to the atrocities.

So, Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman ROYCE and Mr. MAST.

Mr. Speaker, the crisis in Syria has gone on for far too long, a civil war that has killed at least half a million people, displaced more than 11 million Syrians, and stoked instability and extremism well beyond Syria's borders.

Iran and al-Qaida are on Israel's doorstep; refugees have overwhelmed Turkey, Lebanon, and Jordan; and the human suffering inside Syria is still unimaginable.

Just 2 weeks ago, an American family learned the tragic news that their daughter was tortured and killed in Assad's prison. Leila was one of thousands of cases of enforced disappearance in Syria.

The Assad regime has had plenty of help, as this resolution points out. The Syrian regime was on the ropes earlier in the conflict when Iran sent thousands of fighters to defend its ally, Bashar al-Assad. Iranian-backed Hezbollah has been battle hardened, gaining fighting experience in Syria, displacing communities wholesale, and remaking Syrian society in their image.

The Russian Government came in to save the Assad regime when they again seemed to be losing the war, and the

Russians sent fighter jets to target civilian populations and infrastructure, hospitals, schools, markets. We have heard from Syrian doctors who were delivering babies as air strikes threatened them from above, and then when civilian defense workers, the White Helmets showed up to clear the rubble, Russian bombs targeted the emergency workers, too. That is just shameful.

And it is not over. Idlib, a city of 2 million people, many of whom fled other conflict zones, is now under threat of annihilation. Truth be told, terrorists have a strong presence there, emboldened by the war crimes of the Syrian regime and their allies.

As Assad seeks to consolidate power and territory, millions of innocent people stand in the crosshairs.

There is no military solution to this conflict. Assad may believe that he can bomb his way out of this, but the regime's presence will continue to be a magnet for extremists.

Iran's permanent presence in Syria will only lead to further instability. And let me be very clear: we cannot and should not rely on Russian assurances to remove Iran from Syria.

You know the old adage, "Fool me once, shame on you. Fool me twice, shame on me." The only thing that the Russians can be trusted to do in Syria is foment further instability on behalf of the regime.

This resolution comes at a critical time. It calls on the administration to work toward a political solution to this conflict and it seeks to build American leverage in negotiations by opposing international reconstruction funds that would support projects in Assad-controlled territory.

Lastly, I want to thank the many Syrian-American groups, which I have worked closely with, who have been doing whatever they can possibly do to stop the carnage and the evilness of the Assad regime. I will be continuing to work with the Syrian-American groups. Hopefully we can one day restore freedom and democracy to that beleaguered land.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to support this resolution, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROSELEHTINEN), who chairs the Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa.

Ms. ROSELEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman ROYCE and Ranking Member ENGEL for their leadership in bringing this bipartisan measure to the floor today.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to especially thank the author of this important resolution, my Florida colleague, BRIAN MAST, for his efforts in calling attention to the bloody Assad regime. What a highly valued member Mr. MAST is to our committee and to this institution. He is an American hero and an American treasure.

There is no one more responsible for what is going on in Syria, as Mr. MAST

has pointed out in his resolution, than Bashar al-Assad. Who is the one responsible for this massacre of his own people? Al-Assad.

Assad brutally repressed peaceful Syrians who were demanding change in their country. Assad unleashed thousands of terrorists from the prisons into Iraq in 2003, helping to create the precursor to ISIS, and he did so again during the Syrian protests of 2011, leading to the founding and growth of ISIS.

And Assad, with his brutal and insidious tactics, is responsible for the hundreds of thousands of murders, for war crimes, for crimes against humanity. He continues to be responsible for the daily terror occurring in Syria to this day. Bashar al-Assad is the one responsible.

This is not a man who can lead a country. So we must use every tool at our disposal to put pressure on Assad and his backers, including pressure on Iran, pressure on Russia. They are the ones who are backing him. We have got to pass my good friend Mr. ENGEL's bill, the Caesar Syria Civilian Protection Act, and the bill that he puts forth with Mr. ROYCE, the No Assistance for Assad Act. These are important bills, and they are still pending in the Senate, as all good bills go, pending in the Senate.

We must ensure that Assad is not allowed to participate in any future election in Syria.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend, Mr. MAST of Florida, for authoring this important resolution. I urge all of my colleagues to give it their support.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MAST), a member of the Foreign Affairs Committee and the author of this bill.

Mr. MAST. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman ROYCE for yielding me the time and for his continued leadership on this critical issue. It has been an honor to serve with him and to learn from him. Absolutely, I couldn't say that more seriously. It has been an honor.

Mr. Speaker, I do rise today in support of H. Res. 1165. It is a resolution condemning the Assad regime and its backers, including Iran and Russia, for their continued support of war crimes and crimes against humanity in Syria.

Now, after 7 years of war, as was already mentioned, the deaths of more than half a million people have occurred. Now, let's do a little bit of math on that. That would be over 70,000 people each year. When you think of the march of killing each and every day, that is a government march by the Assad regime of killing over 200 people every single day of the year.

The atrocities of the Assad regime are still ongoing with the help of Russia and Iran. And what do these atrocities look like: burning individuals to death, having them buried under rubble, having an adult put a 7.62 Kalash-

nikov round into a child, the use of chemical devices. The United States must push for an end to this and must push to hold these perpetrators accountable.

Currently, Iran is estimated to have deployed over 3,000 Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps soldiers into the area. Iran is also responsible for directing Hezbollah and other militia fighters to battle on behalf of the regime.

Should Iran be allowed to maintain a permanent military presence in Syria, it will pose an even greater threat to Israel, to Jordan, and to all United States interests in the region.

This resolution calls upon the President and the Secretary of State to work towards a sustainable political transition in Syria and a strategy to stop a permanent Iranian presence in the region.

□ 1530

The resolution also condemns the Russian Federation, which has deployed more than 68,000 Russian personnel, for their continued support of war crimes and crimes against humanity in Syria.

H. Res. 1165 reiterates Congress' opposition to U.S. assistance to government-controlled areas in Syria.

Mr. Speaker, the United States must continue to work with our partners to condemn the Assad regime's horrific abuses against the Syrian people and counter Iran and Russia's malign influence in the region.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this critical resolution.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KILDEE).

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 1165, condemning the Assad regime and its backers for their continued support of war crimes and crimes against humanity in Syria: nearly half a million Syrians killed, 14 million Syrians displaced, and countless acts of atrocities from the Assad regime supported by its backers in Iran and in Russia. Clearly, it is right that Congress takes this step and acts.

This resolution urges a political solution to this conflict, to ensure the Assad regime cannot use the air to target its own civilians.

This resolution brings much-needed attention to the atrocities of this regime, which is responsible for horrific crimes, again, against its own people.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues for their hard work and advocacy for this resolution that seeks to hold this regime accountable, and I urge my colleagues to pass this legislation. It shines a bright light on what is happening in Syria and the crimes committed by the Assad regime, along with its backers in Russia and in Iran.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the passage of this resolution, and, again, I thank my colleagues for their work on this effort.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman

from Texas (Mr. POE), chairman of the Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, for more than 7 years, the butcher of Syria has been slaughtering his own people. This relentless mass murderer has left half a million dead and millions others displaced. He has bombed, gassed, gunned down, and executed the Syrian people. He is, obviously, the Satan of Syria.

After the horrors of World War II, we were supposed to have rid the world of such evil, but, for years, we have shamefully watched it unfold. Mr. Speaker, it has always been crystal-clear who is responsible. The criminal butcher, the barbarian, Bashar al-Assad and his Russian and Iranian outlaws have turned the cradle of civilization into ashes.

Russian and Syrian warplanes have laid waste to Syrian towns, hospitals, and aid convoys from the air. On the ground, thousands of Iranian-backed militiamen have waged a campaign of outright sectarian cleansing.

These militias are the wicked arm of the IRGC and the Ayatollah of Iran. These militias are one of the most dangerous aspects of this chaotic war. They not only kill innocents today, but they kill any hope for a future Syria by sowing deep divisions along sectarian lines.

The time is well past that they are all called to be accountable. That is why I introduced legislation more than a year ago calling on the State Department to designate some of these Iranian-supported militias as terrorists. I am pleased this resolution also calls for these groups to be designated as such. These killers must meet justice for the crimes they have committed against the people of the world.

I congratulate Mr. MAST on bringing this to the House floor. I also thank Chairman ROYCE and Ranking Member ENGEL for their tenacious efforts in making sure the American people understand what is taking place throughout the world.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

And that is just the way it is.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, let me say that this resolution reminds us of the importance of building leverage as we push for an end to the crisis in Syria. We can and we should do more to increase that leverage.

Congress, as Chairman ROYCE mentioned before, could do so today by passing the Caesar Syria Civilian Protection Act, my legislation to pressure the Assad regime to stop the violence, to sit down and negotiate an end to this conflict.

It really breaks my heart that it is being held in the other body, and we are hoping, before the end of the year, that we can shake it loose. It had tremendous support in this Chamber, bipartisan support, support on both sides



of the aisle. The House passed it twice; the administration strongly supports it; and the Syrian people desperately need it. The clock is running out in the other body, with one single Member opposing it.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the Caesar bill and the resolution before us today, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

In closing, I thank my colleagues, the ranking member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, Mr. ENGEL; Major BRIAN MAST of Florida; as well as the leadership on both sides of the aisle, for their bipartisan work on this resolution.

The Syrian people deserve a government that respects basic human rights and a government that is free of Iranian-backed militias. As long as the Assad regime remains in power, this will not be the case.

The administration needs to develop a strategy toward a sustainable political transition in Syria and to prevent Iranian entrenchment, recognizing that Russia has not been a reliable partner in either effort.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to back this resolution to once again condemn the Assad regime, Russia, and Iran for their unspeakable crimes against the Syrian people, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 1165.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### EXPRESSING OPPOSITION TO THE COMPLETION OF NORD STREAM II

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 1035) expressing opposition to the completion of Nord Stream II, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

##### H. RES. 1035

Whereas Nord Stream II is an underwater gas pipeline that, if completed, will transport natural gas from the Russian Federation through the Baltic Sea to Germany;

Whereas Russia controls the supply of nearly 40 percent of Europe's gas and 11 European countries rely on Russian gas for 75 percent or more for their annual needs;

Whereas Nord Stream II will increase Russian control over the European energy market;

Whereas Donald Tusk, the President of the European Council, stated that Nord Stream II would "not help diversification, nor would

it reduce [European] dependency" on Russian gas;

Whereas it has been longstanding United States policy to support European energy security through diversification of supplies, such as the Southern Gas Corridor which will deliver Caspian Sea energy resources to Southern and Central Europe;

Whereas the existing Ukrainian gas transit system currently has 55 billion cubic meters of spare capacity which is equal to Nord Stream II's planned capacity;

Whereas Ukraine has been a stable and reliable transit hub for energy flowing to European destinations;

Whereas Russia's geopolitical interest in Nord Stream II is not to increase European energy security, but rather to drive a wedge between countries in Europe and drastically diminish Ukraine's political leverage regarding Russia and the significant income Ukraine derives from transit fees;

Whereas according to Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Energy Diplomacy, Sandra Oudkirk, "because [Nord Stream II] has such a potentially large impact on the national security of some of our largest partners in the world, it has an impact on our national security"; and

Whereas Members of Congress on a bipartisan basis have expressed strong opposition to Nord Stream II through statements and legislation: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) finds that Nord Stream II is a drastic step backwards for European energy security and United States interests;

(2) calls upon European governments to reject the Nord Stream II project;

(3) urges the President to use all available means to support European energy security through a policy of reducing reliance on the Russian Federation; and

(4) supports the imposition of sanctions with respect to Nord Stream II under section 232 of the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (22 U.S.C. 9526).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

##### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material in the RECORD.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, for many years, Russia has conducted a campaign of armed aggression and intimidation against many neighboring countries, but especially Ukraine and Georgia. That threat now includes massive Russian military exercises along the border of our NATO allies and repeated intrusions into the air and sea space of these and other countries in Europe.

But Vladimir Putin is also employing more subtle weapons of influence. This includes leveraging energy exports, especially oil and natural gas. Many Eu-

ropean countries, including key NATO allies, are dependent on Russian energy and, thus, are vulnerable to Moscow's pressure.

But even as the United States, its NATO allies, and other partners are seeking to impose economic costs on Russia to force it to end its aggression, a massive new pipeline known as Nord Stream II is being built. It will increase the flow of Russian gas directly to Germany and on to other countries in the heart of Europe.

Moscow's strategy is to undermine the energy security of our NATO allies, because the more dependent they are on Russian energy, the greater Moscow's influence over them will be.

Nord Stream II has another purpose, which is to strike at Ukraine. It will end Moscow's reliance on Ukraine's natural gas pipelines, thereby cutting off an important source of revenue and eliminating one of Ukraine's few means of leverage against Russian aggression.

H.R. 3364, the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act, which I introduced and was passed overwhelmingly by Congress, authorizes the President to impose sanctions on persons assisting the construction of this and other pipelines.

This resolution recognizes the danger that Nord Stream II represents to the Atlantic alliance and urges the President to use the authority Congress has given him to prevent this pipeline from being constructed.

If Nord Stream II is completed, it will undermine U.S. interests in Europe by rendering key NATO allies more vulnerable to Russian blackmail and convincing Moscow that its policy of aggression is, in fact, succeeding.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time, and I ask unanimous consent that the gentleman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) control the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this measure.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. CONAWAY of Texas for authoring this resolution, and, again, I thank Chairman ROYCE.

Mr. Speaker, in Europe's far eastern reaches, construction has begun on a new pipeline to move natural gas, the Nord Stream II. If this project reaches completion, it will represent much more than a way to move fuel from point A to point B. It will, in fact, be a new tool for Russia to interfere in European politics, to pit ally against ally and neighbor against neighbor, to put down deeper roots in the heart of the European Union, and to weaken efforts to confront Russia for a range of aggressive behaviors.

Russia has already shown the way it uses its gas resources as a weapon, choking off supplies to Ukraine and inflating prices. If the Nord Stream II

goes forward, this dangerous practice could increase a hundredfold.

We want to see a Europe that has access to a range of energy sources. The last thing European countries should do is become more dependent on Russian gas. There are plenty of other options, whether from the Caspian basin or from right here in the United States.

This measure calls on European governments to reject this clear threat to stability and security. It is an appeal to our allies not to allow Russia another avenue to undermine European unity and involve itself in European politics.

Mr. Speaker, I am glad to support this measure, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CONAWAY), the chairman of the Committee on Agriculture and the author of this measure.

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding, and I thank the ranking member for bringing forth this resolution that I cosponsored.

Mr. Speaker, Nord Stream II is an underwater gas pipeline that, if completed, will transport natural gas from the Russian Federation—Russian gas—through the Baltic Sea to Germany.

This project may seem innocent enough, but it does several very dangerous things. One, it circumvents Ukraine, and the impact it has there. Two, it further dominates the European energy supply. Three, it will threaten European security and stability. And, four, it attempts to drive a wedge between NATO allies.

This project is being sold to our European allies and partners as many things. They are being told, and we are being told, that the current routes lack transit capacity to meet the demand in Western Europe. Mr. Speaker, this is false. There is a 55 billion cubic meter surplus in transit lines existing currently through Ukraine that Nord Stream II plans to completely circumvent, which is the capacity of the Nord Stream II.

□ 1545

In other words, Mr. Speaker, Russia is working to strangle Ukraine's existing pipeline. Once Nord Stream II reaches its planned terminus in Germany, it is to move southward away from Western markets and back into existing lines.

Mr. Speaker, the impact that that will have on the Ukraine pipeline is that, if it goes empty, then it will cease to exist and cease to operate. The argument that if Russia tried to use Nord Stream II as some leverage they could revert back to using the gas going through Ukraine lines is simply false and is misleading.

We are also being told that the pipeline will reduce gas prices in Europe. This also is false. Nord Stream II circumvents market competitors and fur-

ther reinforces Russia's dominance in the market, essentially creating zero incentive to lower energy prices.

We are also being told that Nord Stream II is a commercial deal with zero geopolitical impact. Compared to Nord Stream I, which is owned by a variety of stakeholders from Western Europe, Nord Stream II is 100 percent Russian owned and operated through Gazprom, which is controlled by the Russian state, i.e., Vladimir Putin, who is known to pursue political goals and whose chairman, Alexey Miller, is currently sanctioned by the United States.

Mr. Speaker, the handwriting is on the wall. It could not be clearer, and we can no longer kid ourselves what Nord Stream II is and what it is not. It will provide greater latitude for the Russians to continue defiance of global norms, sovereign borders, and international law. The project is simply another tool for Vladimir Putin to wield in Russia's ever-increasing aggressive and subversive activities against the West.

Mr. Speaker, Nord Stream II is a danger to peace as we know it. Our German and NATO colleagues should see clearly what it is. It allows Vladimir Putin to have an additional place to put his boot on the jugular of Europe.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage support for this resolution.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, Russia is already enough of a problem for our European friends. Putin's efforts to undermine democracy and stoke instability are a constant threat to European peace and unity. In 6 months' time, Russia could have another way to exert even more leverage on Europe, and that is if its development of the Nord Stream II pipeline goes forward. Today we are going on record to say that that is a terrible idea, and we hope our allies and partners in Europe see it the same way.

So I again thank the authors of this measure, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE), chairman of the Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, Nord Stream II is energy blackmail. If completed, it will make our European allies more dependent on Russian gas to meet their energy needs.

For three decades, Russia has used its abundant energy supplies to coerce European neighbors into doing its bidding. Europe, lacking natural gas reserves of its own, once had little choice in energy providers, allowing the Kremlin to block the flow of gas if Europe was opposing its interests.

In fact, I was in Ukraine in 2009 when the Russians turned off the gas in Ukraine, and it was cold. People died. It is blackmail since they are a monop-

oly on European natural gas. This includes forcing Europe's silence over Russia's illegal aggression in not only Ukraine, but Georgia and Crimea as well.

Today, Europe has other options, however. American natural gas is increasingly available on the global market thanks to the advances in technology. In 2019, the United States' LNG exports are expected to surge by almost 80 percent. In Texas, Mr. Speaker, we have more natural gas than we ever had and more than we need. We should use all we can, and then we should sell the rest to the Europeans.

Across Europe, more LNG terminals are coming online and allowing more American natural gas to reach the European market. Even Germany has pledged to build a new LNG terminal as a result of President Trump's push to renew the transatlantic trade relationship. With the expanding availability of U.S. natural gas, Europe can and should say "no" to Nord Stream II.

Vladimir Putin, the Napoleon of Siberia, cannot be trusted to be a fair trading partner. His recent aggression in Ukraine demonstrates Russia is a threat and not a friend. We must pass this resolution and send a message to our European allies that Nord Stream II is a bad idea.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the chairman of the Agriculture Committee, Mr. CONAWAY, for bringing this resolution, and I also want to thank the ranking member and chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee for their support.

And that is just the way it is.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, Russia's ongoing aggression has taken many forms, from outright invasion and annexation of territory in Ukraine to cyberattacks and other assaults against the U.S. and our NATO allies.

One of the most powerful weapons in its armory is its export of energy, especially oil and gas. The Nord Stream II pipeline from Russia to Germany will hand Moscow another source of influence to wield against our NATO allies and Ukraine. The result will be to undermine Europe's energy security and perhaps the will to resist Russian aggression.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to vote for this resolution and urge the President to use all of the means at his disposal to prevent this pipeline from being constructed. Only then can U.S. interests in Europe, including the integrity of the NATO alliance, be made secure.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 1035, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the

rules were suspended and the resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

# EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES WITH RESPECT TO UKRAINE

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 1162) expressing the sense of the House of Representatives with respect to Ukraine, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

## H. RES. 1162

Whereas the United States is committed to supporting international norms and agreements governing the peaceful relations between countries;

Whereas the Russian Federation has repeatedly violated international norms and agreements by its continuing aggression against Ukraine, including directing and arming separatist forces in eastern Ukraine and forcibly occupying and illegally annexing the Ukrainian territory of Crimea;

Whereas the Russian Federation continues to foment conflict in Ukraine in order to undermine the Ukrainian Government and economy;

Whereas these actions have caused tremendous suffering for the Ukrainian people, with thousands of Ukrainians killed both in battle and in their homes, and hundreds of thousands made refugees;

Whereas the Russian Federation continues to deny any responsibility for the destruction of Malaysian Airlines flight 17 over Ukraine, which killed 298 innocent civilians;

Whereas the Russian Federation has continuously failed to meet its commitments under the Minsk II agreement;

Whereas the United States and its allies and partners around the world continue to support the Ukrainian people in their efforts to strengthen their government, economy, and military in order to bring peace and prosperity to their country and to the surrounding region;

Whereas the United States and its allies and partners around the world have imposed punitive sanctions and other measures against the Russian Federation for its continued aggression against Ukraine, including its occupation of Crimea;

Whereas the Russian Federation continues to expand its aggression against Ukraine, including militarization of the Azov Sea and blockading the Kerch Strait in contravention of international norms and agreements;

Whereas, on November 25, 2018, the Russian Federation fired upon and rammed Ukrainian vessels attempting to pass through the Kerch Strait and seized the Ukrainian vessels and their crews: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

(1) condemns the Russian Federation's firing upon, ramming, and seizing Ukrainian vessels and crews attempting to pass through the Kerch Strait on November 25, 2018, as violations of binding international norms and agreements;

(2) calls on the Russian Federation to immediately return the Ukrainian vessels and their crews to Ukraine;

(3) calls on the Russian Federation to cease its violation of Ukraine's sovereignty and its efforts to prevent Ukrainian vessels from transiting the Kerch Strait, as is Ukraine's

right under international norms and agreements;

(4) reaffirms the United States commitment to provide the people of Ukraine with political, economic, and security assistance to enable them to secure their independence, democracy, and prosperity; and

(5) encourages the President and allies and partners of the United States to hold the Russian Federation accountable for its ongoing aggression against Ukraine.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida.

## GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on this measure.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Chairman ROYCE and esteemed Ranking Member ENGEL for their swift action in putting this important and timely resolution together in support of the people of Ukraine.

For far too long, we have witnessed Putin's increased aggression against Ukraine, directing and arming separatist forces on Ukraine soil and forcibly occupying and annexing the Ukrainian territory of Crimea.

More recently, Russian forces were firing upon, ramming, and seizing Ukrainian vessels and crews attempting to pass through the Kerch Strait, in clear violation of international norms and agreements.

The 2014 destruction of Malaysia Airlines flight 17 that killed close to 300 people also demonstrated the threat to civilians in this conflict. Until this day, Putin continues to deny any responsibility for that heinous act. Meanwhile, thousands of Ukrainians continue to be killed fighting for their basic freedoms that we as Americans hold dear, while hundreds of thousands flee looking for a safe haven.

Mr. Speaker, Putin's actions are simply unacceptable, and the United States and our allies must stand strong against Russia. That is why this resolution is so important. We must make it clear that we truly support the people of Ukraine and their aspirations for a free and democratic society.

For that, it is crucial that the United States provides the kind of assistance—politically, militarily, and economically—that will allow Ukraine to fight Russia's increasing coercion. We must also use all of the tools at our disposal, because these are not isolated issues, to ensure that Putin and his regime pay a heavy price for Russia's aggression.

Through this resolution and other measures, we can demonstrate to Putin and the world that we are paying close attention, that we will continue to support the people of Ukraine and do what is necessary to protect Ukraine and other countries threatened by his imperial ambitions, and to ensure that they can live in peace and live in security.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this measure to condemn Putin's despotic rule, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this measure.

Let me start by thanking Chairman ROYCE for bringing this measure forward. He and I introduced this resolution a few weeks ago after the latest flare-up of Russian aggression in Ukraine.

I also want to thank the gentlewoman from Florida, who has always, through the years, time and time again, been standing up with us for what is right and really showing a great moral compass.

I am glad that, as we wrap up this Congress and as Chairman ROYCE wraps up a distinguished career as a Member of the House, we are again working together, working across the aisle with a bipartisan commitment to American leadership and American values. That has been the hallmark of the Foreign Affairs Committee in the 6 years Mr. ROYCE has been chairman and I have been ranking member. I am grateful that we are going out of this Congress on the same, positive, good note.

Mr. Speaker, this measure is another opportunity for the House to go on record condemning the aggressive and destructive behavior of Russia under Vladimir Putin. Russia had shredded international norms and laws with its illegal occupation of Crimea, its violent campaign in eastern Ukraine, the downing of Malaysia Airlines flight 17, and Russia's ceaseless shirking of its obligations under the Minsk II peace agreement, all at a cost of thousands of lives.

Most recently, Russia has blockaded the Kerch Strait and militarized the Sea of Azov. A few weeks ago, Russian forces fired on Ukrainian vessels attempting to pass through the strait, ultimately seizing the vessels and their crews as well.

What is remarkable about this latest action, Mr. Speaker, is just how brazen it is. Typically, Putin has always made sure that there is some veil of deniability over his dirty work so that he can say up is down and cast blame somewhere else.

But this time, Russian forces are operating out in the open. It is almost as though Putin thinks he can turn the international order on its head and there won't be any consequences. I cannot imagine where he got that idea.

My measure that we are now considering says that Russia's latest aggression cannot stand. It calls upon the

Kremlin to immediately return the captured vessels and crews and to end its violation of Ukrainian sovereignty. It reaffirms our support for Ukrainian independence, democracy, and prosperity, and it calls on the Trump administration to hold Russia accountable, to make sure there will be consequences for this sort of behavior.

We hope the administration hears us and acts accordingly, and we hope the people of Ukraine and the thugs running Russia hear us and know that Congress won't stay silent in the face of Moscow's outrageous behavior.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN), who has been a Member of this House for many years and has done wonderful work.

(Mr. LEVIN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

□ 1600

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I will start first by applauding the leadership of this committee: Mr. ROYCE, who has worked so hard, and the gentlewoman from Florida.

We went to Bosnia together some years ago, and they have worked so closely with Mr. ENGEL. I think it really demonstrates what can be done when people work together.

The Congressional Ukraine Caucus cochairs—Representatives MARCY KAPTUR, ANDY HARRIS, BRIAN FITZPATRICK, and I—issued this statement rebuking the Russian Federation's aggressive attack on Ukraine near the Kerch Strait in the Sea of Azov: "As cochairs of the Congressional Ukraine Caucus, we strongly condemn Russia's dangerous naval assault on Ukrainian ships. This episode, as well as Russia's blockade of Ukrainian ports, is a deeply disturbing sign of continued Russian aggression in its efforts to tighten its bloody grip and illegitimate occupation of the Crimean peninsula.

"We join the international committee and our NATO allies in resolute affirmation of the fact that Crimea and its surrounding waters belong to Ukraine. We call on Russian authorities, in accordance with international law, to cease any and all interference with access to Ukrainian ports and the Azov Sea. Russia must end this bloody and unjust occupation of Ukrainian sovereign territory."

I was in Ukraine at the time of the Russian attack. I was at meetings where the President of Ukraine spoke out clearly against the Russian action on behalf of the people of Ukraine. He also spoke out on what was the main aim of Russia's military actions: to undermine Ukraine's efforts to build democracy.

Today, there is a dangerous tilt to authoritarianism in many places around the world. This makes

Ukraine's struggle to resist aggression, safeguard its independence, and develop democracy all the more important.

Ukraine has witnessed firsthand that the challenges of democracy are not easily overcome. That makes it all the more important to overcome the threats to democracy, such as injustice and corruption.

The United States must support Ukraine in its efforts. We must deepen our determination to help the fight for freedom and democracy, never making heroes out of dictators. That is what this resolution is all about. May it pass unanimously.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. ENGEL and thank my pal from Florida for their work.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE), who is our esteemed chairman of our Foreign Affairs Committee.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, last month's Russian attack on Ukrainian vessels attempting to pass through the Kerch Strait is a dramatic reminder of Vladimir Putin's continued aggression. This was not an isolated incident. Russia has opened a new front in the Sea of Azov, where it is attempting to choke off Ukrainian imports and exports and greatly undermine Ukraine's economy.

This is a dangerous escalation. In the past, Moscow has attempted to disguise its armed intervention in Ukraine by claiming that its troops and weapons in the eastern regions belong to the separatist entities there.

Now let me share with you, Mr. Speaker, the reality that, in the east, there is Russian armor. ELIOT ENGEL and I traveled to Dnipropetrovsk in the east, in the Russian-speaking east of Ukraine, with a delegation of four Republicans and four Democrats. We traveled in order to talk to those who were trying to deal with the fact that Russian military was rolling over provinces in Ukraine. But now Russia is openly using its own military against Ukraine in the territory of Crimea that it has illegally occupied and annexed. They are using the fleet.

The United States and its allies and partners must hold Russia accountable. Failure to do so may be interpreted by Moscow as a green light to go even further, a miscalculation that could result in a dangerous military escalation.

This resolution sends two messages. The first is to the Ukrainian people, to demonstrate that we remain committed in assisting them in their fight for freedom. The second, of course, is to Moscow, to make clear that the U.S. will oppose Russian aggression whenever it occurs.

I urge the President to ensure, by his words and actions, that Moscow understands the potential consequences of its actions and the commitment of the United States to the freedom, sovereignty, and independence of Ukraine.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, in closing, I am worried that Vladimir Putin is becoming emboldened because he has faced no real consequences for his ongoing violations of international law. I am glad we are considering this resolution today, saying that he should face consequences.

I wish we had more time in this Congress to work on legislation that could make those consequences real. I am committed to staying focused on this issue when we come back in January.

For now, I am glad we are sending this message, and I am glad to stand shoulder to shoulder as I have so many times over the past 6 years with my friend, ED ROYCE, as we pass this measure.

Mr. Speaker, again, I thank the gentlewoman from Florida, ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN. I ask all Members to support this, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, Ukraine remains under assault from Moscow, which is betting that the West is tiring of the struggle and that it is free now to expand its aggression. Silence on our part at this critical moment invites miscalculation and an escalation of the conflict.

We must demonstrate by our words and actions that we remain fully committed to assisting the people of Ukraine to defend their country, including by providing them with the weapons they need to defeat Russia's continuing aggression. A slap on the wrist at this point will not restrain Putin and may guarantee the expansion of hostilities that we hope to avoid.

We strongly encourage the President to use the authority that Congress has provided to impose sanctions on Russia and to take action to make clear that we remain committed to the sovereignty of the Ukrainian people and a Ukraine that is whole and free.

I want to thank my colleague from New York (Mr. ENGEL) for authoring this very important measure and, most importantly, for his consistent leadership on Ukraine. At the end of my service in this body, I thank him for the many years of friendship and cooperation as we worked together to promote the interests and the values of the American people around the world.

It has been a real joy, and I thank Mr. ENGEL for sharing that ride with me.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 1162.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

## NICARAGUAN INVESTMENT CONDITIONALITY ACT (NICA) OF 2017

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table the bill (H.R. 1918) to oppose loans at international financial institutions for the Government of Nicaragua unless the Government of Nicaragua is taking effective steps to hold free, fair, and transparent elections, and for other purposes, with the Senate amendment thereto, and concur in the Senate amendment.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the Senate amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Senate amendment:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

**SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.**

(a) **SHORT TITLE.**—This Act may be cited as the “Nicaragua Human Rights and Anticorruption Act of 2018”.

(b) **TABLE OF CONTENTS.**—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

Sec. 2. Sense of Congress on advancing a negotiated solution to Nicaragua's crisis.

Sec. 3. Statement of policy.

Sec. 4. Restrictions on international financial institutions relating to Nicaragua.

Sec. 5. Imposition of targeted sanctions with respect to Nicaragua.

Sec. 6. Annual certification and waiver.

Sec. 7. Report on human rights violations and corruption in Nicaragua.

Sec. 8. Civil society engagement strategy.

Sec. 9. Reform of Western Hemisphere Drug Policy Commission.

Sec. 10. Termination.

Sec. 11. Definitions.

**SEC. 2. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON ADVANCING A NEGOTIATED SOLUTION TO NICARAGUA'S CRISIS.**

It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) credible negotiations between the Government of Nicaragua and representatives of Nicaragua's civil society, student movement, private sector, and political opposition, mediated by the Catholic Church in Nicaragua, represent the best opportunity to reach a peaceful solution to the current political crisis that includes—

(A) a commitment to hold early elections that meet democratic standards and permit credible international electoral observation;

(B) the cessation of the violence perpetrated against civilians by the National Police of Nicaragua and by armed groups supported by the Government of Nicaragua; and

(C) independent investigations into the killings of protesters; and

(2) negotiations between the Government of Nicaragua and representatives of Nicaragua's civil society, student movement, private sector, and political opposition, mediated by the Catholic Church in Nicaragua, have not resulted in an agreement as of the date of the enactment of this Act because the Government of Nicaragua has failed to credibly participate in the process.

**SEC. 3. STATEMENT OF POLICY.**

It is the policy of the United States to support—

(1) the rule of law and an independent judiciary and electoral council in Nicaragua;

(2) democratic governance in Nicaragua;

(3) free and fair elections overseen by credible domestic and international observers in Nicaragua; and

(4) anti-corruption and transparency efforts in Nicaragua.

**SEC. 4. RESTRICTIONS ON INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS RELATING TO NICARAGUA.**

(a) **RESTRICTIONS.**—The Secretary of the Treasury shall—

(1) instruct the United States Executive Director at each international financial institution of the World Bank Group to use the voice, vote, and influence of the United States to oppose the extension by the International Finance Corporation of any loan or financial or technical assistance to the Government of Nicaragua for a project in Nicaragua;

(2) instruct the United States Executive Director of the Inter-American Development Bank to use the voice, vote, and influence of the United States to oppose the extension by the Bank of any loan or financial or technical assistance to the Government of Nicaragua for a project in Nicaragua; and

(3) instruct the United States Executive Director of each other international financial institution, including the International Monetary Fund, to work with other key donor countries to develop a coherent policy approach to future engagements with and lending to the Government of Nicaragua, in a manner that will advance human rights, including the full restoration of the rights guaranteed to the people of Nicaragua through the commitments made by the Government of Nicaragua as a signatory of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

(b) **EXCEPTIONS FOR BASIC HUMAN NEEDS AND DEMOCRACY PROMOTION.**—The restrictions under paragraphs (1) and (2) of subsection (a) shall not apply with respect to any loan or financial or technical assistance provided to address basic human needs or to promote democracy in Nicaragua.

(c) **BRIEFING BY THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter, the Secretary of the Treasury shall brief the appropriate congressional committees on the effectiveness of international financial institutions in enforcing applicable program safeguards in Nicaragua.

**SEC. 5. IMPOSITION OF TARGETED SANCTIONS WITH RESPECT TO NICARAGUA.**

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The President shall impose the sanctions described in subsection (c) with respect to any foreign person, including any current or former official of the Government of Nicaragua or any person acting on behalf of that Government, that the President determines—

(1) to be responsible for or complicit in, or responsible for ordering, controlling, or otherwise directing, or to have knowingly participated in, directly or indirectly, any activity described in subsection (b);

(2) to be a leader of—

(A) an entity that has, or whose members have, engaged in any activity described in subsection (b); or

(B) an entity whose property and interests in property are blocked under subsection (c)(1)(A) as a result of activities related to the tenure of the leader;

(3) to have knowingly materially assisted, sponsored, or provided financial, material, or technological support for, or goods or services in support of—

(A) an activity described in subsection (b); or

(B) a person whose property and interests in property are blocked under subsection (c)(1)(A); or

(4) to be owned or controlled by, or to have knowingly acted or purported to act for or on behalf of, directly or indirectly, any person whose property and interests in property are blocked under subsection (c)(1)(A).

(b) **ACTIVITIES DESCRIBED.**—An activity described in this subsection is any of the following in or in relation to Nicaragua on or after April 18, 2018:

(1) Significant acts of violence or conduct that constitutes a serious abuse or violation of

human rights against persons associated with the protests in Nicaragua that began on April 18, 2018.

(2) Significant actions or policies that undermine democratic processes or institutions.

(3) Acts of significant corruption by or on behalf of the Government of Nicaragua or a current or former official of the Government of Nicaragua, including—

(A) the expropriation of private or public assets for personal gain or political purposes;

(B) corruption related to government contracts;

(C) bribery; or

(D) the facilitation or transfer of the proceeds of corruption.

(4) The arrest or prosecution of a person, including an individual or media outlet disseminating information to the public, primarily because of the legitimate exercise by such person of the freedom of speech, assembly, or the press.

(c) **SANCTIONS DESCRIBED.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The sanctions described in this subsection are the following:

(A) **ASSET BLOCKING.**—The exercise of all powers granted to the President by the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.) to the extent necessary to block and prohibit all transactions in all property and interests in property of a person determined by the President to be subject to subsection (a) if such property and interests in property are in the United States, come within the United States, or are or come within the possession or control of a United States person.

(B) **EXCLUSION FROM THE UNITED STATES AND REVOCATION OF VISA OR OTHER DOCUMENTATION.**—In the case of an alien determined by the President to be subject to subsection (a), denial of a visa to, and exclusion from the United States of, the alien, and revocation in accordance with section 221(i) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1201(i)), of any visa or other documentation of the alien.

(2) **PENALTIES.**—A person that violates, attempts to violate, conspires to violate, or causes a violation of a measure imposed pursuant to paragraph (1)(A) or any regulation, license, or order issued to carry out paragraph (1)(A) shall be subject to the penalties set forth in subsections (b) and (c) of section 206 of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1705) to the same extent as a person that commits an unlawful act described in subsection (a) of that section.

(3) **EXCEPTION RELATING TO IMPORTATION OF GOODS.**—The requirement to block and prohibit all transactions in all property and interests in property under paragraph (1)(A) shall not include the authority to impose sanctions on the importation of goods.

(4) **EXCEPTION TO COMPLY WITH UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS AGREEMENT.**—Sanctions under paragraph (1)(B) shall not apply to an alien if admitting the alien into the United States is necessary to permit the United States to comply with the Agreement regarding the Headquarters of the United Nations, signed at Lake Success June 26, 1947, and entered into force November 21, 1947, between the United Nations and the United States, or other applicable international obligations.

(d) **IMPLEMENTATION; REGULATORY AUTHORITY.**—

(1) **IMPLEMENTATION.**—The President may exercise all authorities provided under sections 203 and 205 of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1702 and 1704) to carry out this section.

(2) **REGULATORY AUTHORITY.**—The President shall issue such regulations, licenses, and orders as are necessary to carry out this section.

**SEC. 6. ANNUAL CERTIFICATION AND WAIVER.**

(a) **CERTIFICATION.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter, the Secretary of State shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report certifying whether the Government of Nicaragua is taking effective steps—

(1) to strengthen the rule of law and democratic governance, including the independence of the judicial system and electoral council;

(2) to combat corruption, including by investigating and prosecuting cases of public corruption;

(3) to protect civil and political rights, including the rights of freedom of the press, speech, and association, for all people of Nicaragua, including political opposition parties, journalists, trade unionists, human rights defenders, indigenous peoples, and other civil society activists;

(4) to investigate and hold accountable officials of the Government of Nicaragua and other persons responsible for the killings of individuals associated with the protests in Nicaragua that began on April 18, 2018; and

(5) to hold free and fair elections overseen by credible domestic and international observers

(b) **WAIVER.**—

(1) **TEMPORARY GENERAL WAIVER.**—If the Secretary certifies to the appropriate congressional committees under subsection (a) that the Government of Nicaragua is taking effective steps as described in that subsection, the President may waive the application of the restrictions under section 4 and sanctions under section 5 for a period of not more than one year beginning on the date of the certification.

(2) **NATIONAL INTEREST WAIVER.**—The President may waive the application of the restrictions under section 4 and sanctions under section 5 if the President—

(A) determines that such a waiver is in the national interest of the United States; and

(B) submits to the appropriate congressional committees a notice of and justification for the waiver.

(3) **SENSE OF CONGRESS.**—It is the sense of Congress that the President should exercise the waiver authority provided under paragraph (1) if the Secretary of State certifies under subsection (a) that the Government of Nicaragua is taking effective steps as described in that subsection.

(c) **CONSULTATION.**—In preparing a certification required by subsection (a), the Secretary shall consult with the appropriate congressional committees.

(d) **ANNUAL BRIEFING.**—The Secretary shall annually brief the appropriate congressional committees on whether the Government of Nicaragua is taking effective steps as described in subsection (a).

## **SEC. 7. REPORT ON HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS AND CORRUPTION IN NICARAGUA.**

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State, acting through the Assistant Secretary of State for Intelligence and Research, and in coordination with the Secretary of the Treasury and the Director of National Intelligence, shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report on—

(1) the involvement of senior officials of the Government of Nicaragua, including members of the Supreme Electoral Council, the National Assembly, and the judicial system, in human rights violations, acts of significant corruption, and money laundering; and

(2) persons that transfer, or facilitate the transfer of, goods or technologies for use in or with respect to Nicaragua, that are used by the Government of Nicaragua to commit serious human rights violations against the people of Nicaragua.

(b) **FORM.**—The report required by subsection (a) may be classified.

## **SEC. 8. CIVIL SOCIETY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY.**

Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State shall brief the appropriate congressional committees on a strategy—

(1) for engaging relevant elements of civil society in Nicaragua, including independent media, human rights, and anti-corruption organizations, to strengthen rule of law and increase ac-

countability for human rights abuses and corruption in Nicaragua; and

(2) setting forth measures to support the protection of human rights and anti-corruption advocates in Nicaragua.

## **SEC. 9. REFORM OF WESTERN HEMISPHERE DRUG POLICY COMMISSION.**

Section 603(f)(1) of the Department of State Authorities Act, Fiscal Year 2017 (Public Law 114-323; 130 Stat. 1938) is amended by striking “Not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commission shall hold an initial meeting to develop and implement” and inserting “At the initial meeting of the Commission, the Commission shall develop and implement”.

## **SEC. 10. TERMINATION.**

The provisions of this Act (other than section 9) shall terminate on December 31, 2023.

## **SEC. 11. DEFINITIONS.**

In this Act:

(1) **APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.**—The term “appropriate congressional committees” means—

(A) the Committee on Foreign Relations, the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Committee on Financial Services, and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives.

(2) **GOOD.**—The term “good” means any article, natural or manmade substance, material, supply or manufactured product, including inspection and test equipment, and excluding technical data.

(3) **PERSON.**—The term “person” means an individual or entity.

(4) **UNITED STATES PERSON.**—The term “United States person” means any United States citizen, permanent resident alien, entity organized under the laws of the United States or any jurisdiction within the United States (including a foreign branch of such an entity), or any person in the United States.

Mr. ROYCE of California (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to dispense with the reading of the amendment.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the original request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

## **SANCTIONING HIZBALLAH'S IL-LICIT USE OF CIVILIANS AS DEFENSELESS SHIELDS ACT**

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table the bill (H.R. 3342) to impose sanctions on foreign persons that are responsible for gross violations of internationally recognized human rights by reason of the use by Hizballah of civilians as human shields, and for other purposes, with the Senate amendments thereto, and concur in the Senate amendments.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the Senate amendments.

The Clerk read as follows:

Senate amendments:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

## **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

This Act may be cited as the “Sanctioning the Use of Civilians as Defenseless Shields Act”.

## **SEC. 2. STATEMENT OF POLICY.**

It shall be the policy of the United States to officially and publicly condemn the use of innocent civilians as human shields.

## **SEC. 3. IMPOSITION OF SANCTIONS WITH RESPECT TO FOREIGN PERSONS THAT ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE USE OF CIVILIANS AS HUMAN SHIELDS.**

(a) **IMPOSITION OF SANCTIONS.**—

(1) **MANDATORY SANCTIONS.**—The President shall impose sanctions described in subsection (d) with respect to each person on the list required under subsection (b).

(2) **PERMISSIVE SANCTIONS.**—The President may impose sanctions described in subsection (d) with respect to each person on the list described in subsection (c).

(b) **MANDATORY SANCTIONS LIST.**—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter, the President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a list of the following:

(1) Each foreign person that the President determines, on or after the date of the enactment of this Act—

(A) is a member of Hizballah or is knowingly acting on behalf of Hizballah; and

(B) knowingly orders, controls, or otherwise directs the use of civilians protected as such by the law of war to shield military objectives from attack.

(2) Each foreign person that the President determines, on or after the date of the enactment of this Act—

(A) is a member of Hamas or is knowingly acting on behalf of Hamas; and

(B) knowingly orders, controls, or otherwise directs the use of civilians protected as such by the law of war to shield military objectives from attack.

(3) Each foreign person or agency or instrumentality of a foreign state that the President determines, on or after the date of the enactment of this Act, knowingly and materially supports, orders, controls, directs, or otherwise engages in—

(A) any act described in subparagraph (B) of paragraph (1) by a person described in that paragraph; or

(B) any act described in subparagraph (B) of paragraph (2) by a person described in that paragraph.

(c) **PERMISSIVE SANCTIONS LIST.**—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter, the President should submit to the appropriate congressional committees a list of each foreign person that the President determines, on or after the date of the enactment of this Act, knowingly orders, controls, or otherwise directs the use of civilians protected as such by the law of war to shield military objectives from attack, excluding foreign persons included in the most recent list under subsection (b).

(d) **SANCTIONS DESCRIBED.**—The sanctions to be imposed on a foreign person or an agency or instrumentality of a foreign state under this subsection are the following:

(1) **BLOCKING OF PROPERTY.**—The President shall exercise all of the powers granted to the President under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.) to the extent necessary to block and prohibit all transactions in property and interests in property of the foreign person or agency or instrumentality of a foreign state if such property or interests in property are in the United States, come within the United States, or are or come within the possession or control of a United States person.

(2) **ALIENS INELIGIBLE FOR VISAS, ADMISSION, OR PAROLE.**—



(A) VISAS, ADMISSION, OR PAROLE.—An alien who the Secretary of State or the Secretary of Homeland Security determines is subject to sanctions under subsection (a) is—

- (i) inadmissible to the United States;
- (ii) ineligible to receive a visa or other documentation to enter the United States; and
- (iii) otherwise ineligible to be admitted or paroled into the United States or to receive any other benefit under the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101 et seq.).

(B) CURRENT VISAS REVOKED.—Any visa or other documentation issued to an alien who is subject to sanctions under subsection (a), regardless of when such visa or other documentation was issued, shall be revoked and such alien shall be denied admission to the United States.

(C) EXCEPTION TO COMPLY WITH UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS AGREEMENT AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATIONS.—The sanctions under this paragraph shall not be imposed on an individual if admitting such individual to the United States is necessary to permit the United States to comply with the Agreement regarding the Headquarters of the United Nations, signed at Lake Success June 26, 1947, and entered into force November 21, 1947, between the United Nations and the United States, or with other applicable international obligations.

(e) PENALTIES.—The penalties provided for in subsections (b) and (c) of section 206 of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1705) shall apply to a person that knowingly violates, attempts to violate, conspires to violate, or causes a violation of regulations prescribed to carry out this section to the same extent that such penalties apply to a person that knowingly commits an unlawful act described in section 206(a) of such Act.

(f) PROCEDURES FOR JUDICIAL REVIEW OF CLASSIFIED INFORMATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—If a finding under this section, or a prohibition, condition, or penalty imposed as a result of any such finding, is based on classified information (as defined in section 1(a) of the Classified Information Procedures Act (18 U.S.C. App.)) and a court reviews the finding or the imposition of the prohibition, condition, or penalty, the President may submit such information to the court ex parte and in camera.

(2) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to confer or imply any right to judicial review of any finding under this section or any prohibition, condition, or penalty imposed as a result of any such finding.

(g) WAIVER.—The President may waive the application of sanctions under this section if the President determines and reports to the appropriate congressional committees that such waiver is in the national security interest of the United States.

(h) REGULATORY AUTHORITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The President may exercise all authorities under sections 203 and 205 of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1702 and 1704) for purposes of carrying out this section.

(2) ISSUANCE OF REGULATIONS.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall prescribe such regulations as may be necessary to implement this section.

(i) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section may be construed—

(1) to limit the authorities of the President pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.) or any other relevant provision of law; or

(2) to apply with respect to any activity subject to the reporting requirements under title V of the National Security Act of 1947 (50 U.S.C. 3091 et seq.), or to any authorized intelligence activities of the United States.

#### SEC. 4. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) ADMITTED; ALIEN.—The terms “admitted” and “alien” have the meanings given those terms in section 101 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101).

(2) AGENCY OR INSTRUMENTALITY OF A FOREIGN STATE.—The term “agency or instrumentality of a foreign state” has the meaning given that term in section 1603(b) of title 28, United States Code.

(3) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—In this section, the term “appropriate congressional committees” means—

(A) the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, the Committee on Foreign Relations, and the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Financial Services, the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives.

(4) FOREIGN PERSON.—The term “foreign person” means—

(A) any citizen or national of a foreign state, wherever located; or

(B) any entity not organized solely under the laws of the United States or existing solely in the United States.

(5) HAMAS.—The term “Hammas” means—

(A) the entity known as Hamas and designated by the Secretary of State as a foreign terrorist organization pursuant to section 219 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1189); or

(B) any person identified as an agent or instrumentality of Hamas on the list of specially designated nationals and blocked persons maintained by the Office of Foreign Asset Control of the Department of the Treasury, the property or interests in property of which are blocked pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.).

(6) HIZBALLAH.—The term “Hizballah” means—

(A) the entity known as Hizballah and designated by the Secretary of State as a foreign terrorist organization pursuant to section 219 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1189); or

(B) any person identified as an agent or instrumentality of Hizballah on the list of specially designated nationals and blocked persons maintained by the Office of Foreign Asset Control of the Department of the Treasury, the property or interests in property of which are blocked pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.).

(7) UNITED STATES PERSON.—The term “United States person” means any United States citizen, permanent resident alien, entity organized under the laws of the United States (including foreign branches), or any person in the United States.

#### SEC. 5. SUNSET.

This Act shall cease to be effective on December 31, 2023.

Amend the title so as to read: “An Act to impose sanctions with respect to foreign persons that are responsible for using civilians as human shields, and for other purposes.”.

Mr. ROYCE of California (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to dispense with the reading of the amendments.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the original request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES THAT THE 85TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UKRAINIAN FAMINE OF 1932–1933, KNOWN AS THE HOLODOMOR, SHOULD SERVE AS A REMINDER OF REPRESSIVE SOVIET POLICIES AGAINST THE PEOPLE OF UKRAINE

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Affairs be discharged from further consideration of H. Res. 931, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

#### H. RES. 931

Whereas 2017–2018 marks the 85th anniversary of the Ukrainian Famine of 1932–1933, known as the Holodomor;

Whereas in 1932 and 1933, millions of Ukrainian people perished at the will of the totalitarian Stalinist government of the former Soviet Union, which perpetrated a premeditated famine in Ukraine in an effort to break the nation's resistance to collectivization and communist occupation;

Whereas the Soviet Government deliberately confiscated grain harvests and starved millions of Ukrainian men, women, and children by a policy of forced collectivization that sought to destroy the nationally conscious movement for independence;

Whereas Soviet dictator Joseph Stalin ordered the borders of Ukraine sealed to prevent anyone from escaping the manmade starvation and to prevent the delivery of any international food aid that would provide relief to the starving;

Whereas numerous scholars worldwide have worked to uncover the scale of the famine, including Canadian wheat expert Andrew Cairns, who visited Ukraine in 1932 and was told that there was no grain “because the government had collected so much grain and exported it to England and Italy”, while Joseph Stalin simultaneously denied food aid to the people of Ukraine;

Whereas nearly a quarter of Ukraine's rural population perished or were forced into exile due to the induced starvation, and the entire country suffered from the consequences of the prolonged famine;

Whereas noted correspondents of the time were refuted for their courage in depicting and reporting on the forced famine in Ukraine, including Gareth Jones, William Henry Chamberlin, and Malcolm Muggeridge, who wrote, “They (the peasants) will tell you that many have already died of famine and that many are dying every day; that thousands have been shot by the government and hundreds of thousands exiled . . .”;

Whereas title V of the Departments of Commerce, Justice, and State, the Judiciary, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 1986 (Public Law 99–180; 99 Stat. 1157), signed into law on December 13, 1985, established the Commission on the Ukraine Famine to “conduct a study of the Ukrainian Famine of 1932–1933 in order to expand the world's knowledge of the famine and provide the American public with a better understanding of the Soviet system by revealing the Soviet role” in it;

Whereas with the dissolution of the Soviet Union, archival documents became available

that confirmed the deliberate and premeditated deadly nature of the famine, and that exposed the atrocities committed by the Soviet Government against the Ukrainian people;

Whereas Raphael Lemkin, who devoted his life to the development of legal concepts and norms for containing mass atrocities and whose tireless advocacy swayed the United Nations in 1948 to adopt the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, authored an essay in 1953 entitled "Soviet Genocide in [the] Ukraine", which highlighted the "classic example of Soviet genocide", characterizing it "not simply a case of mass murder[, but as] a case of genocide, of destruction, not of individuals only, but of a culture and a nation";

Whereas the Government of Ukraine passed on November 28, 2006, a law numbered No: N 376-V, and entitled "About the 1932-1933 Holodomor in Ukraine", giving official recognition to the Ukraine Famine as an act of genocide against the Ukrainian people;

Whereas President George W. Bush signed into law Public Law 109-340 on October 13, 2006, authorizing the Government of Ukraine "to establish a memorial on Federal land in the District of Columbia to honor the victims of the Ukrainian famine-genocide of 1932-1933", which was officially dedicated in November 2015;

Whereas the Government of Ukraine and the Ukrainian communities in the United States and worldwide continue their efforts to secure greater international awareness and understanding of the 1932-1933 tragedy; and

Whereas victims of the Holodomor of 1932-1933 will be commemorated by Ukrainian communities around the globe, and in Ukraine, through November 2018: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

(1) solemnly remembers the 85th anniversary of the Holodomor of 1932-1933 and extends its deepest sympathies to the victims, survivors, and families of this tragedy;

(2) condemns the systematic violations of human rights, including the freedom of self-determination and freedom of speech, of the Ukrainian people by the Soviet Government;

(3) recognizes the findings of the Commission on the Ukraine Famine as submitted to Congress on April 22, 1988, including that "Joseph Stalin and those around him committed genocide against the Ukrainians in 1932-1933";

(4) encourages dissemination of information regarding the Holodomor of 1932-1933 in order to expand the world's knowledge of this manmade tragedy; and

(5) supports the continuing efforts of the people of Ukraine to work toward ensuring democratic principles, a free-market economy, and full respect for human rights, in order to enable Ukraine to achieve its potential as an important strategic partner of the United States in that region of the world, and to reflect the will of its people.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. ROYCE OF CALIFORNIA

Mr. ROYCE of California. I have an amendment to this text at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Strike all after the resolving clause and insert the following:

That the House of Representatives—

(1) extends its deepest sympathies to the victims and survivors of the Holodomor of 1932-1933, and their families;

(2) condemns the systematic violations of human rights, including the freedom of self-

determination and freedom of speech, of the Ukrainian people by the Soviet Government;

(3) recognizes the findings of the Commission on the Ukraine Famine as submitted to Congress on April 22, 1988, including that "Joseph Stalin and those around him committed genocide against the Ukrainians in 1932-1933";

(4) encourages dissemination of information regarding the Holodomor of 1932-1933 in order to expand the world's knowledge of this manmade tragedy; and

(5) supports the continuing efforts of the people of Ukraine to work toward ensuring democratic principles, a free-market economy, and full respect for human rights, in order to enable Ukraine to achieve its potential as an important strategic partner of the United States in that region of the world, and to reflect the will of its people.

Mr. ROYCE of California (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to dispense with the reading.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

The amendment was agreed to.

The resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### DONNA SAUERS BESKO POST OFFICE

Mr. MITCHELL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform be discharged from further consideration of the bill (H.R. 1850) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 907 Fourth Avenue in Lake Odessa, Michigan, as the "Donna Sauers Besko Post Office", and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Michigan?

There was no objection.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1850

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

#### SECTION 1. DONNA SAUERS BESKO POST OFFICE.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 907 Fourth Avenue in Lake Odessa, Michigan, shall be known and designated as the "Donna Sauers Besko Post Office".

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the facility referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the "Donna Sauers Besko Post Office".

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, was read the third time, and passed, and a motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### CORPORAL JEFFERY ALLEN WILLIAMS POST OFFICE BUILDING

Mr. MITCHELL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table the bill (H.R. 4407) to

designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 3s101 Rockwell Street in Warrenville, Illinois, as the "Corporal Jeffery Allen Williams Post Office Building", with the Senate amendments thereto, and concur in the Senate amendments.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the Senate amendments.

The Clerk read as follows:

Senate amendments:

(1) On page 2, line 1, strike [Jeffery] and insert *Jeffrey*.

(2) On page 2, line 6, strike [Jeffery] and insert *Jeffrey*.

(3) On page 2, line 10, strike [Jeffery] and insert *Jeffrey*.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Michigan?

There was no objection.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### SERGEANT KENNETH ERIC BOSTIC POST OFFICE

Mr. MITCHELL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform be discharged from further consideration of the bill (H.R. 5205) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 701 6th Street in Hawthorne, Nevada, as the "Sergeant Kenneth Eric Bostic Post Office", and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Michigan?

There was no objection.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5205

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

#### SECTION 1. SERGEANT KENNETH ERIC BOSTIC POST OFFICE.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 701 6th Street in Hawthorne, Nevada, shall be known and designated as the "Sergeant Kenneth Eric Bostic Post Office".

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the facility referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the "Sergeant Kenneth Eric Bostic Post Office".

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, was read the third time, and passed, and a motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

□ 1615

#### SO2 NAVY SEAL ADAM OLIN SMITH POST OFFICE

Mr. MITCHELL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform be discharged from further consideration of the bill (H.R. 5475) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 108 North Macon Street in Bevier, Missouri, as

the "SO2 Navy SEAL Adam Olin Smith Post Office", and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Michigan?

There was no objection.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5475

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

**SECTION 1. SO2 NAVY SEAL ADAM OLIN SMITH POST OFFICE.**

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 108 North Macon Street in Bevier, Missouri, shall be known and designated as the "SO2 Navy SEAL Adam Olin Smith Post Office".

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the facility referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the "SO2 Navy SEAL Adam Olin Smith Post Office".

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, was read the third time, and passed, and a motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

**THOMAS P. COSTIN, JR. POST OFFICE BUILDING**

Mr. MITCHELL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform be discharged from further consideration of the bill (H.R. 6059) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 51 Willow Street in Lynn, Massachusetts, as the "Thomas P. Costin, Jr. Post Office Building", and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Michigan?

There was no objection.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 6059

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

**SECTION 1. THOMAS P. COSTIN, JR. POST OFFICE BUILDING.**

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 51 Willow Street in Lynn, Massachusetts, shall be known and designated as the "Thomas P. Costin, Jr. Post Office Building".

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the facility referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the "Thomas P. Costin, Jr. Post Office Building".

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, was read the third time, and passed, and a motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

**JAMES WILLIAM ROBINSON JR. MEMORIAL POST OFFICE BUILDING**

Mr. MITCHELL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Oversight and Government

Reform be discharged from further consideration of the bill (H.R. 6167) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 5707 South Cass Avenue in Westmont, Illinois, as the "James William Robinson Jr. Memorial Post Office Building", and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Michigan?

There was no objection.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 6167

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

**SECTION 1. JAMES WILLIAM ROBINSON JR. MEMORIAL POST OFFICE BUILDING.**

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 5707 South Cass Avenue in Westmont, Illinois, shall be known and designated as the "James William Robinson Jr. Memorial Post Office Building".

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the facility referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the "James William Robinson Jr. Memorial Post Office Building".

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, was read the third time, and passed, and a motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

**VETERANS MEMORIAL POST OFFICE**

Mr. MITCHELL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform be discharged from further consideration of the bill (H.R. 6335) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 322 Main Street in Oakville, Connecticut, as the "Veterans Memorial Post Office", and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Michigan?

There was no objection.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 6335

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

**SECTION 1. VETERANS MEMORIAL POST OFFICE.**

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 322 Main Street in Oakville, Connecticut, shall be known and designated as the "Veterans Memorial Post Office".

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the facility referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the "Veterans Memorial Post Office".

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. MITCHELL

Mr. MITCHELL. Mr. Speaker, I have an amendment at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

**SECTION 1. OAKVILLE VETERANS MEMORIAL POST OFFICE.**

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 322 Main Street in Oakville, Connecticut, shall be known and designated as the "Oakville Veterans Memorial Post Office".

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the facility referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the "Oakville Veterans Memorial Post Office".

The amendment was agreed to.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, was read the third time, and passed.

The title of the bill was amended so as to read: "A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 322 Main Street in Oakville, Connecticut, as the 'Oakville Veterans Memorial Post Office'".

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

**ROSS BOUYEA POST OFFICE BUILDING**

Mr. MITCHELL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform be discharged from further consideration of the bill (H.R. 6930) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 10 Miller Street in Plattsburgh, New York, as the "Ross Bouyea Post Office Building", and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Michigan?

There was no objection.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 6930

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

**SECTION 1. ROSS BOUYEA POST OFFICE BUILDING.**

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 10 Miller Street in Plattsburgh, New York, shall be known and designated as the "Ross Bouyea Post Office Building".

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the facility referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the "Ross Bouyea Post Office Building".

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, was read the third time, and passed, and a motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

**PRIVATE HENRY SVEHLA POST OFFICE BUILDING**

Mr. MITCHELL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform be discharged from further consideration of the bill (S. 3209) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 413 Washington Avenue in Belleville, New Jersey, as the "Private Henry Svehla Post

Office Building", and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Michigan?

There was no objection.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 3209

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

**SECTION 1. PRIVATE HENRY SVEHLA POST OFFICE BUILDING.**

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 413 Washington Avenue in Belleville, New Jersey, shall be known and designated as the "Private Henry Svehla Post Office Building".

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the facility referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the "Private Henry Svehla Post Office Building".

The bill was ordered to be read a third time, was read the third time, and passed, and a motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

**RICHARD W. WILLIAMS, JR., CHAPTER OF THE TRIPLE NICKLES (555TH P.I.A.) POST OFFICE**

Mr. MITCHELL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform be discharged from further consideration of the bill (S. 3237) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 120 12th Street Lobby in Columbus, Georgia, as the "Richard W. Williams, Jr., Chapter of the Triple Nickles (555th P.I.A.) Post Office", and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Michigan?

There was no objection.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 3237

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

**SECTION 1. RICHARD W. WILLIAMS, JR., CHAPTER OF THE TRIPLE NICKLES (555TH P.I.A.) POST OFFICE.**

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 120 12th Street Lobby in Columbus, Georgia, shall be known and designated as the "Richard W. Williams, Jr., Chapter of the Triple Nickles (555th P.I.A.) Post Office".

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the facility referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the "Richard W. Williams, Jr., Chapter of the Triple Nickles (555th P.I.A.) Post Office".

The bill was ordered to be read a third time, was read the third time, and passed, and a motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

**POSTMASTER FRAZIER B. BAKER POST OFFICE**

Mr. MITCHELL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Com-

mittee on Oversight and Government Reform be discharged from further consideration of the bill (H.R. 7230) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 226 West Main Street in Lake City, South Carolina, as the "Postmaster Frazier B. Baker Post Office", and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Michigan?

There was no objection.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 7230

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

**SECTION 1. POSTMASTER FRAZIER B. BAKER POST OFFICE.**

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 226 West Main Street in Lake City, South Carolina, shall be known and designated as the "Postmaster Frazier B. Baker Post Office".

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the facility referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the "Postmaster Frazier B. Baker Post Office".

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, was read the third time, and passed, and a motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

**AMENDMENT TO CHANGE ADDRESS OF POSTAL FACILITY DESIGNATED BY PUBLIC LAW 115-217**

Mr. MITCHELL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform be discharged from further consideration of the bill (H.R. 7243) to amend Public Law 115-217 to change the address of the postal facility designated by such Public Law in honor of Sergeant First Class Alwyn Crendall Cashe, and for other purposes, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Michigan?

There was no objection.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 7243

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

**SECTION 1. AMENDMENT TO CHANGE ADDRESS OF POSTAL FACILITY DESIGNATED BY PUBLIC LAW 115-217.**

In section 1(a) of Public Law 115-217, strike "567 East Franklin Street" and insert "83 Geneva Drive".

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, was read the third time, and passed, and a motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

**HONORING THE LIFE OF PRESIDENT GEORGE HERBERT WALKER BUSH**

Mr. MITCHELL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Com-

mittee on Oversight and Government Reform be discharged from further consideration of House Resolution 1172, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Michigan?

There was no objection.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 1172

Whereas President George Herbert Walker Bush's lifetime record of service to the United States will continue to inspire Americans for years to come;

Whereas, after the attack on Pearl Harbor, George H.W. Bush joined the United States Naval Reserve in 1942 on his 18th birthday and became a distinguished naval aviator;

Whereas George H.W. Bush's TBM Avenger aircraft was hit with enemy fire over Chi Chi Jima, and though the engine was ablaze, he completed his mission and escaped over water, and floated on a raft for 4 hours before being rescued;

Whereas George H.W. Bush flew 58 combat missions during the Second World War, and was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross and the United States Navy Air Medal with 2 gold stars;

Whereas George H.W. Bush graduated from Yale University with a degree in economics, and moved his family to West Texas and embarked on a successful career in the energy industry;

Whereas, in 1966, George H.W. Bush was elected to represent Texas in the House of Representatives;

Whereas, from 1971 to 1973, George H.W. Bush served as the United States Ambassador to the United Nations;

Whereas, from 1974 to 1975, George H.W. Bush served as the Chief of the United States Liaison Office to the People's Republic of China;

Whereas, from 1976 to 1977, George H.W. Bush served as the Director of Central Intelligence;

Whereas, from 1981 to 1989, George H.W. Bush served as the 43rd Vice President of the United States;

Whereas, from 1989 to 1993, George H.W. Bush served as the 41st President of the United States;

Whereas President George H.W. Bush provided the steady leadership needed through the fall of the Berlin Wall, the reunification of Germany, the peaceful end of the Cold War, and the collapse of the Soviet Union;

Whereas President George H.W. Bush led a coalition of 32 nations to restore Kuwait's sovereignty following its invasion by Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein;

Whereas President George H.W. Bush is noted for the advancement of civil rights with the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act;

Whereas President George H.W. Bush negotiated the North American Free Trade Agreement, creating the world's largest free trade zone;

Whereas, on January 6, 2000, President George H.W. Bush and First Lady Barbara Pierce Bush became the longest married Presidential couple, setting forth for the Nation an example of love and commitment;

Whereas, on January 10, 2009, the U.S.S. George H.W. Bush was commissioned as the 10th and final Nimitz-class carrier for the Navy, named in recognition of George H.W. Bush's Navy service;

Whereas, in 2011, President George H.W. Bush received the Medal of Freedom, the Nation's highest civilian award, for his life of public service and commitment to liberty;

Whereas President George H.W. Bush was a tireless advocate for volunteerism and community service, speaking in his inaugural address of "a Thousand Points of Light, of all the community organizations that are spread like stars throughout the Nation, doing good";

Whereas President George H.W. Bush and Barbara Bush were strong supporters of the Bush School of Government and Public Service at Texas A&M University, established in 1997 as a component of the George H.W. Bush Presidential Library, to encourage future generations to live a life of service to others;

Whereas President George H.W. Bush, with Barbara Bush, had 6 children, 17 grandchildren, and 8 great-grandchildren, and considered Houston, Texas, his home and Walker's Point in Kennebunkport, Maine, as his "anchor to windward"; and

Whereas President George H.W. Bush's life will be remembered for civility, public service, humility, and servant leadership: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

(1) expresses its appreciation for the profound public service of President George H.W. Bush;

(2) expresses its deep sympathy to the children of President George H.W. Bush and First Lady Barbara Bush: President George W. Bush, Jeb Bush, Neil Bush, Marvin Bush, and Dorothy Bush Koch, and to the entire family of the former President; and

(3) directs the Clerk of the House to transmit a copy of this resolution to the family of President George H.W. Bush.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on motions to suspend the rules previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

H.R. 7217, by the yeas and nays;

S. 3029, by the yeas and nays; and

S. 825, by the yeas and nays.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. Remaining electronic votes will be conducted as 5-minute votes.

#### IMPROVING MEDICAID PROGRAMS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR ELIGIBLE BENEFICIARIES ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 7217) to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to provide States with the option of providing coordinated care for children with complex medical conditions through a health home, and for other purposes, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BAR-

TON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 400, nays 11, not voting 21, as follows:

[Roll No. 428]

#### YEAS—400

Abraham	Davis, Rodney	Johnson, Sam
Adams	DeGette	Jones (MI)
Aderholt	Delaney	Jordan
Aguilar	DeLauro	Joyce (OH)
Allen	DelBene	Kaptur
Amodei	Demings	Katko
Arrington	Denham	Kelly (IL)
Babin	DeSaulnier	Kelly (MS)
Bacon	DesJarlais	Kelly (PA)
Balderson	Deutch	Kennedy
Banks (IN)	Diaz-Balart	Khanna
Barletta	Dingell	Kihuen
Barr	Donovan	Kildee
Barragán	Doyle, Michael	Kilmer
Barton	F.	Kind
Bass	Duffy	King (IA)
Beatty	Duncan (SC)	King (NY)
Bera	Duncan (TN)	Kinzinger
Bergman	Dunn	Krishnamoorthi
Bilirakis	Emmer	Kuster (NH)
Bishop (GA)	Engel	Kustoff (TN)
Bishop (UT)	Eshoo	LaHood
Black	Españillat	LaMalfa
Blackburn	Estes (KS)	Lamb
Blum	Esty (CT)	Lamborn
Blumenauer	Evans	Lance
Blunt Rochester	Faso	Langevin
Bonamici	Ferguson	Larsen (WA)
Bost	Fitzpatrick	Larson (CT)
Boyle, Brendan	Fleischmann	Latta
F.	Flores	Lawrence
Brady (PA)	Fortenberry	Lawson (FL)
Brady (TX)	Foster	Lee
Brat	Fox	Lesko
Brooks (IN)	Frankel (FL)	Levin
Brown (MD)	Frelinghuysen	Lewis (GA)
Brownley (CA)	Fudge	Lewis (MN)
Buck	Gabbard	Lieu, Ted
Bucshon	Gallagher	Lipinski
Budd	Gallego	LoBiondo
Burgess	Garamendi	Loeb
Bustos	Gianforte	Loeb
Butterfield	Gibbs	Long
Byrne	Gohmert	Loudermilk
Calvert	Gomez	Love
Capuano	Gonzalez (TX)	Lowenthal
Carbajal	Goodlatte	Lowey
Cárdenas	Gottheimer	Lucas
Carson (IN)	Gowdy	Luetkemeyer
Carter (GA)	Granger	Lujan Grisham,
Carter (TX)	Graves (GA)	M.
Cartwright	Graves (LA)	Luján, Ben Ray
Castor (FL)	Graves (MO)	Lynch
Castro (TX)	Green, Al	MacArthur
Chabot	Green, Gene	Maloney,
Cheney	Grijalva	Carolyn B.
Chu, Judy	Grothman	Maloney, Sean
Cicilline	Guthrie	Marchant
Clark (MA)	Gutiérrez	Marino
Clarke (NY)	Hanabusa	Marshall
Clay	Handel	Mast
Cleaver	Harper	Matsui
Clyburn	Hastings	McCarthy
Coffman	Heck	McCaul
Cohen	Hensarling	McClintock
Cole	Hern	McCollum
Collins (GA)	Herrera Beutler	McEachin
Collins (NY)	Higgins (LA)	McGovern
Comer	Higgins (NY)	McHenry
Comstock	Hill	McKinley
Conaway	Himes	McMorris
Connolly	Holding	Rodgers
Cook	Hollingsworth	McNerney
Cooper	Hoyer	McSally
Correa	Hudson	Meadows
Costello (PA)	Huffman	Meeks
Courtney	Huizenga	Meng
Cramer	Hultgren	Messer
Crawford	Hunter	Mitchell
Crist	Hurd	Moolenaar
Crowley	Issa	Mooney (WV)
Cuellar	Jackson Lee	Moore
Culberson	Jayapal	Morelle
Cummings	Jeffries	Moulton
Curtis	Johnson (GA)	Mullin
Davidson	Johnson (LA)	Murphy (FL)
Davis (CA)	Johnson (OH)	Nadler
Davis, Danny	Johnson, E. B.	Napolitano
		Neal

Newhouse  
Nolan  
Norcross  
Norman  
Nunes  
O'Halleran  
O'Rourke  
Olson  
Palazzo  
Pallone  
Palmer  
Panetta  
Pascarella  
Paulsen  
Payne  
Pearce  
Pelosi  
Perlmutter  
Perry  
Peterson  
Pingree  
Pocan  
Poe (TX)  
Poliquin  
Posey  
Price (NC)  
Quigley  
Shimkus  
Raskin  
Ratcliffe  
Reed  
Reichert  
Renacci  
Rice (NY)  
Rice (SC)  
Richmond  
Roby  
Roe (TN)  
Rogers (AL)  
Rogers (KY)  
Rohrabacher  
Rokita  
Ros-Lehtinen  
Rosen  
Roskam  
Rothfus  
Rouzer  
Roybal-Allard

Royce (CA)  
Ruiz  
Ruppersberger  
Rush  
Russell  
Rutherford  
Ryan (OH)  
Sánchez  
Sanford  
Sarbanes  
Scalise  
Scanlon  
Schakowsky  
Schiff  
Schneider  
Schrader  
Schweikert  
Scott (VA)  
Scott, Austin  
Scott, David  
Sensenbrenner  
Serrano  
Sessions  
Sewell (AL)  
Shea-Porter  
Sherman  
Shimkus  
Shuster  
Simpson  
Sinema  
Sires  
Smith (MO)  
Smith (NE)  
Smith (NJ)  
Smith (TX)  
Smith (WA)  
Smucker  
Soto  
Speler  
Stefanik  
Stewart  
Stivers  
Suzuki  
Swalwell (CA)  
Takano  
Taylor  
Tenney

Thompson (CA)  
Thompson (MS)  
Thompson (PA)  
Thornberry  
Tipton  
Titus  
Tonko  
Torres  
Trott  
Tsongas  
Turner  
Upton  
Valadao  
Vargas  
Veasey  
Vela  
Velázquez  
Visclosky  
Wagner  
Walberg  
Walden  
Walker  
Walorski  
Wasserman  
Schultz  
Waters, Maxine  
Watson Coleman  
Weber (TX)  
Webster (FL)  
Welch  
Wenstrup  
Westerman  
Wild  
Williams  
Wilson (FL)  
Wilson (SC)  
Wittman  
Womack  
Woodall  
Yarmuth  
Yoder  
Yoho  
Young (AK)  
Young (IA)  
Zeldin

#### NAYS—11

Amash  
Biggs  
Brooks (AL)  
Gaetz

Garrett  
Gosar  
Harris  
Hice, Jody B.

Labrador  
Massie  
Rooney, Francis

#### NOT VOTING—21

Beyer  
Bishop (MI)  
Buchanan  
Costa  
Curbelo (FL)  
DeFazio  
Doggett  
Ellison

Hartzler  
Jenkins (KS)  
Jones (NC)  
Keating  
Knight  
Noem  
Peters  
Pittenger

Polis  
Rooney, Thomas  
J.  
Ross  
Walters, Mimi  
Walz

□ 1646

Messrs. JODY B. HICE of Georgia and GOSAR changed their vote from "yea" to "nay."

Mr. SANFORD changed his vote from "nay" to "yea."

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. YOHO. Mr. Speaker, had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall No. 428.

#### PREMATURITY RESEARCH EXPAN- SION AND EDUCATION FOR MOTHERS WHO DELIVER IN- FANTS EARLY REAUTHORIZA- TION ACT OF 2018

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 3029) to revise and extend the

Prematurity Research Expansion and Education for Mothers who deliver Infants Early Act (PREEMIE Act), on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 406, nays 3, not voting 23, as follows:

[Roll No. 429]

#### YEAS—406

Abraham	Costello (PA)	Harper
Adams	Courtney	Harris
Aderholt	Cramer	Hastings
Aguilar	Crawford	Heck
Allen	Crist	Hensarling
Amodei	Crowley	Hern
Arrington	Cuellar	Herrera Beutler
Babin	Culberson	Hice, Jody B.
Bacon	Cummings	Higgins (LA)
Balderson	Curtis	Higgins (NY)
Banks (IN)	Davidson	Hill
Barletta	Davis (CA)	Himes
Barr	Davis, Danny	Holding
Barragán	Davis, Rodney	Hollingsworth
Barton	DeGette	Hoyer
Bass	Delaney	Hudson
Beatty	DeLauro	Huffman
Bera	DelBene	Huizenga
Bergman	Demings	Hultgren
Biggs	Denham	Hunter
Billirakis	DeSaulnier	Hurd
Bishop (GA)	DesJarlais	Issa
Bishop (UT)	Deutch	Jackson Lee
Black	Diaz-Balart	Jayapal
Blackburn	Dingell	Jeffries
Blum	Doggett	Johnson (GA)
Blumenauer	Donovan	Johnson (LA)
Blunt Rochester	Doyle, Michael	Johnson (OH)
Bonamici	F.	Johnson, E. B.
Bost	Duffy	Johnson, Sam
Boyle, Brendan	Duncan (SC)	Jones (MI)
F.	Duncan (TN)	Jordan
Brady (PA)	Dunn	Joyce (OH)
Brady (TX)	Emmer	Kaptur
Brat	Engel	Katko
Brooks (AL)	Eshoo	Kelly (IL)
Brooks (IN)	Espallat	Kelly (MS)
Brown (MD)	Estes (KS)	Kelly (PA)
Brownley (CA)	Esty (CT)	Kennedy
Buck	Evans	Khan
Bucshon	Faso	Kihuen
Budd	Ferguson	Kildee
Burgess	Fitzpatrick	Kilmer
Bustos	Fleischmann	Kind
Butterfield	Flores	King (IA)
Byrne	Fortenberry	King (NY)
Calvert	Foster	Kinzing
Capuano	Fox	Krishnamoorthi
Carbajal	Frankel (FL)	Kuster (NH)
Cárdenas	Frelinghuysen	Kustoff (TN)
Carson (IN)	Fudge	Labrador
Carter (GA)	Gabbard	LaHood
Carter (TX)	Gaetz	LaMalfa
Cartwright	Gallagher	Lamb
Castor (FL)	Galleo	Lamborn
Castro (TX)	Garamendi	Lance
Chabot	Gianforte	Langevin
Cheney	Gibbs	Larsen (WA)
Chu, Judy	Gohmert	Larson (CT)
Cicilline	Gomez	Latta
Clark (MA)	Gonzalez (TX)	Lawrence
Clarke (NY)	Goodlatte	Lawson (FL)
Clay	Gosar	Lee
Cleaver	Gottheimer	Lesko
Cloud	Gowdy	Levin
Clyburn	Granger	Lewis (GA)
Coffman	Graves (GA)	Lewis (MN)
Cohen	Graves (LA)	Lieu, Ted
Cole	Graves (MO)	Lipinski
Collins (GA)	Green, Al	LoBiondo
Collins (NY)	Green, Gene	Loebsack
Comer	Griffith	Lofgren
Comstock	Grijalva	Long
Conaway	Grothman	Loudermilk
Connolly	Guthrie	Love
Cook	Gutiérrez	Lowenthal
Cooper	Hanabusa	Lowe
Correa	Handel	Lucas

Luetkemeyer	Peterson	Smith (NE)
Lujan Grisham, M.	Pingree	Smith (NJ)
Luján, Ben Ray	Pocan	Smith (TX)
Lynch	Poe (TX)	Smith (WA)
MacArthur	Poliquin	Smucker
Maloney,	Posey	Soto
Carolyn B.	Price (NC)	Speier
Maloney, Sean	Quigley	Stefanik
Marchant	Raskin	Stewart
Marino	Ratcliffe	Stivers
Marshall	Reed	Swalwell (CA)
Mast	Reichert	Takano
Matsui	Renacci	Taylor
McCarthy	Rice (NY)	Tenney
McCaul	Rice (SC)	Thompson (CA)
McClintock	Richmond	Thompson (MS)
McCollum	Roby	Thompson (PA)
McGovern	Roe (TN)	Thornberry
McHenry	Rogers (AL)	Tipton
McKinley	Rogers (KY)	Titus
McMorris	Rohrabacher	Tonko
Rodgers	Rokita	Torres
McNerney	Rooney, Francis	Trotter
McSally	Ros-Lehtinen	Tsongas
Meadows	Rosen	Turner
Meeks	Roskam	Upton
Meng	Rothfus	Valadao
Messer	Rouzer	Vargas
Mitchell	Roybal-Allard	Veasey
Moolenaar	Royce (CA)	Vela
Mooney (WV)	Ruiz	Velázquez
Moore	Ruppersberger	Visclosky
Morelle	Rush	Wagner
Moulton	Russell	Walberg
Mullin	Rutherford	Walden
Murphy (FL)	Ryan (OH)	Walker
Nadler	Sánchez	Walorski
Napolitano	Sanford	Wasserman
Neal	Sarbanes	Schultz
Newhouse	Scalise	Waters, Maxine
Nolan	Scanlon	Watson Coleman
Norcross	Schakowsky	Weber (TX)
Norman	Schiff	Webster (FL)
Nunes	Schneider	Welch
O'Halleran	Schrader	Wenstrup
O'Rourke	Scott (VA)	Westerman
Olsen	Scott, Austin	Wild
Palazzo	Scott, David	Williams
Pallone	Sensenbrenner	Wilson (FL)
Palmer	Serrano	Wilson (SC)
Panetta	Sessions	Wittman
Pascarell	Sewell (AL)	Womack
Paulsen	Shea-Porter	Woodall
Payne	Sherman	Yarmuth
Pearce	Shimkus	Yoder
Pelosi	Shuster	Young (AK)
Perlmutter	Simpson	Young (IA)
Perry	Sinema	Zeldin
Peters	Sires	
	Smith (MO)	

#### NAYS—3

#### NOT VOTING—23

Amash	Garrett	Massie
Beyer	Jenkins (KS)	Rooney, Thomas
Bishop (MI)	Jones (NC)	J.
Buchanan	Keating	Ross
Costa	Knight	Schweikert
Curbelo (FL)	McEachin	Suozi
DeFazio	Noem	Walters, Mimi
Ellison	Pittenger	Walz
Hartzler	Polis	Yoho

□ 1657

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### SOUTHEAST ALASKA REGIONAL HEALTH CONSORTIUM LAND TRANSFER ACT OF 2017

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 825) to provide for the conveyance of certain property to the Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium located in Sitka, Alaska, and for

other purposes, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 403, nays 3, not voting 26, as follows:

[Roll No. 430]

#### YEAS—403

Abraham	Crist	Higgins (NY)
Adams	Crowley	Hill
Aderholt	Cuellar	Himes
Aguilar	Culberson	Holding
Allen	Cummings	Hollingsworth
Amodei	Curtis	Hoyer
Arrington	Davidson	Hudson
Babin	Davis (CA)	Huffman
Bacon	Davis, Rodney	Huizenga
Balderson	DeGette	Hultgren
Banks (IN)	Delaney	Hunter
Barletta	DeLauro	Hurd
Barr	DelBene	Jackson Lee
Barragán	Demings	Jayapal
Barton	Denham	Jeffries
Bass	DeSaulnier	Johnson (GA)
Beatty	DesJarlais	Johnson (LA)
Bera	Deutch	Johnson (OH)
Bergman	Diaz-Balart	Johnson, E. B.
Biggs	Dingell	Johnson, Sam
Billirakis	Doggett	Jones (MI)
Bishop (GA)	Donovan	Jordan
Bishop (UT)	Doyle, Michael	Joyce (OH)
Black	F.	Kaptur
Blackburn	Duffy	Katko
Blum	Duncan (SC)	Kelly (IL)
Blumenauer	Duncan (TN)	Kelly (MS)
Blunt Rochester	Dunn	Kelly (PA)
Bonamici	Emmer	Kennedy
Bost	Engel	Khan
Boyle, Brendan	Eshoo	Kihuen
F.	Espallat	Kildee
Brady (PA)	Estes (KS)	Kilmer
Brady (TX)	Esty (CT)	Kind
Brat	Evans	King (IA)
Brooks (IN)	Faso	King (NY)
Brooks (MD)	Ferguson	Kinzing
Brownley (CA)	Fitzpatrick	Krishnamoorthi
Buck	Fleischmann	Kuster (NH)
Bucshon	Flores	Kustoff (TN)
Budd	Fortenberry	Labrador
Burgess	Foster	LaHood
Bustos	Fox	LaMalfa
Butterfield	Frankel (FL)	Lamb
Byrne	Gosar	Lamborn
Calvert	Gottheimer	Lance
Capuano	Gowdy	Langevin
Carbajal	Granger	Larsen (WA)
Cárdenas	Graves (GA)	Larson (CT)
Carson (IN)	Graves (LA)	Latta
Carter (GA)	Graves (MO)	Lawrence
Carter (TX)	Green, Al	Lawson (FL)
Cartwright	Green, Gene	Lee
Castor (FL)	Griffith	Lesko
Castro (TX)	Grijalva	Levin
Chabot	Grothman	Lewis (GA)
Cheney	Guthrie	Lewis (MN)
Chu, Judy	Gutiérrez	Lieu, Ted
Cicilline	Hanabusa	Lipinski
Clark (MA)	Handel	LoBiondo
Clarke (NY)	Harper	Loebsack
Clay	Harris	Lofgren
Cleaver	Hastings	Long
Cloud	Heck	Loudermilk
Clyburn	Hensarling	Love
Coffman	Hern	Lowenthal
Cohen	Herrera Beutler	Lowe
Cole	Hice, Jody B.	Lucas
Comstock	Higgins (LA)	
Conaway		
Connolly		
Cook		
Cooper		
Correa		



Massie	Raskin	Soto
Mast	Ratcliffe	Speier
Matsui	Reed	Stefanik
McCarthy	Reichert	Stewart
McCaul	Renacci	Stivers
McClintock	Rice (NY)	Suozi
McCollum	Rice (SC)	Swalwell (CA)
McGovern	Richmond	Takano
McHenry	Roby	Taylor
McKinley	Roe (TN)	Tenney
McMorris	Rogers (AL)	Thompson (CA)
Rodgers	Rogers (KY)	Thompson (MS)
McNerney	Rohrabacher	Thompson (PA)
McSally	Rokita	Thornberry
Meadows	Rooney, Francis	Tipton
Meeks	Ros-Lehtinen	Titus
Meng	Rosen	Tonko
Messer	Roskam	Torres
Mitchell	Rothfus	Trott
Moolenaar	Rouzer	Tsongas
Mooney (WV)	Roybal-Allard	Turner
Moore	Royce (CA)	Upton
Morelle	Ruiz	Valadao
Moulton	Ruppersberger	Vargas
Mullin	Rush	Veasey
Murphy (FL)	Russell	Vela
Nadler	Rutherford	Velázquez
Napolitano	Ryan (OH)	Visclosky
Neal	Sánchez	Wagner
Newhouse	Sanford	Walberg
Nolan	Sarbanes	Walden
Norcross	Scalise	Walker
Norman	Scanlon	Walorski
Nunes	Schiff	Wasserman
O'Halleran	Schneider	Schultz
O'Rourke	Schrader	Waters, Maxine
Olson	Schweikert	Watson Coleman
Palazzo	Scott (VA)	Weber (TX)
Pallone	Scott, Austin	Webster (FL)
Palmer	Scott, David	Welch
Panetta	Sensenbrenner	Wenstrup
Pascarella	Serrano	Westerman
Paulsen	Sessions	Wild
Payne	Sewell (AL)	Williams
Pearce	Shea-Porter	Wilson (FL)
Pelosi	Sherman	Wilson (SC)
Perlmutter	Shimkus	Wittman
Perry	Shuster	Womack
Peters	Simpson	Woodall
Peterson	Sinema	Yarmuth
Pingree	Sires	Yoder
Pocan	Smith (MO)	Yoho
Poe (TX)	Smith (NE)	Young (AK)
Poliquin	Smith (NJ)	Young (IA)
Posey	Smith (TX)	Zeldin
Price (NC)	Smith (WA)	
Quigley	Smucker	

## NAYS—3

Amash	Brooks (AL)	Garrett
-------	-------------	---------

## NOT VOTING—26

Beyer	Frelinghuysen	Noem
Bishop (MI)	Gaetz	Pittenger
Buchanan	Hartzler	Polis
Costa	Issa	Rooney, Thomas
Cramer	Jenkins (KS)	J.
Curbelo (FL)	Jones (NC)	Ross
Davis, Danny	Keating	Schakowsky
DeFazio	Knight	Walters, Mimi
Ellison	McEachin	Walz

□ 1706

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

# ENDANGERED SALMON PREDATION PREVENTION ACT

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table the bill (S. 3119) to allow for the taking of sea lions on the Columbia River and its tributaries to protect endangered and threatened species of salmon and other nonlisted fish species, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Colorado?

There was no objection.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 3119

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

## SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Endangered Salmon Predation Prevention Act".

## SEC. 2. SENSE OF CONGRESS.

It is the sense of the Congress that—

(1) preventing predation by sea lions, recovery of listed salmonid stocks, and preventing future listings of fish stocks in the Columbia River under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.) is a vital priority; and

(2) the Federal Government should continue to fund lethal and nonlethal removal, and deterrence, measures for preventing such predation.

## SEC. 3. TAKING OF SEA LIONS ON THE COLUMBIA RIVER AND ITS TRIBUTARIES TO PROTECT ENDANGERED AND THREATENED SPECIES OF SALMON AND OTHER NONLISTED FISH SPECIES.

Section 120(f) of the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972 (16 U.S.C. 1389(f)) is amended to read as follows:

"(f) TEMPORARY MARINE MAMMAL REMOVAL AUTHORITY ON THE WATERS OF THE COLUMBIA RIVER OR ITS TRIBUTARIES.—

"(1) REMOVAL AUTHORITY.—Notwithstanding any other provision of this Act, the Secretary may issue a permit to an eligible entity to authorize the intentional lethal taking on the waters of the Columbia River and its tributaries of individually identifiable sea lions that are part of a population or stock that is not categorized under this Act as depleted or strategic for the purpose of protecting—

"(A) species of salmon, steelhead, or eulachon that are listed as endangered species or threatened species under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.); and

"(B) species of lamprey or sturgeon that are not so listed as endangered or threatened but are listed as a species of concern.

"(2) PERMIT PROCESS.—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—An eligible entity may apply to the Secretary for a permit under this subsection.

"(B) TIMELINES AND PROCEDURES OF APPLICATION.—The timelines and procedures described in subsection (c) shall apply to applications for permits under this subsection in the same manner such timelines apply to applications under subsection (b).

"(C) COORDINATION.—The Secretary shall establish procedures to coordinate issuance of permits under this subsection, including application procedures and timelines, delegation and revocation of permits to and between eligible entities, monitoring, periodic review, and geographic, seasonal take, and species-specific considerations.

"(D) DURATION OF PERMIT.—A permit under this subsection shall be effective for a period of not more than 5 years, and may be renewed by the Secretary.

"(3) LIMITATIONS ON ANNUAL TAKINGS.—The Secretary shall apply the process for determining limitations on annual take of sea lions under subsection (c) to determinations on limitations under this subsection, and the cumulative number of sea lions authorized to be taken each year under all permits in effect under this subsection shall not exceed 10

percent of the annual potential biological removal level for sea lions.

"(4) QUALIFIED INDIVIDUALS.—Intentional lethal takings under this subsection shall—

"(A) be humane within the meaning of such term under section 3(4);

"(B) require that capture, husbandry, transportation, and euthanasia protocols are based on standards propagated by an Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee and that primary euthanasia be limited to humane chemical methods; and

"(C) be implemented by agencies or qualified individuals described in subsection (c)(4), or by individuals employed by the eligible entities described in paragraph (6).

"(5) SUSPENSION OF PERMITTING AUTHORITY.—If, 5 years after the date of the enactment of the Endangered Salmon Predation Prevention Act, the Secretary, after consulting with State and tribal fishery managers, determines that lethal removal authority is no longer necessary to protect salmonid and other fish species from sea lion predation, the Secretary shall suspend the issuance of permits under this subsection.

"(6) ELIGIBLE ENTITY DEFINED.—

"(A) DEFINITION.—In this subsection, the term 'eligible entity' means—

"(i) with respect to removal in the mainstem of the Columbia River, from river mile 112 to the McNary Dam and its tributaries in the State of Washington, and its tributaries in the State of Oregon above Bonneville Dam, the State of Washington, the State of Oregon, and the State of Idaho;

"(ii) with respect to removal in the mainstem Columbia River from river mile 112 to the McNary Dam and its tributaries within the State of Washington and in any of its tributaries above Bonneville Dam within the State of Oregon, the Nez Perce Tribe, the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon, and the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation; and

"(iii) with respect to removal in the Willamette River and other tributaries of the Columbia River within the State of Oregon below Bonneville Dam, a committee recognized by the Secretary under subparagraph (D).

"(B) DELEGATION AUTHORITY.—The Secretary may allow eligible entities described in clause (i) or (ii) of subparagraph (A) to delegate their authority under a permit under this subsection to the Columbia River Intertribal Fish Commission for removal in the mainstem of the Columbia River above river mile 112 and below McNary Dam, in the Columbia River tributaries in the State of Washington, or in tributaries within the State of Oregon above Bonneville Dam and below McNary Dam.

"(C) ADDITIONAL DELEGATION AUTHORITY.—The Secretary may allow an eligible entity described in subparagraph (A)(i) to delegate its authority under a permit under this subsection to any entity described in subclause (i) or (ii) of subparagraph (A) with respect to removal in the mainstem of the Columbia River above river mile 112 and below McNary Dam, in the Columbia River tributaries in the State of Washington, or in tributaries in the State of Oregon above Bonneville Dam and below McNary Dam.

"(D) COMMITTEE REQUIREMENTS.—

"(i) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall recognize a committee established in accordance with this subparagraph as being eligible for a permit under this subsection, for purposes of subparagraph (A)(iii).

"(ii) MEMBERSHIP.—A committee established under this subparagraph shall consist of the State of Oregon and each of the following:

“(I) The Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians or the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde Community, or both.

“(II) The Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs or the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Reservation, or both.

“(iii) MAJORITY AGREEMENT REQUIRED.—A committee established under this subparagraph may take action with respect to a permit application and removal under this subsection only with majority agreement by the committee members.

“(iv) NONAPPLICABILITY OF FACA.—The Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) shall not apply to a committee established under this subparagraph.

“(7) INDIVIDUAL EXCEPTION.—For purposes of this subsection, any sea lion located upstream of river mile 112 and downstream of McNary Dam, or in any tributary to the Columbia River that includes spawning habitat of threatened or endangered salmon or steelhead is deemed to be individually identifiable.

“(8) SIGNIFICANT NEGATIVE IMPACT EXCEPTION.—For purposes of this subsection, any sea lion located in the mainstem of the Columbia River upstream of river mile 112 and downstream of McNary Dam, or in any tributary to the Columbia River that includes spawning habitat of threatened or endangered salmon or steelhead is deemed to be having a significant negative impact, within the meaning of subsection (b)(1).

“(9) DEFINITION.—In this subsection, the term ‘Indian tribe’ has the meaning given such term in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5304).”.

#### SEC. 4. TREATY RIGHTS OF FEDERALLY RECOGNIZED INDIAN TRIBES.

Nothing in this Act or the amendments made by this Act shall be construed to enlarge, confirm, adjudicate, affect, or modify any treaty or other right of an Indian tribe (as defined in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5304)).

#### SEC. 5. REPORT.

Not later than 3 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Commerce shall study and report to Congress on the effects of deterrence and the lethal taking of sea lions on the recovery of endangered and threatened salmon and steelhead stocks in the waters of the Columbia River and the tributaries of the Columbia River subject to section 120(f) of the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972 (16 U.S.C. 1389(f)), as amended by this Act.

The bill was ordered to be read a third time, was read the third time, and passed, and a motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### APPOINTMENT OF INDIVIDUAL TO THE COMMISSION ON INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair announces the Speaker's appointment, pursuant to section 201(b) of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 (22 U.S.C. 6431) and the order of the House of January 3, 2017, of the following individual on the part of the House to the Commission on International Religious Freedom for a term ending May 14, 2020:

Ms. Anurima Bhargava, Chicago, Illinois, to succeed Mr. Daniel I. Mark

#### HONORING THE LIFE OF JOHN “WOODY” WOOD

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

Ms. TENNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor John “Woody” Wood, and his loving wife, Candice, or Candy, two long-time and dear friends of mine.

John, affectionately known as “Woody” to his friends and family, is a true inspiration to all. Woody has endured more than his share of challenges throughout his life. Woody boldly fought the status quo as a citizen and, later on, as an elected official in our community.

As a community servant, his creed was no different. He fought for the truth in government and he never compromised his integrity, and his word was worth his weight in gold. Most importantly, he made a difference for all the people that he served in our community.

Woody bravely battled liver cancer, which resulted in a liver transplant, and now, unfortunately, our dear friend Woody is fighting pancreatic cancer.

Despite the hardships Woody has faced throughout his life, he has always remained courageous in the face of every foe, including cancer. Woody's integrity, compassion, and eternal sunny outlook on life have been an inspiration to all of us.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in praying for Woody and Candice and their entire family as they fight the next battle in Woody's life.

#### HONORING JERSEY CITY POET LAUREATE RASHAD WRIGHT

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

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Rashad Wright on becoming Jersey City, New Jersey's first poet laureate in more than a decade.

Rashad is a 24-year-old Poetry Slam Champion and recent graduate of New Jersey City University. Rashad has spent the past 6 years performing poetry and inspiring people throughout my district.

His poetry challenges society to improve lives. His spoken word and his written word are full of power that exceeds his 24 years of age.

In a piece of prose, titled, “Between Lines,” Rashad writes: “As a poet, it feels like the souls of black folks fire through my lips.”

He speaks truth through art and helps elevate everyone who listens. I am proud to honor a man whose creativity and passion pull people into poetry.

Poet laureate Rashad Wright's story is just the beginning. I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating Rashad for his accomplishments.

□ 1715

#### HONORING WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, one of our finest holiday traditions will take place this Saturday: Wreaths Across America.

Many Americans can recall the iconic photograph of wreaths on the tombstones at Arlington National Cemetery. Snow blankets the ground, red ribbons adorn the wreaths that lay on the rows of tombstones as far as the eye can see.

This annual tribute began in 1992 by a Maine wreath maker named Morrill Worcester, who donated 5,000 wreaths to Arlington National Cemetery in honor of our fallen heroes.

Today, Wreaths Across America has grown into a national organization. A total of 1.2 million wreaths were placed on markers across the country last year in more than 1,400 locations, with more than 200,000 at Arlington alone.

The mission is to remember, honor, and teach.

As we celebrate with our loved ones, let us remember all of our military men and women, especially those we have lost in service to this Nation.

Thank you to Morrill and to all the volunteers who honor their memory.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank all of our troops serving at home and overseas and wish them a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

#### CONGRATULATING FLORIDA STATE'S GIRLS SOCCER

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

Mr. LAWSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this time to congratulate Florida State University women's soccer team for winning the NCAA national championship over the North Carolina Tar Heels.

I know we have a lot of Tar Heels here, and I would like to congratulate them for their work, too.

These extraordinary women trained day in and day out to become the champs that they are today.

Coach Mark Krikorian's work and relationship with his players speaks volumes to the work they have been able to accomplish and to develop a program that will continue to produce remarkable results in the future.

I hope these young women continue to work hard as they grow to new heights. I encourage them to carry over the same training, mind-set, and attitude into all the things that they do here in life.

I join my fellow alumni and fans from across the Nation to say congratulations, and go Noles.

CELEBRATING REVEREND DR. F.N. WILLIAMS' 90TH BIRTHDAY

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to honor a great force in our community in Houston, Texas, in Acres Homes. This coming Sunday, he will celebrate 90 years of age, but decades in the ministry, Reverend Dr. F.N. Williams, whose father preceded him in the ministry, whose sons have gone on into the ministry.

He is a pastor of the Antioch Missionary Baptist Church in Acres Homes, one of the oldest churches in our State.

He is a warrior. He is a fighter for civil rights and civil justice. He was there on the front lines when the Honorable Barbara Jordan was elected and Mickey Leland. But even before that, he was one who would lead the community on addressing their rights and the right to stand against inequality.

He was a friend of President George H.W. Bush, who happened to represent Acres Homes before we had the 18th Congressional District, which I represent. They had a relationship. They fought against drugs in that community.

And, as well, he believes in education. He believes in young people. He has a church that reaches those who are in need.

So tonight, this evening, I am delighted to honor his beloved wife and his family members, but to say to him: I salute you on your 90th birthday. Reverend Dr. F.N. Williams, you are deserving and, yes, you are a great American.

COWBOY RIDES AWAY

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, it is the final showdown scene, and while there are no swinging doors or clicking of spurs, eerie signs and sounds of silence or dust swirling behind me, I stand here today in the people's House to speak probably for the last time.

If they would let me cue the soundtrack, the king of country, George Strait, would sing: "Oh, the last goodbye's the hardest one to say. This is where the cowboy rides away."

I gave my very first speech as a Member of Congress from Texas on February 1, 2005, after I had come back from Iraq to see their first free elections ever. I went to Iraq, along with Chris Shays, a Congressman from Connecticut. Since that first speech, some might say I haven't shut up, and, well, they are probably right, Mr. Speaker.

I spoke, I understand according to the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, over 2,000

times in my 14 years serving the good people of the Second Congressional District of the State of Texas—some very well received, I might add. My staff might say, however, some not so much.

They have gotten a few calls over the years asking, "Did your boss really say that?"—more often than not, "What in the world was he talking about?"

I have probably spoken more about Texas and the way we do things there than anyplace else. You, Mr. Speaker, being from Louisiana, understand how important it is to love where we are from.

And I say things a little bit different than folks up here in "Warshington." And, yes, that is "Warshington" with an R.

I am not going to relive every moment in a sad song good-bye, but there are a few things that I came here to say and do in my 14 years, and I would like to say some of those again.

First of all, thank you, thank you to the people of the State of Texas for trusting me to be their voice, their advocate here in this amazing place, the United States House of Representatives. It has been an honor of a lifetime.

I came here to advocate for issues that are important, important back home to the folks in Texas. And through the mud and the blood and the beer, I fought day and night to make sure that the interests of Texas came first. And there are a lot of them, Mr. Speaker.

I vowed that crime victims would have a voice; that those who serve and have served our great Nation in the military would receive the honors that they earn and deserve; to protect our privacy and make sure our most important right to freedom of speech was fiercely protected, protected by us in the House of Representatives.

If I look back, my order of priorities came about at an early age. I owe my career in public service to my grandmother, my mother's mother, and I can probably credit her with my outspoken opinions. She instilled in me the non-negotiable duty to serve.

That is what life is all about: to serve, to serve others. So I have. I have always been in public service.

I was in the United States Air Force Reserves. Then I taught school. That was too hard, so I went to law school, and I became a lawyer and a prosecutor in the district attorney's office in Houston, where I was the chief felony prosecutor. I spent 22 years on the district court bench in Houston, Texas, trying criminal cases, and now I am here in the United States Congress.

My grandmother educated me in the ways of the world more than anyone in my life, but unfortunately, to her dismay, I broke her staunchest Southern belief: being a Democrat. I don't know that she ever forgave me for being a Republican. Probably, she hasn't. She is still rolling over in her grave wondering where she went wrong all those years.

I was a Reagan Republican from the first time I saw Reagan speak at the 1968 Republican Convention in Miami Beach, when I was a representative from the College Students for Reagan.

My dyed-in-the-wool Democrat grandmother couldn't stand it, and she let me know, but that is one of the things I admired most about her. Well, to put it nicely, she was bluntly truthful. I never doubted what she said. And if she had told me that it was raining in my house, I would have run home and started putting plastic over the furniture.

She taught me to say: "And that is just the way it is." I think we can all agree I took that lesson pretty well.

Another person in my life who taught me a lesson or two—some hard ones growing up, I might add—was my dad, Virgil Poe. Now 93, he hasn't stopped giving me advice, and he doesn't mind giving anybody advice whether they ask for it or not. He really is the greatest man I know. A charter member of the Greatest Generation, he went off to the great World War II when he was 18. He represents everything that is good and right about our country.

He and my mom, who is also 93, have been married for 73 years. She gives me quite a bunch of advice as well. They still live in Houston, not far from where I grew up. They still go to the same church, and they set examples for our family on how to do things the right way.

They are from a generation that believed in God, country, and family, and good old-fashioned American hard work.

Although they both grew up very poor in the Depression, they never thought they were victims, but they believed that here, only here in America, could they and would they have a good life. It was from them that I learned how important it was to be an American.

We are unusual people in an unusual country, and we should be proud of that fact. Never should we apologize for who we are. We must never forget that what sets us apart from the rest of the world—it is a basic word. We use it a lot, but it has great meaning. And that word is "freedom."

The most important right we have as Americans is, really, the freedom of speech. It is first because it is the most important. It is the very core of who we are as people. Without the First Amendment, freedom of religion, freedom of press, freedom of assembly, the right to petition government, and the rest of the amendments really don't make a lot of sense.

Of course, the Second was written to protect the First. Some of my friends in Texas believe that the Second Amendment is more important than the First, but it is not. It is the Second Amendment because it is to protect the First.

Nowhere in the Constitution is the word "fair" mentioned. Speech is to be free, not necessarily fair. Fair means

different things to different folks. Fair means to some folks in Texas where you take the chickens and cattle to on the weekends, to the fair.

We have an obligation to uphold the laws as they were intended. And our forefathers didn't scribble out these amendments in a tavern in Philadelphia after drinking some demon rum many years ago. They were carefully crafted to stand the test of time and make sure that all people—all people—had the power, and not government had the power.

We have seen government grow more and more powerful and intrusive in our lives, in our businesses every year. With more and more control over our speech being handed down by the self-appointed, self-righteous speech police, they are running neck and neck with Big Brother that is digging deeper and deeper into our private lives.

The Fourth Amendment, unique to America, is sacred, and it is sacred to this country and the Founders who drafted it. Privacy, the right of privacy in the Fourth Amendment should not be forsaken on the false altar of national security.

Yes, we can have both: the right of privacy and also national security.

As a former judge, I am very concerned about the loss of our Fourth Amendment right of privacy in the United States based on, in my opinion, the unconstitutional actions of the NSA.

In the aftermath of 9/11, the government authorized a once secret program by the NSA to collect information on the bad actors, primarily terrorists and foreign agents who wished to create mayhem. They were terrorists overseas. We fought to go after them and get them. Section 702 of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act was written to go after terrorists, but it is being used to go after Americans, Mr. Speaker.

When I was a judge, I signed lots of warrants when peace officers would bring me a warrant. They would swear out an affidavit of truthfulness, so I would give them a piece of paper, a warrant, to allow them to go arrest or search a premises. That is all based upon the Fourth Amendment in the Constitution. And peace officers did exactly that. But that is not the case for many American citizens anymore.

You might ask, well, who is doing this? Is it a criminal organization? Is it a private investigator? Is it Google?

No. It is not a nefarious organization operating behind closed doors, and it is not even the Russians, Mr. Speaker. It is the spying eyes of the United States Federal Government.

As the chairman of the Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade, I agree; we should go after the terrorists with everything we have got, and our government should use techniques they have on those people who wish to destroy America and find out what those terrorists are doing.

But despite the overall intention of the law, the program has been corrupted. Not only does NSA collect information on terrorists, which they should do, but it collects data on ordinary American citizens.

What I mean by "data" is not just emails and text messages, but communications and conversations. This, I believe, is in violation of the Constitution.

□ 1730

The government does not use a specific Fourth Amendment warrant, a warrant based upon probable cause for a person—law enforcement—to go and search or arrest someone, but it uses it anyway under the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, a lesser requirement, and still issues warrants to go and search and seize information.

The Fourth Amendment says the warrantless search and seizure is unconstitutional without a probable cause warrant. I don't see any exceptions there, Mr. Speaker. Our constitutional rights are not selected. They were written to keep big brother—government—in check. The government really doesn't get to pick and choose which ones they want to follow and which ones they don't.

It sounds like a page out of George Orwell's novel "1984" where it says:

Always eyes watching you and the voice enveloping you. Asleep or awake, indoors or out of doors, in the bath or bed, no escape.

We read "1984" years ago, Mr. Speaker, and we all thought that would never happen. But the government's ability to seize information, based upon information that is less reliable than the Fourth Amendment requires, and does so in secret I think is a violation of our rights.

It is hard to believe this is happening, but we need to wake up and remember this. Remember, Mr. Speaker, the Bill of Rights was intended to protect us from government. People have rights. Government has power. Government has no rights. It has power that they take or we give it to them. But it is the individuals in this country who have rights, including the right of privacy to be secure in our persons and our places and our homes from unlawful searches and seizures.

I think government has gotten out of the box because of this Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act. The Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act allows secret courts to issue secret warrants to law enforcement to go and do things that the person who is having their information seized may know nothing about. It was intended to be used against terrorists, but now it is being used against Americans and seizing that information against Americans.

Congresswoman ZOE LOFGREN and I co-founded The Fourth Amendment Caucus to protect our privacy. When I was first elected to Congress, they gave me a BlackBerry. That was new technology back then, Mr. Speaker. We

could get emails on our phones. I called it a Strawberry. And I can't tell you how many of those things I have lost all over the world.

Now we have smartphones that are smarter than most of us most of the time. While technology continues to change, the Constitution does not change. The rights we have in the Constitution still apply to us today, even with technology.

It is the duty of government to balance the interest of protecting Americans, while respecting constitutional rights. So the caucus has fought to protect Americans against warrantless searches and seizures, closing privacy violating surveillance loopholes, and champion reform efforts to protect and restore Fourth Amendment rights.

The FISA abuse—the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act—allowing secret courts to operate in secret and issue secret warrants against people who never know about it reminds me of the Star Chamber back in merry ole England, that operated in secret and issued secret warrants, all in the name of protecting the Crown, and that is what it seems like we have gotten to.

Mr. Speaker, the First Amendment also talks about the right to practice the religion that we wish. The First Amendment states in part that "Congress"—of course that is us—"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof."

You notice, Mr. Speaker, the First Amendment doesn't just give us the right to believe any religion we want to, it gives us the right to practice the religion that we have: the free exercise. And Congress can make no law to prevent that.

The freedom to practice one's own religion is the reason why many of the colonists settled and founded in this great country. Modern revisionist historians don't want to talk about that, but it is true. One of the primary reasons why people left England and Europe was to seek religious freedom. That is why it is in the First Amendment along with freedom of speech.

When Thomas Jefferson, who is the author of the Declaration of Independence, wrote it, he proclaimed that God gives us our rights. He wrote "that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness;" and that governments are instituted among men to secure those rights. We get our rights from the almighty. We don't get our rights from government or the king.

Jefferson's reference to God is echoed throughout this Nation: our currency mentions God; our government buildings have religious scenes and words on them; we pledge allegiance every day in this House Chamber to one Nation under God; we even have the great law-giver Moses on the far wall looking down directly on the Speaker; and above the flag is the phrase, "In God We Trust."

Those who argue we cannot mention God or religion in public government places are looking to destroy the very freedom that our country was founded on. The mention of God in our culture is not an establishment of religion; it is a freedom. Note that the right to practice one's religion, Mr. Speaker, is a right that we have, as well as the right to believe whatever we wish when it comes to religion.

We have this concept in the Declaration of Independence that we are worth something as individuals; that we are worth something as individuals not because government gives us rights, or politicians, or the king, but the Declaration of Independence says that we are endowed by our creator with certain unalienable rights.

The truth is our Constitution says that we are guaranteed freedom of religion, not freedom from religion. I believe, as many Americans do, that America is a special place, a chosen place, an exceptional place, and America is more than just another country on the globe.

Throughout our history, we have served as a beacon of light in an often dark world, and one reason is because we say and believe "In God We Trust." We cannot follow this fundamental principle that sets us apart to be taken away by those who want government to be the highest power of the land.

In the end, I do not believe I will ever answer to my government for my time on this Earth, but I do believe I will answer to my God, and the freedom of that choice is what America stands for.

Mr. Speaker, as a judge, I saw every imaginable crime. In 22 years on the felony court bench, about 25,000 felony cases worked their way through the courtroom—or the palace of perjury, as I referred to it in those days—everything from stealing to killing and everything in between.

One of my first actions in Congress was to establish the bipartisan Congressional Victims' Rights Caucus, along with Congressman JIM COSTA from California, to advocate on behalf of victims in our Nation's Capital. I am very proud of the work we have done for victims of crime. The consequences of devastating crimes stay with victims for the rest of their lives.

I saw victims every day at the courthouse come down there, their lives shattered because of some person committing a crime against them. Many of those victims recover and many do not recover, and they spend the last days of their lives in hopeless despair. So we started that caucus to promote the rights of victims.

One such story that affected me personally, and has made its way through my career as a prosecutor and as a judge, was a case I prosecuted a long time ago. Kevin Wanstrath was his name. He was a 14-month-old adopted baby. It was his murder, along with the murder of his mother and his father and his grandmother. Four outlaws had plotted to kill all four of them so they

could collect the estate and the inheritance.

I still have that picture of Kevin Wanstrath that I had on my desk as a prosecutor, on my desk as a judge, and on my desk here in the Rayburn building. I keep it with me to remind me really kind of why we are here: to protect those who cannot protect themselves.

Kevin was assassinated, shot in the back of the head, sacrificed on the altar of greed. Fortunately, after a long duration of finding out who committed the crime, the four killers were brought to justice. All were convicted by juries in Texas. Two of them have received the death penalty and have been executed.

Kevin was born the same year my son Kurt was born. It is about people. We are in the business here, as Members of Congress, to really help people, help other people in our country. Since that case changed my life, that is one reason why I have been so passionate, as others—JIM COSTA, for example—in protecting victims of crime. We are not judged by the way we treat the rich folks or important folks. We are judged by the way we treat innocent people: the weak, the unfortunate, the elderly, and the young.

Since its inception in 2005, the Victims' Rights Caucus has taken the lead to protect programs that provide critical support for victim services throughout the Nation, including the Victims of Crime Act. It is called VOCA. What a great concept this was.

President Reagan had the idea, Congress passed it, and the VOCA, Victims of Crime Act, does this. When criminals commit crimes, judges have the ability to fine those criminals, along with sending them to the Federal penitentiary, and that money goes into a fund that helps victims of crime. It is called the Victims of Crime Act, and it is a marvelous idea. It is not taxpayer money. Criminals are paying the rent on the courthouse, they are paying for the crimes that they have committed and putting that money into a fund.

But every year, Mr. Speaker, Mr. COSTA and I have to fight the bureaucrats in government to let go of that money. Right now, there is about \$12 billion in the Victims of Crime Act fund and only about \$800,000 of that was used this year to help victims. What happens to the rest of that money?

Well, I don't understand the math, but they use that money as an offset for other government programs, and, therefore, they don't spend it on crime victims, and I think that is wrong. Enough of the offsets. If the money goes to victims, it ought to be given to the victims. The government ought to keep its hands off of it because it doesn't belong to the government, and it doesn't belong to the taxpayers.

I hope in the future we will let go of that and that that money goes into a lockbox and it remains always for victims of crimes. Because those Federal judges, God bless them, they are nail-

ing people who violate the law with large fines and fees, and that fund continues to grow every year.

Besides the VOCA funds, we have worked on the Violence Against Women Act, VAWA as it is called, and the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act.

The caucus was also instrumental in the enactment of the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act in 2006. That bill had to do with the abduction of children and then those children were sexually assaulted throughout the United States. It protects them and makes sure that we keep up with those child predators who roam the streets and byways of our Nation. So we have reauthorized that act this year.

We have also passed the Cruise Vessel Safety and Security Act, the Kate Puzey Peace Corps Volunteer Protection Act, the SAFER Act of 2013, and the Victims of Child Abuse Reauthorization Act. All this was bipartisan, Mr. Speaker. All of it was bipartisan.

May I ask of the Speaker how much time I have left.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas has 43 minutes remaining.

Mr. POE of Texas. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

We are in the midst of a situation in the United States, and throughout the world, where slavery has crept back into our environment and into our communities, and it is the slave trade of women and children for sexual assault. People don't want to talk about it, but it is taking place. Unfortunately, my hometown of Houston used to be one of the hubs in the United States. What I am talking about is the buying and selling of people, primarily women and children, on the marketplace of sex slavery.

□ 1745

A lot of Members of Congress on both sides of the aisle worked on this very issue to try to get a grip on what is taking place in our country. We had 11 bills in the House that had to do with helping stop this scourge.

I was glad to work with CAROLYN MALONEY from New York. I mean, that is about as bipartisan as you can get, CAROLYN MALONEY, a New York Democrat, and TED POE, a Texas Republican. We are separated by common language, but I worked with her, and that is about as bipartisan as you can get.

We passed those 11 pieces of legislation. Members of Congress had sponsored several pieces of those. It passed the House overwhelmingly. It went to the Senate, and they combined those 11 pieces into two, sent it back. We passed it, and it became law. President Obama signed it.

What it does, this legislation goes after the trafficker, the person who buys and sells women and children, and makes sure that our law punishes those people to the fullest extent.

That is why we build prisons, our Federal prisons and our State prisons,

for people like that. But what it also does, it takes the victims and treats them like victims instead of treating them like criminals.

Children are not prostitutes when they are forced into sex slavery. Children can't be prostitutes. They are victims of crime. So it rescues them and treats them with the dignity they deserve.

But it also goes after the buyers, the people who buy those women and children on the marketplace of sex slavery. We make sure that the law goes after those people and punishes them to almost the extent of the trafficker as well.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud of the progress we have made as a Nation to support victims of crime and crack down on those outlaws that run our streets.

There is one piece of legislation that I hope we see passed before I leave Congress on January 2. Megan Rondini was a student. She was from Austin, Texas, and she went off to the University of Alabama. She met a person there at a bar, and they went to his place. He lived in a big mansion, and he sexually assaulted her. She jumped out the window to get away, and she went to the hospital.

She wasn't treated right at the hospital. They botched the sexual exam. The sexual assault kit was botched.

She went to the police department—the sheriff's department, to be specific—and when they found out who the alleged perpetrator was, they backed off and told her that they weren't going to prosecute him, file charges on him.

She went to the university, and the university offered her counseling, but the counselor knew the people involved, the defendant's family, so the counselor said: I can't help you. It is a conflict of interest.

But no other counselor was provided. She went into deep depression. She withdrew from the University of Alabama, and she went back to Texas and went to SMU for the next semester.

She wasn't at SMU very long at all before she took her own life because the criminal justice system wasn't justice for her. It failed her.

As a result, we have offered bipartisan legislation. Representative JAYAPAL and others, Representative SEWELL. We have offered legislation, the Megan Rondini Sexual Assault Victims Protection Act, which is to make sure that a sexual assault forensic examiner or a sexual assault forensic nurse is available for people like Megan when they show up at a hospital, that universities make sure that they have the right medical exam. Otherwise, we end up with people like Megan who take their own life.

That piece of legislation is pending, and I know the Ways and Means Committee and Energy and Commerce Committee are working on that. Hopefully, we can get it to the House floor next week before we recess.

Topics like human trafficking, sexual abuse, and domestic violence are topics that we need to discuss to make sure that we can get a grip on it and stop that. Counseling, resources, and shelters are much more readily available to victims of crime than ever before in our history.

Human traffickers and those caught buying human trafficking victims can no longer escape the long arm of the law, and that is one of the things I like about the long arm of the law. It can go after those individuals.

Of course, our system is not perfect because it is run by people, but it is still the best that we have. The men and women who pledge to protect and serve as our first responders overwhelmingly do so with honor throughout our country. Those who pin the badge over their heart and go out there every day to protect and serve the rest of us always deserve our utmost recognition and respect.

As a prosecutor and a judge, I worked with some of Houston's finest police, as I call them. During my time in Congress, I had the privilege of getting to know the Texas sheriffs along the Texas-Mexico border. They are a special breed of law officers.

I have visited every county along the southern border, from El Paso to the mouth of the Boca Chica at the Gulf of Mexico. It is 1,254 miles from New Orleans to Washington, D.C. That is about the distance of the Texas-Mexico border.

I have held field hearings, flown the Rio Grande with the Texas Air National Guard. I think I may have walked all of those 1,254 miles, including much of it that goes to California from El Paso.

I have made several dozen trips down there, and I have traveled the Rio Grande River with our peace officers, in particular, the Texas Department of Public Safety in their fast boats.

Down on the border, I have seen the good; I have seen the bad; and I have seen a lot of the ugly. I have met a lot of people on both sides of the border.

No matter what our position is on the issue of immigration, our total disregard for border enforcement has cost our State and our Nation tremendously, from the lives lost to the communities on both sides of the border. It has been destroyed by the cartel violence.

Mr. Speaker, as you know, the cartels control the southern border. They control the border with Mexico on the southern side. They control what takes place. And they control the violence.

We cannot turn a blind eye to the real issues because it is eroding our national security. Border towns on both sides of the border are unique, and the Texas border towns have their own personalities like no others. For some people, they are the lyrics in country songs and stories of college days.

Long before a Houston billionaire added the Cadillac Bar to his restaurant empire, it was an institution

in Nuevo Laredo that generations of Texans and Mexican families enjoyed together. But now, Nuevo Laredo, across the river from Laredo, is a ghost town, like many other border towns that we share, because the drug cartels control the environment.

It seems to me that we haven't done enough, and border security and immigration must go hand in hand. We must do both, but they are not the same. It is not, nor will it ever be, an either-or option. We have tried to do all we can in my office to cut the red tape and send more money and boots to the border, and tell the hard, unpopular truth about what is going on in our southern border.

Obviously, our Nation needs to secure the border. We are debating that very issue these last 2 weeks we are in session, about whether or not to secure the border. Well, I would think that we should. We cannot afford anything less. A country without borders will cease to be a country at all.

Mr. Speaker, I don't understand why we secure the borders of other countries but we don't secure our own. I have been to Afghanistan, and we are protecting their border against the bad guys coming in from Pakistan. We have American troops protecting the border of the Koreans and all over the world. We are protecting the borders of a lot of countries, but we don't protect our own, and I don't understand why.

As a veteran and a son of a World War II veteran, as I mentioned, I think the United States has the greatest military that has ever existed. I have been in Afghanistan, Iraq, and other places to see our military. They are the best in the world, no question about it. Second place isn't even close. We must recognize our military's contributions, both during service and after our troops come back home.

I am proud to represent southeast Texas. I think that is the most patriotic place on the planet. People where I come from, we love the military. We even have parades when the military is on Active Duty and the National Guard or the Reserves come back home. They march down the street. Can you believe that? It is still happening in parts of the country down in southeast Texas.

I host a lot of veteran events. My staff, of course, does all the work. One of my favorite events is our annual honor-our-heroes event. We pick a day that nothing else is going to go on, and it is usually in the summer. We invite veterans and Active Duty military to come to the event. It is a pep rally for our military.

We let each one of them come up to the microphone and tell us about their career in the military and try to do it in 60 seconds or less.

It is a great honor for them to tell other people about what they did, whether it is World War II or Korea or last week when they got off Active Duty in Afghanistan.

The final event that we had just a few months ago was marked by a surprise visitor. Vice President PENCE just



showed up, walked into the room. Everybody was whooping and hollering when he showed up, showing support for our military.

I say all of that to say that we have to continue to support the military, those on Active Duty and those who have served in the past.

Some of the legislation I am proud that we have accomplished: EMANUEL CLEAVER and I worked on bipartisan legislation to establish a commission to build a memorial in Washington, D.C., for all the World War I veterans. There is no memorial for all of the World War I veterans. Here we are, 100 years after the war was over, and there is no memorial.

We have one for World War II, as we should. We have one for Vietnam. We have one for Korea. But we don't have one for the Great War of World War I.

We have been working on that for several years. We finally got that passed, and groundbreaking has taken place, and they will build it. It will not take another 100 years before we see it, Mr. Speaker. It will be done soon.

My only regret was that my friend, and the last American doughboy, Frank Buckles, Jr., didn't get to see that happen. Corporal Buckles came up to Washington and went around the House and the Senate, talking about getting that memorial built. He died before the legislation passed. He died at the age of 110.

He lied to get into the Army in World War I. He said he was 15. He was probably 14 when he got in and served in World War I. In World War II, he was captured by the Japanese, because he was in the Philippines and he spent 3 years in a prisoner-of-war camp. He was a great American.

So we owe it to people like that. All of them have died and gone away. Get that memorial built.

I thanked Mr. CLEAVER, Congressman CLEAVER—preacher, as I call him—for his support in getting that legislation passed. We have to remember him, Mr. Speaker, because the greatest casualty of war is to be forgotten.

I could fill hours talking about the tremendous men and women who serve our country, but I know that you are watching the clock, Mr. Speaker, and I won't do that.

I have also spoken about the Greatest Generation as much as any other topic. I have lamented for those who fought in Vietnam—that is the war of my generation—because of the way they were treated when they came back home.

Finally, America is getting to understand that we should honor those men and women who served and welcome them back home as well. There are no words that can come close to express how we should change our opinion of those individuals.

Mr. Speaker, may I inquire how much time I have remaining.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas has 22 minutes remaining.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I have had the privilege to serve on the Foreign Affairs Committee. My district stretches—or used to stretch—all the way to the Texas-Louisiana border, where the Speaker is from. Some say that is why I was on the Foreign Affairs Committee, because the Texas border has that other international border with Louisiana. Be that as it may, I am glad that I have been able to serve on the Foreign Affairs Committee.

But during that service, I have been able to see our men and women in Iraq, Afghanistan, Kosovo, Europe, the Philippines, and other places throughout the world, and I am impressed with their duty of service. As we know, they are all volunteers. Every one of them is a volunteer.

□ 1800

When men and women join our military now, they know that they are probably going to be in combat somewhere in the world, but yet they continue to volunteer.

I can always spot the Texans, though. When I was in Fallujah right after the Marines went in and eliminated Fallujah, I saw a Texas flag flying on the back of a Humvee as it was speeding down one of those streets. Somebody had written on the side of a bombed-out building: "Don't mess with Texas."

I don't know who did that, but we do have that proud attitude of Texans who serve in the military.

The enemy we fight today is not the enemy of the Greatest Generation. Our country is under threat from volatile, nuclear-armed rogue nations like we have never seen. We have leaders of foreign nations who are not only untrustworthy, they are outright treacherous, and they want to cause harm in the world.

We have little Kim of North Korea, and we have the little man in the sand in Iran. These rulers pose an increasing threat to not only our security, but to everybody throughout the world. They are determined to cause trouble. They are determined to cause terror in the world.

As the chairman of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs' Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade Subcommittee, it has been my goal to bring attention to some of the most pressing international threats to our country and global stability. Many of my bills, including legislation that targeted Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps and Iran's proxies—the North Korean regime and incitement taught to kids in Saudi Arabia through Saudi Arabian textbooks—have all been shared security interests of the United States and our besieged Israeli allies.

I have authored lots of pieces of legislation, and I am glad to see that many of them have been passed and signed into law.

I do believe in America, Mr. Speaker, and I don't apologize for it. It is the

beacon of light for other peoples everywhere.

I do believe that all Members of Congress on both sides want what is best for the country. We just disagree sometimes on how to get there. I am convinced of that. One of my greatest honors in being in the House of Representatives is to serve with people from all over the country who are passionate about making sure we make the right decisions on all types of legislation. We do have the freedom to disagree.

People ask me what I am going to do when I retire. I don't know what I am going to do. I haven't decided. I just know that I am leaving Washington. I have often joked that D.C. stands for the Devil's city. But I will miss being here, Mr. Speaker. I will miss representing Texas.

Since I was elected in 2004, our four kids, Kim, Kara, Kurt, and Kellee, were all single or just recently married. Now, in those 14 years, I have 12 grandkids: Barrett Houston, Shaelyn, Elizabeth, Jackson, Brooklyn, Payton, Hallie, Olivia, Levi, Presley, Rosalyn, and Ivy. Of course, they all have names, Mr. Speaker, but I call them by their birth number, 1 through 12. I just say, "Twelve or Three, get over here. Six, leave Seven alone."

I call them by their birth numbers. You might try that, Mr. Speaker, when you get a little older and have grandkids.

I am looking forward to being back in Texas where we have sweet tea. We have bluebonnets that bloom. And football under Friday night lights is the greatest. We have sunsets that are burnt orange. Sorry, Aggies, it is not maroon.

For people to understand what I am saying—and people understand mostly what I am saying—there isn't any doubt in anyone's mind that Texas is the end all and be all for me, personally. I have had the time of my life sharing the stories of Texas on this floor.

I have been through six hurricanes as a Member of Congress: Katrina, Rita, Humberto, Gustav, Ike, and Harvey.

I will miss being around Members of Congress. It is an honor to serve the people of Texas in the people's House, and there are many Members that I could thank. I want to thank them all for working with me.

I have told a lot of stories about where I am from, Texas, including my hero William Barret Travis, Sam Houston, remembering the Alamo, and taking you all on our fight of independence in the marshy banks of the San Jacinto where we had folks from Louisiana come and help us out to win the independence of Texas. We are saving, currently, the Battleship Texas, the oldest dreadnought in the world, making sure that it maintains its dignity in the Houston Ship Channel.

I have spent a lot of time talking about Judge Roy Bean. It is not true that Judge Roy Bean was my grandfather. Some said that at the courthouse, but he was not.

Of course, my favorite law enforcement group in the whole world is the Texas Rangers.

Above all, it has been an honor to recognize servicemembers from the Second Congressional District who gave their lives for our country while I have been in Congress. In my office here and my office in Texas, we have the photographs, 8-by-10s, of the 40 men and women from my congressional district, of all races and all branches of the service, who have been killed in Iraq, in Afghanistan, and in other places in the world. I am grateful that the incoming Member of Congress, Congressman Crenshaw, is going to keep those 8-by-10s, all 40 of them, on our wall here in Washington, D.C., so that we can remember those men and women who served and gave their lives for the rest of us.

I have had the honor to represent people in southeast Texas from Beaumont to Port Arthur, Sabine Pass, Dayton, China, Liberty, Hull-Daisetta, Baytown, Ames, Nome, Highlands, Kingwood, Humble, Porter, Mont Belvieu, Tarleton, Cleveland, Champions, Spring, Klein, Spring Branch, Memorial, parts of Houston, and where I am from, Atascocita. I see so many wonderful people along the way.

I have a staff that I would put up against any staff. I have the best staff in Congress. I always have. It is fortunate for me, and it is fortunate for the folks in our congressional district. Of my four chiefs of staff, Heather Ramsey-Cook was my first one. She was my chief of staff when I was a judge. She was my chief of staff when I started here, and she is now my current chief of staff. Others were Janet Diaz-Brown, who has since moved off to Seattle, Washington, with her family, and Gina Santucci who is now Gina Foote. My latest was Tim Tarpley, and now Heather Ramsey-Cook again. My chiefs of staff have been excellent, and I think all of us owe a lot of our success in getting things done to the people who work for us.

My caseworkers in Texas are great. Viviana and Amy are both veterans: one from Afghanistan, one from Iraq. One of them is a wounded warrior. They deal with the casework. They get it. They understand veterans' issues. One of the major things we do as Members of Congress is casework for our veterans.

But all of my staff have been excellent, and I want to thank them for their proud work that they have done, especially in constituent services.

So I don't know what is next, Mr. Speaker. I do know that it is time to dance with the one that brung you and pack up my old 1998 Jeep and head on home. By the way, my gaudy Jeep left a mark here in Washington as well. Aside from being the only '98 Jeep with a lift kit and lights across the top—you never know when you will see deer up here, Mr. Speaker—there is a special oil stain on the White House front drive that President Bush didn't take

too kindly to. It is fitting, leaving a little Texas oil on the driveway of the White House when you leave town.

So this is where the cowboy rides away, Mr. Speaker. Also, at the end, there is really no better good-bye than the words of Davy Crockett when he left Congress, when he said, affectionately: "You may all go to hell, I am going to Texas."

And that is just the way it is.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

#### MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Lasky, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate agrees to the report of the committee of conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 2) "An Act to provide for the reform and continuation of agricultural and other programs of the Department of Agriculture through fiscal year 2023, and for other purposes."

#### IS AMERICA FIRST?

(Ms. KAPTUR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, following the gruesome murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi ordered by the Saudi Arabia Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, the world raised its voice in condemnation. Noticeably quiet was the leader of the free world, our own President. A closer look at President Trump's deeply troubling financial connections and conflicts of interest likely explain why.

In August 2015, the President himself said on the campaign trail: "Saudi Arabia, I get along with all of them. They buy apartments from me. They spend \$40 million, \$50 million. . . . I like them very much."

That same month, The Trump Organization registered eight separate companies to do business in Saudi Arabia.

Indeed, The Hill newspaper reported that a 5-day stay from the Saudi crown prince at the Trump Hotel caused a 13 percent surge in revenue in the first quarter of this year. How about that?

Mr. President, the American people wonder, is it America first, or is America for sale to foreign interests?

Given the President's clear conflicting interests, Congress must assert its power to limit the ability of corrupt regimes to influence our politics. Our colleagues on both sides of the aisle must reaffirm America's values of liberty, justice, and equality, and restore America's faith in our politics.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the President.

#### HEALTHCARE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of Jan-

uary 3, 2017, the gentleman from California (Mr. GARAMENDI) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I am grateful for the opportunity. There are so many things that we need to consider.

Today, the President announced that he is going to do his best to shut down the Government of the United States, and he wants to call it the Trump shutdown.

I wonder if he really understands what that means to Americans. The Department of Homeland Security—about which there is so much discussion as to the security of the border, the Coast Guard, all of the ICE agents and so forth—presumably would stand down. I guess that is what a shutdown means, that we would have no border security.

So I am curious exactly what the President has in mind when he says it will be the Trump shutdown.

We don't really want to do that. I have been there before in the mid-1990s, when Speaker Gingrich decided to shut down the government. I was over at the Department of the Interior as the Deputy Secretary, and I think that the Department of National Parks and the Bureau of Land Management and on and on simply shut down. The National Parks shut down, the Washington Monument.

So the Department of the Interior would apparently shut down—not apparently, would definitely shut down—under a Trump shutdown. I suppose the Washington Monument, the memorial to World War I, World War II memorials, Yosemite—that would be a problem actually. We usually go to Yosemite on the 18th of December. That is my anniversary.

So, Mr. President, do you have any idea what you are going to cause here in America? The Department of Agriculture would shut down. Food safety, presumably, would shut down. It goes on and on, and all of that over a border wall that nobody other than the President thinks would be useful.

We do need border security, no doubt about it. We just heard our colleague from Texas talk about this a little bit. Yes, we do need border security. But nobody thinks a big, massive, beautiful wall from here to there, from the Caribbean to the Pacific Coast, would solve the issue of border security.

By the way, if you shut down the government, it is the Coast Guard that shuts down, and the Coast Guard has confiscated 10 times more drugs than the Border Patrol. So I guess we will have the President shut down that part of border security also.

Nobody says a wall is the answer. They said use technology. Use observation devices of various kinds that sense and watch remotely, drones and unmanned aerial vehicles and things of that sort.

By the way, why don't we beef up and provide the kind of security and the

kind of access that our ports of entry really need, whether those ports of entry are along the Mexican border or the ports?

We really are justifiably concerned about port security. I mean ocean port security.

So, come on, Mr. President. Realistically, you don't have the votes here in the House of Representatives for your \$5 billion border wall, which now you would say Mexico is going to pay for.

□ 1815

Show me the money. We can negotiate this out. And Democrats—the leader of the House and of the minority in the Senate, Ms. PELOSI and Senator SCHUMER, went over and said: We put more than \$1 billion—I think it was about \$1.3, \$1.4 billion from last year's appropriations—and you have only spent 6 percent of that for border security. So you have got that billion or so available now. And now you want \$5 billion. How do you want to spend it?

No plans on how to spend the money. It is just fulfilling a campaign promise, which now, apparently, Mexico is going to pay for. We will see.

I wasn't really going to talk about that. What I wanted to talk about is what Americans are really concerned about, which is healthcare. That was an issue in the campaign. I know from the Democratic Party side, we made healthcare a major central issue of our campaign for the people: affordable healthcare for the people. That is what we campaigned on. That is what we promised.

On January 3, when the Democrats take control of this House of Representatives, we will put forth solutions to the healthcare crisis.

The Affordable Care Act was passed in 2010, and it brought more than 22 million Americans into the insurance market and gave them a quality insurance product. They had to pay for it. It wasn't all free. The price varied. It created exchanges, a marketplace in which individuals and families can go and select policies from various insurance companies. Unfortunately, the public option was not adopted, but nonetheless, there was an opportunity for 22 million Americans.

No sooner did that bill pass than the Republicans used that Affordable Care Act, with what they then called "ObamaCare," to beat up the Democrats. They did a very, very good job at it. They took control of the House of Representatives in the 2010 election, and in 2011, they began a process of eviscerating the Affordable Care Act.

More than 60 times on this floor our Republican colleagues voted to eviscerate, gut, kill, terminate, but never to replace, just to eliminate that, with 22 million Americans losing their insurance. The expansion of the Medicaid program across this Nation is gone, reduced, gutted.

So we go into the 2018 campaign, and we said: No. No. Healthcare is a fundamental issue, a fundamental right. The

wealthiest country in the world ought to be able to provide healthcare to all its citizens.

That was our campaign. So we are going to move forward on this. One of the things we want to take up right away is why we want to do it.

Those of you who follow my occasional 1-hour Special Orders here on the floor have seen this. This is kind of to center me, to center what it is we want to accomplish, why we want to do these things.

Franklin Delano Roosevelt said it very, very well back in the late 1930s. He said: "The test of our progress is not whether we add more to the abundance of those who have much; it is whether we provide enough for those who have too little."

That is where I am coming from, and I think that is where my Democratic colleagues are coming from.

The wealthy are doing quite well. They certainly are. The tax bill that was passed by the Republicans without one Democratic vote last year in December 2017 ripped nearly \$2 trillion out of the Federal Treasury and gave 85 percent of that \$2 trillion to the wealthy American corporations and to the top 10 percent of the wealthy Americans.

So we come back to values. We are not here to make the rich richer—although they certainly would like that, and they certainly did get that in the tax bill, or scam, I think is what we would call it—but, rather, for people who really need help, the men and women and families of America who go to their kitchen table, are unable to figure out how they are going to get healthcare, how they are going to get a job.

There is talk there is a tax break, but that tax break was eaten up by inflation for the working men and women of America.

So let's go to the healthcare issue. One of the things we spent a lot of time talking about and intend to deal with is the cost of prescription drugs. Let's spend some time on that.

This little chart is a comparison of prescription drugs versus generic drugs. Ninety percent of the prescriptions are filled with generic drugs and 23 percent of the prescriptions are filled with other, nongeneric drugs. Seventy-seven percent of the total cost of drugs is on the nongeneric side; and on the generic side down here, it is about 10 percent.

So one solution here is to advance the availability of generic drugs. Clearly, a generic drug is significantly cheaper than a prescription drug. You may ask: Why is that?

The pharmaceutical industry will say: The reason is, we have got to do all this research, and we have got to do all this marketing.

They certainly do a lot of marketing. You turn the television on; they are marketing like crazy one drug or another. That is a prescription drug. They are not marketing the generic drugs.

So there you have it: Generics, 90 percent of the prescriptions are generic, and 70 percent of the cost is on 23 percent, the prescription drugs.

What has happened to the cost of prescription drugs?

Well, if you take the average price of the specialty drugs, these are prescriptions, they have tripled over the last—2006 to 2015, that is what?—10 years. So the prescription drugs, the specialty prescription drugs, same drugs, over a 10-year period, the cost has tripled.

You might ask: Well, why? Is it suddenly more expensive to make the same drug that you made before?

Well, possibly. But maybe it has to do with market power. If your prescription drug has a patent or many, many patents, then the generic drug cannot be made. So you control the market for that particular drug. That particular drug might be rather important.

Now, for those of you who watch television, you may actually have heard of a couple of these drugs. Let's just take a look here at key metrics for the three major brand drugs: Humira, Revlimid, and Lantus. I don't take them, so I really don't know how to pronounce them that well.

But let's take a look here at Humira: the number of patents, 247; the price change since 2006, 144 percent—using patents to protect the drug from competition, allowing a 144 percent price increase—years blocking competition, 39 years before there will be any competition for the most expensive and most used drug, Humira.

This one for multiple myeloma; I think that is a cancer: number of patent applications, 106; number of patents pending, 96; price increase since 2012, 79 percent price increase; years blocking competition, if you happen to have this particular cancer, there is one drug that seems to work really, really well, but it will be 40 years before there is competition, in other words, a generic that could be used, similarly with the other drug.

So what is happening here is the pharmaceutical industry is using multiple patents and not a brand-new drug, but just a little minor tweaking of the existing drug, giving an opportunity to extend way beyond whatever the patent law originally intended, in some cases 30, 40 years before a generic drug can come onto the market and replace what is going on.

How can we deal with that?

Well, let's take another example. Here is one. You have heard of insulin. I bet you have. Insulin prices have tripled over the last 15 years. One of the most expensive insulin products in Medicare part D, only one out of the six most expensive insulin products faces competition. So, in the absence of competition, now the cost per year is \$2,300.

Another example is using patents on a drug to deal with diabetes. Let's take a look at this one.

As if the patent policies and the ability of the drug companies to tweak

their product to use multiple patents over time, one after another, to gain market domination and to eliminate competitors for these very essential drugs, as if it is not bad enough now, our good President recently, I think about 10 days ago, sat down with the President of Mexico and the Prime Minister of Canada and signed a new really big, wonderful trade deal to somehow replace NAFTA, the North American Free Trade Act.

Well, way down in the guts of that agreement was a little clause, subsection C, measures relating to pharmaceutical products, biologicals, et cetera, extended by 10 years the existing patent law for biologicals. This is the hot new area of pharmaceutical drugs: biologicals.

So, in the patent law, as if the patent law wasn't already being abused sufficiently to drive up the price of medical costs in the United States, the President goes out with his team of negotiators and adds an additional 10 years to the existing patents for this particular type of pharmaceutical product.

Together with the ability to tweak small, little changes in the processing or in the drug itself, using that to gain control of that particular solution to a very serious health problem that Americans face, the President decides to add 10 years to the foundation patent.

So, what does it mean to Americans?

Well, it means you are going to pay a whole, whole lot of money for your drug prices.

There are solutions. I assure you that we are already, on the Democratic side of this coin, looking at solutions, first and foremost, to allow the Federal Government, which is the single biggest purchaser, payer for these drugs, to negotiate the price, that is, to use the purchasing power of government to overcome the patent lock that the drug companies have been able to secure using patents and other technologies and techniques.

□ 1830

That is the first thing, to allow the Federal Government to negotiate.

So, you remember when Medicare part D was installed back in 2003? The pharmaceutical industry weaseled into that law—that is, the prescription drug benefit in Medicare—a provision that said the Federal Government could not negotiate for the prices of drugs. So taxpayers and those who have a deductible or a copay, you are being harmed.

Now, generics, yes; generics are an answer. But just to complete this system of harming Americans by charging more than necessary for drugs using the patents, as we just discussed, the savior to the problem, which many would say is the generics, well, there is a little problem there too. And the problem was laid out in a recent article in *The Washington Post*.

You have heard of antitrust laws, which basically say that competitors

in an economic sector cannot conspire to control the price. Antitrust. It turns out that the generic, according to *The Washington Post* and to 47 State attorneys general around the Nation and a whole lot of—CVS, I believe, and a few others who buy drugs and sell them—retailers have launched an antitrust complaint against a cabal of generic drug companies who are alleged to have conspired to control the cost of the generic drugs—that is, to maintain a higher cost—and to divide up the market.

A generic drugmaker decides: I am going to make drug A, starts making it, controls 100 percent of the generic market for that drug. Good. Generic drugmaker B comes along, says: I can make that drug, and I can probably make it a little bit cheaper, so I am going to compete with company A.

Company A said: Whoa, wait a minute. We can make this good for both of us. It can be a win-win. You take 25, 30 percent of the market; I'll take 75, 60 percent of the market; and we will both be doing very well. That is the allegation.

So this is something we need to deal with also. We need to encourage the Department of Justice, the State departments, to use the antitrust laws to make sure that these kinds of conspiracies are not happening.

Clearly, if the generic drugmakers are engaged in a conspiracy to control the cost or to divide up the market for their drugs, it is illegal. There are serious penalties associated with that.

These cases, as reported by *The Washington Post*, are proceeding. Wonderful.

What we need to do is to make sure that the Department of Justice, the Federal Department of Justice as well as the State departments of justice and the Commerce Department and others who are responsible for enforcing the antitrust laws are doing so.

So, with regard to pharmaceuticals, with regard to drugs, I want you to know that the Democratic Congress is going to attack this problem, first by making certain that the United States Government can use its market power to break the monopoly that the drug companies presently have as a result of their ability to hold their specific drug forever, at least 30 to 40 years, under the patent schemes that they are now doing.

There are other things that I would like to take up, and I will do so quickly.

We said that we would also want to deal with the issues of preexisting conditions. Now, in the Affordable Care Act there was a requirement that insurance companies do not discriminate in the sale of insurance and the pricing of insurance based upon preexisting conditions.

Now, what is a preexisting condition? Well, we just had one example up here: diabetes, childhood diabetes, type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, other childhood illnesses.

I was the insurance commissioner in California twice, in the early '90s, '91 to '95, and again from 2003 to 2007.

This issue of insurance companies discriminating based upon preexisting conditions was rampant in California, despite our efforts to try to pass a law in California to prohibit the insurance companies from discriminating based upon preexisting conditions. We were unsuccessful.

What we did find is that in the application process for insurance there was a form, and it listed every conceivable thing that a human being could be afflicted with—headaches, colds, sinus problems, sore throats, on and on and on—a list of maybe 20 or 30, and you had to check off each and every one of those.

If you checked them off, they would go: Ah, you have got a preexisting condition. We will insure you, but we are going to charge you 10 times more than a person that didn't have that condition. And they would then provide the insurance.

If you went through and you said: No, I don't have a sinus problem; no, I don't have a sore throat; blah, blah; and then you come down with a sore throat, they say: Ah, you didn't honestly fill out the form, and therefore we are not going to cover you for that illness.

This was a common problem. So when the Affordable Care Act passed, in that law was a provision that said the insurance companies could not do that, they could not discriminate either in the cost of it or not providing insurance at all. Couldn't do it.

However, in legislation that passed the House of Representatives, passed the Senate, and was signed into law—not a healthcare bill, but an addition to a must-pass piece of legislation—the Republicans, without Democratic support here, passed legislation that wiped out that portion of the Affordable Care Act, basically putting Americans at risk once again to insurance discrimination, health insurance discrimination.

And suddenly America woke up and goes: Whoa, wait a minute. You mean to tell me that if I have diabetes I can't get insurance or I am going to have to pay 10, 20, 30 times more than somebody else? Even to the point of a woman being discriminated against because she is a woman and she might have a baby. Anyway, America woke up and goes: Whoa, wait. We don't like that.

So, yes, we made that an issue. We made it a really big issue in the campaign: No discrimination based upon preexisting conditions. Can't do it. We are going to eliminate that problem for America.

It wasn't too long before my Republican colleagues go: Oops, we had better get on board that ship.

And I want my Republican colleagues and the President to know they are going to have an opportunity to be on that ship. We are going to put that bill



before the House of Representatives in the early days of the 116th Congress in 2019. We are going to do that.

We will see if they are willing to stay with the promises that they made—most of them unsuccessful, but nonetheless the promises they made—to deal with the problem of insurance discrimination.

So those are two things that are on the agenda right up front. There are many other things that we intend to do with healthcare because we believe that healthcare is a right. In the richest country in the world, you ought to be able to have quality healthcare available to you. That is our pledge. That is what we intend to do.

A final point. A week ago I was here talking about climate change with my colleagues, and we were talking about the Federal Government's report on climate changes that are occurring. It was an eye-opener. It basically said we are—by “we,” not my generation, but the next generation out, 10, 20 years out—going to face a monumental problem of sea level rise, massive storms, massive fires, the epidemic of tropical diseases moving into the Northern Hemisphere in through the countries that have not experienced tropical illnesses.

All of those things were in that report, and we spoke about it here. We called upon our government, our President, and our colleagues here—Democrat and Republican—to aggressively attack this problem by reducing carbon emissions, by moving away from a carbon-based energy system. We can do that.

As I said during that debate here on the floor, in 1978 I authored a law in California, the first in the Nation, to provide a tax credit for wind, solar, and conservation. And those kind of laws have been in place forever, and we have proved that we can do it. Over the years, significant efforts have succeeded in bringing on board clean green power.

So, a week goes by, and in the newspapers yesterday and today are two articles that deserve our attention, and actually a third that just came up this afternoon.

The first article was that the carbon emissions over the last year have grown substantially. For the United States it is around, I think, a 2½ percent increase in carbon emissions; and in China and India, the other two large emitters of carbon, significant growth.

In other words, the world is falling backwards in addressing the carbon pollution that is creating climate change. Oh, my goodness, a wake-up call.

We have the report that these bad things are going to happen unless we change the direction we are going. And then a week later we find out the direction we are going is not downward but, rather, upward.

Article one: Today in the newspapers, even in the fake newspapers, is an article that the President's emissaries to a

conference in Europe on climate change are advocating—advocating—for the burning of more coal and oil.

This wasn't a coal conference. This was a conference on how does the world go to green, non-carbon energy sources. And so the United States, leading away from solving the problem.

Yes, that is what our President sent those folks over to Europe to do, not to solve the problem but to make the problem worse. It was an O-M-G moment. You have got to be kidding. The least you could have done is keep your mouth shut. But oh, no, advocating for more coal, advocating for more oil, and pushing aside all of those technologies—solar, wind, biomass, biofuel, all of those things—pushing them aside. No, no, no, we have got to have more coal.

It is reprehensible and an absolute dereliction of duty and responsibility to this generation here and now and to future generations to come.

□ 1845

What would you expect from the man who wants to shut down government? I would expect better. We just want A Better Deal. We want A Better Deal for the American people.

The rich and wealthy, they got one big beautiful deal in the tax cut. Working men and women and families, we have got our work cut out for us.

A Better Deal for the people—that is what we want to do. Many different ways to do it. We are going to work at it. We ask you to work with us.

#### FAREWELL TO CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HOLLINGSWORTH). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HENSARLING) for 30 minutes.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, tonight it is a privilege that I have to yield to somebody who has become a good friend and an excellent colleague, who has served with me, at my side, at the House Financial Services Committee, who will be leaving us at the end of this Congress. Her voice of common sense and her voice to really promote economic growth among all Americans will be missed; but in her short tenure, she has made her mark in our committee and made her mark in Congress, and I am pleased to yield to the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. TENNEY).

Ms. TENNEY. Mr. Speaker, it was certainly an honor and a privilege to serve in the prestigious Financial Services Committee as a Member of the 115th Congress. It was a distinct privilege to be selected to serve on that committee by our chairman, JEB HENSARLING, who recognized the urgent need to reignite our economy and to give small businesses like ours and millions like our family business around the Nation a chance to thrive again against the oppressive weight of government overregulation.

As a small manufacturing business owner and as an attorney to small community banks and credit unions in my community, I am acutely aware of the challenges that small businesses and families face concerning Big Government overreach in the financial realm.

Families were not able to save for their future, small businesses were laying off employees instead of hiring, and community banks were closing at a record pace. The policies we championed and the incredible work we have done on the Financial Services Committee this year under the leadership of Chairman JEB HENSARLING has turned all of that around. For the first time in over a decade, I am witnessing growth and renewed enthusiasm in our economy, thanks to the work of our committee.

The jurisdiction of the Financial Services Committee may seem esoteric to some; however, the work that we do is vitally important to this Nation. We have the power, of course, if used correctly, to open up markets, to unleash free enterprise, and to give citizens the opportunity to pursue the American Dream.

In May, President Trump signed S. 2155, the Economic Growth, Regulatory Relief, and Consumer Protection Act, into law after House passage. Our committee, through numerous hearings and markups, originated most of this legislation. The ultimate work product, S. 2155, made much-needed reforms to Dodd-Frank that directly impact the ability of small community institutions to conduct business and to drive the economy in a positive direction.

As a freshman member, I was honored to be one of the only members to have two bipartisan bills included in this package: the first, the Small Bank Exam Cycle Improvement Act, and, the second, the Community Institution Mortgage Relief Act. These bills are vitally important because community banks are the lifeblood of New York's upstate economy.

Community institutions provide access to capital for entrepreneurs starting or growing their small businesses, for families and farmers acquiring new equipment or assets, for loans to new car buyers, and for mortgages to families purchasing a home, especially for the first time.

In rural areas like the 22nd District in New York, consumers and small businesses often rely on lending with local institutions in order to gain access to capital. These reforms ensure that small community institutions like Tioga National Bank, the Bank of Utica—my personal bank—Adirondack Bank—another bank that I use—and many others throughout the country can keep their doors open and continue to lend to people in our communities.

I am grateful to Chairman HENSARLING and the expert and professional staff on the committee who worked with our office and leaders in

the financial services community in our region to ensure that we had the opportunity to pass meaningful legislation that will benefit the constituents of New York's 22nd Congressional District for many years to come.

I thank Chairman HENSARLING for his unparalleled integrity, tremendous leadership, sage advice, and deep friendship. I am so honored and privileged to have played a small role in Chairman HENSARLING's noble mission of empowering all Americans through freedom and economic opportunity.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for her very, very kind words. And, again, she will be very much missed from this institution, but I will treasure our service together. I will treasure our friendship forever as well, and I thank her for coming to the floor tonight.

And now, Mr. Speaker, I will issue the remainder of my remarks from the House well.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today for what I expect to be my final speech on the House floor. After 8 terms, I have chosen to go home to Texas, the land of my forefathers, with the hope of being a better father and a better husband myself.

I am also going home because I believe America is best served by the Jeffersonian model of American democracy, and that is a citizen legislature. I fear too many wish to become members of the permanent ruling class. I am not among them.

I also know that this congressional seat, Mr. Speaker, never belonged to me. It belonged to the people of the Fifth Congressional District of Texas. It has always belonged to them. They allowed me—they allowed me to hold it in trust. It was a sacred trust, Mr. Speaker, a sacred trust to be the guardian of their freedoms and their opportunities, and I will always, always be grateful for that privilege.

So, come January 3, I reverently return their seat back to them, and I wish my successor, Lance Gooden of Kaufman County, Texas, all the best—all the best.

Mr. Speaker, 16 years ago, I went to these very same people in the Fifth Congressional District of Texas and I told them: I believe I know what the genius of America is. It is faith; it is family; it is free enterprise; and, yes, it is freedom.

And it does indeed all start with faith because, Mr. Speaker, over your chair right there is emblazoned our national motto, "In God We Trust." And it is my firm prayer that, for our Nation, may it always be so. And I firmly believe we cannot be a virtuous nation unless we are first a godly nation.

People come to America for many reasons. They come here for political freedom, economic freedom, but, also, most profoundly, for religious freedom. May we never forget Jefferson's prophetic words enshrined: "Can the liberties of a nation be thought secure, when we have removed their only firm

basis, a conviction in the minds of people that these liberties are the gift of God?"

Mr. Speaker, as vital as faith is, so are our families. And the family that made me in College Station, Texas, all those years ago was blessed with two wonderful parents, Chase and Ann. My father was a poultry farmer; my mother was a stay-at-home mom; but together, they taught me and my siblings invaluable lessons about hard work, fairness, faith, discipline, and honesty—in a word, Mr. Speaker, values. They lovingly led by example, which is what my wife and I attempt to do today with our two children.

We now have, over so many different years of history, showing that it is our families—it is our families—that can best perpetuate our values, raise our children, and care for our elderly.

Now, let me turn to free enterprise.

1776 wasn't just a revolutionary year for America. It was a revolutionary year for free enterprise, for American capitalism, free market capitalism, as well, because it was in that year that Scottish moral philosopher Adam Smith penned its intellectual foundation in his opus magnum, "The Wealth of Nations." Prosperity would never, never be the same.

We now have over 200 years of history in this country proving that free market capitalism produces the greatest wealth for the greatest number of people. Yes, free enterprise is about wealth creation, but this is not to be confused with materialism.

Yes, free enterprise does produce Porsches, it produces Jacuzzis, and it produces vacations to Paris; but, more importantly, it empowers a factory worker in my district in Mesquite, Texas, to start her own business. It helps a family in Jacksonville, Texas, send their first kid to college. It puts ample, nutritious food on the kitchen table. And that kitchen table is found in a home that some hardworking family in Forney, Texas, never dreamed they could own but they have because of American free enterprise.

But even perhaps more profound than wealth creation, free market capitalism is really about the pursuit of happiness. It is about the freedom to use your God-given talents to create, to innovate, and to produce, to take pride and joy that can only arise from what American Enterprise Institute scholar Arthur Brooks terms "earned success." As is written in the book of Isaiah, chapter 65, verse 22: My chosen ones will long enjoy the work of their hands.

And finally, freedom, Mr. Speaker, the inalienable right to liberty endowed by our creator. Never in the vast expanse of time, history, and space have the blessings of liberty been enjoyed in greater abundance than they have here in the United States of America. Only in America are you only limited by the size of your dreams. As my friend and mentor, former Senator Phil Gramm, is fond of saying: Only in

America can ordinary people achieve extraordinary results.

Mr. Speaker, generations—generations—of our forefathers have taken up arms in defense of liberty and found it worthy of the very sacrifice of their lives. There is no greater foundational principle to the American people than liberty: personal liberty, political liberty, religious liberty, and economic liberty. May we, in this body, always fight to preserve it.

Now, in the Federal city, political calculus changes by the moment. Policies come and go, but principles endure, and there are no more enduring or foundational principles in America than faith, family, free enterprise, and freedom. I believed it 16 years ago when I came to this body. I believe it even more fervently today, Mr. Speaker.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I have learned a couple of things in my 16 years of service in Congress. One thing I learned is that, when one announces their retirement, two things happen:

One, people begin to say nice things about you. Had I known about this phenomena earlier, perhaps I would have retired years ago.

Second of all, reporters ask you about your so-called legacy. Well, Mr. Speaker, I have to laugh because I am not sure there is anything as soon forgotten in the Federal city as a former Member of Congress. So I don't really think in terms of legacy. I, frankly, don't know if I have changed Washington. Now, Mr. Speaker, I know Washington didn't change me.

I do take solace, though, and I take a measure of pride knowing that, along with a handful of other conservatives in this body, I fought steadfastly against the forces of what I view crony capitalism, and that be either by earmark set-asides, subsidies, tax preferences, or trade protectionism, particularly now as the specter of socialism once again rears its ugly head in our Nation.

We can never let our fellow countrymen somehow confuse free market capitalism with crony capitalism. In the one, your success depends upon how hard and how smart you work on Main Street. In the other, it depends on who you know in Washington.

The latter is a threat to the former, and the Republican Party will lose its moral authority to prevent a social welfare state if we ever acquiesce in a corporate welfare state. This we cannot allow to happen.

□ 1900

Mr. Speaker, you know personally, as does the previous speaker, the gentlewoman from New York, how much pride I take in the work of the great men and women of the House Financial Services Committee.

Most Americans today are seeing the best economy they have ever seen in their lifetimes, and that is in no small measure to the work of the men and women of the House Financial Services committee.



Now, I am not going to argue that our work was on the same order of magnitude as tax reform. It wasn't. But the Economic Growth, Regulatory Relief, and Consumer Protection Act signed by President Trump was the most pro-growth banking bill in a generation, and has certainly done more to grow our economy than any other legislation passed by the House besides tax reform.

Now, Mr. Speaker, economic growth cannot solve all of America's problems, but it lifts the downtrodden from poverty; it empowers middle-income America; and it enables tens of millions to achieve their version of the American Dream. It has, indeed, for 16 years of my service, been worth fighting for.

As I prepare to leave office, Mr. Speaker, I leave with many, many hopes. But, Mr. Speaker, I leave with a few fears as well that I believe my fellow countrymen should pay close attention to.

First, I am concerned about the state of America's entrepreneurial spirit. I wonder how long we will have robust economic growth if the government continues a regulatory onslaught against American business to attempt to render all risk out of our financial system.

From its earliest beginnings, America has always been the land of the entrepreneur, the land of the dreamer, and the risk-taker and, yes, that includes the risk of failure.

Several of the colonies, such as Massachusetts Bay, Plymouth, and Virginia, were founded, not by the Crown of England but, rather, by profit-seeking corporations that were willing to take risk.

You know, someone who clearly understood something about risk was Steve Jobs, the co-founder of Apple; I believe still the largest company in the world today. In an interview, Jobs was once asked how he thought about himself. He said: "I look at myself as sort of a trapeze artist."

And then the reporter asked: "With or without a net?" He didn't bat an eyelash, he said: "Without." Steve Jobs was a risk-taker and because he took a risk, Apple again became the most valuable company in the world whose innovations have revolutionized our lives.

And what is important is not the amount of money that Steve Jobs made, but what he was able to do with it, and that is create a successful company, to employ and serve millions who collectively have exercised their God-given rights at the pursuit of happiness.

Fewer entrepreneurs taking fewer risks means fewer jobs, Mr. Speaker. It is that simple. And so one day, if we lose our ability to fail in America, we will soon lose our ability to succeed. There are simply too many burdensome regulations that crush the entrepreneurial spirit. This must cease.

Another fear I have, Mr. Speaker, is that I fear we are drifting away from

our constitutional moorings as I witness the rise of the administrative state, because we need to appreciate our birthright, the sheer genius of the Constitution which, unfortunately, today is threatened. Our Constitution's framework of checks and balances, limited government, co-equal branches of government, that has secured our fundamental rights and given us the freest, most prosperous society the world has ever known.

But we are witnessing now a century-long liberal expansion of unconstitutional government that has unleashed the modern regulatory state as we know it, extremely powerful, exceedingly intrusive, imperiously opaque, bafflingly bureaucratic, and alarmingly unaccountable.

Instead of being governed by the rule of law, increasingly, citizens are being ruled by the rule of rulers; specifically, the rules promulgated by legions of unaccountable, unelected bureaucrats.

The result? It is OSHA now, not Congress, that governs over workplace safety. It is the EPA now, not Congress, that governs over our air quality. It is HHS, not Congress, that now governs over our healthcare.

Today, the citizen's right to carefully deliberate proposed legislation through their chosen elected representatives in Congress is now reduced to nothing more than a little "notice and comment" period where the citizens are permitted to lodge complaints and suggestions, all of which the unelected bureaucrats are free to ignore, and which they may actually use to retaliate against the citizen.

Madison, in Federalist 47, warned us of this phenomena when he wrote,

The combination of all power, legislative, executive, and judiciary in the same hands . . . may justly be pronounced the very definition of tyranny.

It is time for Congress, Mr. Speaker, to reclaim its constitutional powers of the purse, to no longer allow these economically significant rules to pass without congressional approval, and to outlaw the Chevron Doctrine that has tilted the scales of justice toward the state. This must change.

The next fear I have as I get ready to leave Congress, Mr. Speaker, is one that has really come about fairly recently in our State of the Union, and that is the tenor and tone of the national debate; in other words, what is happening in our public square.

Now, on the one hand, for those who believe that we are on the precipice of something truly catastrophic, I remind them, we have survived a bloody Civil War. We survived the turbulent 60s of my youth.

Politics has rhetorically always been a full contact sport. And if you read biographies of the founders like Jefferson, and Adams, and Hamilton, you will discover just how coarse and vile ad hominem attacks could be at the dawn of American politics.

But with the exception of the notorious Alien and Sedition Acts, I don't

recall ever there being a greater effort in our Nation's history to actually silence dissent.

The cry for civility in political discourse, welcome as it is, is somewhat misplaced. The threat to democracy does not come from incivility but, instead, from those who are committed to preventing; preventing the debate, as opposed to winning the debate. That is where the true threat comes.

Democratic self-governance relies upon a free flow of differing ideas within the public square to fully inform all opinions and challenge all accepted orthodoxies and ideologies.

There was a time in America's history that the American ethos was encapsulated by the words that have been attributed to Patrick Henry: "I disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it."

Regrettably, I can hear all over the Nation today people saying something along the lines of: "I disapprove of what you say, and I am going to harass and intimidate you and your family, defame your character, and attempt to take away your livelihood until you simply shut up and withdraw."

Those who do not respect the rights of others to be heard in the public square may be little better than book burners and represent a clear and present danger to American democracy.

It is time for every citizen who cares about the destiny of their Nation, it is time for courage, but it is a time also for goodwill and mutual respect among our citizens. It is time to re-secure our democratic values in the public square.

Mr. Speaker, my greatest fear for my Nation, though, is our national debt. When I first came to Congress the national debt was \$6.7 trillion. Today it has tripled. Tripled.

My greatest regret in public office is my inability to convince more of my colleagues and more of my fellow citizens of the peril of this national debt. We are experiencing debt-to-GDP ratios that haven't been seen since World War II, but in World War II they were episodic and temporary. Today's debt is structural and permanent.

As a veteran of the so-called super committee, the Simpson-Bowles Deficit Reduction Committee, and now chairman of the House Financial Services Committee, my iPad is awash in reports saying that our national debt is simply unsustainable. Yet, denial, justification, and obstruction continue to rule the day.

We should all be troubled and sobered by the fact that if one carefully reviews history, you will find few examples of republics that have existed beyond 200 years, and most of those republics met their demise through some type of fiscal crisis. There is so much at stake.

Now, Mr. Speaker, in my heart, and in my head, I don't really believe America one day will wake up and become Greece, but I do believe that we are on the path, within a generation, to

being a second-rate economic power, a second-rate military power and, frankly, a second-rate moral authority as we become the first generation in America's history to leave the next generation with a lower standard of living.

It is beyond time for both a spending limit amendment to the United States Constitution and fundamental reforms of our current entitlement programs for future generations. It is not too late to take America off the road to national bankruptcy.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I have spent the last few minutes speaking about my fears, but please know I have far, far more hope than I have fear as I come to the House floor for the last time to give a speech.

Most Americans, as I observe, are enjoying the greatest economy in their lifetimes. Oh, what a difference that has made in the lives of millions of Americans and, indeed, to borrow a phrase from the past: "It is morning in America again."

Opportunity abounds like few periods in our Nation's history. And our military might that had been hollowed out in the last presidential administration is being rebuilt and it is respected and feared around the globe again.

As we look at our Nation's history, we cannot but conclude that we live in a time of relative peace, relative security, and we should always, always be grateful.

But the main reason I come to this floor tonight, so hopeful, so hopeful for the future, is because of the people I have met in the Fifth District of Texas that I have had this privilege to represent. I have met great entrepreneurs, like Sam Bistriani of Lake Highlands. He immigrated to this country as a 12-year-old boy from Romania. He didn't even speak the language.

A few years later, he managed to get a job at one of the local retailers, Neiman Marcus. He got a job starting at the bottom; I think it was stocking shelves. And with hard work and vision, he ended up one day launching his own line of designer rain boots called Roma, and now he heads up a multi-million dollar enterprise. And oh, by the way, he gives his boots away to poor people all over the world.

Another entrepreneur I met is Rick Carmona from Terrell, Texas. As a kid, he used to visit a local Tex-Mex restaurant and, after going there a few times he said, you know what? My mom cooks better food than this.

So after saving his money from a number of jobs, he finally took the great leap. He invested his money; took out a small loan; started his own restaurant.

He seated the customers; he bussed the tables. His mom did the cooking. His office consisted of a back table and a pencil behind his ear. And a couple of decades later, he runs one of the most successful restaurants in the entire country because of his entrepreneurial vision.

I also have hope because I met great patriots, patriots like Doc Collins from

Van Zandt County, who is a real conservative leader from that county.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, he has bone cancer that he continues to battle. But during a recent election, he got chemotherapy in the morning for his bone cancer, and he was working the polling places in the afternoon because he felt that strongly about his cause and his country.

Then, Mr. Speaker, there is Howard Banks of Kaufman, Texas. I wish everybody could meet this wonderful patriot. He is legally blind. He is a World War II veteran. He flies Old Glory every day. Every day.

One day, some no-account vandal decided he would take Mr. Banks' flag, and Mr. Banks fought him. He fought him. He is age 92 and he still decided that he would fight for and he was willing to die for his American flag and the country it represents.

These patriots inspire me, Mr. Speaker.

And then there are the social entrepreneurs that I have met in the Fifth District of Texas; people like Morgan Jones of Athens, Texas, who owns a pawnshop. Every single year, what he will do is he will take himself and all of his managers on mercy ships to Africa in order to deliver care and gifts. This is something he does at his expense.

There are so many people, I wish I had time to mention, in the Fifth District of Texas who represent the best of America. I don't have all that time, Mr. Speaker, so let me mention one more.

Kenn Waterston of Terrell, Texas. I mean, he is a bulldog of a Marine veteran.

□ 1915

He opened the Veterans Resource Center not a block, maybe two blocks away from the Dallas VA hospital. And now if homeless veterans will go to the VA Hospital to get their healthcare, as soon as they come out, they can get clean clothes; they can get showers; they can get counseling; they can get access to computers and people to help them find a job in society.

So, Mr. Speaker, when I see patriots and entrepreneurs and Good Samaritans who are stepping up every day in the Fifth District of Texas, I know America has a very bright future, a very bright future ahead.

So let me simply conclude where I began.

For me, it is time for me to go home. It is time to go home to my family. It is time to go home to Texas. All things must pass, including our congressional service.

I continue to have so many blessings in my life, but, Mr. Speaker, I don't believe I will ever have a greater privilege than fighting for freedom and opportunity in the people's House, the House of Representatives.

My heart is just full of gratitude, full of gratitude to my staff, whose work empowered me; full of gratitude to my

constituents, whose encouragement and prayers supported me; and most of all to my family, so much gratitude to Melissa, Claire, and Travis, whose support, love, and grace have sustained me all those 16 years. They are my rock.

So here is what I know after 16 years, Mr. Speaker:

I know if we will continue to trust in God, I know if we will continue to revere freedom, I know if we will keep faith with our Founders' vision, our children will have brighter futures and our Republic will be forever preserved.

May God continue to shed his grace on this great country.

And, Mr. Speaker, for the final time on the House floor, I yield back the balance of my time.

#### FAREWELL TO CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BARTON) for 30 minutes.

Mr. BARTON. Mr. Speaker, before Congressman HENSARLING leaves, I just want to commend him for his service and tell him what a privilege it has been for me to serve with him and to know him as a friend. We are both retiring, and we are both, so far as I know, going to move home to Texas. And if we don't see each other anyplace else, we will see each other at some Texas A&M football games. So I thank my good friend.

Mr. Speaker, in January of 1985, at the ripe old age of 34, I stood right here in the well of the House with my 2-year-old daughter, Kristin, in my left arm, held up my right hand, and took the oath to defend the Constitution of the United States of America against all enemies, foreign and domestic, to the best of my ability. I was one of 43, I believe, of that year's freshmen. I think we had a little over 30 Republicans and a dozen or more Democrats.

As soon as I took the oath, I walked over to the hopper—and, yes, there really is a little wooden hopper here in the well of the House, as I look out, on the right-hand side, as the audience looks in, on the left-hand side—and I dropped the Barton Tax Limitation/Balanced Budget Amendment into the hopper.

That constitutional amendment in 1995 was the number one item in the Contract with America, which, when the Republicans took over the House majority for the first time since 1954, we voted on this same floor the first day that we were in session in January of 1995 on my amendment. It failed. It didn't get the two-thirds vote necessary.

We stripped out the tax limitation requirement and brought it back up for a vote, and it did pass by a two-thirds margin. That amendment went to the Senate, and it failed by one vote in the Senate.

Since that day in January, Mr. Speaker, in 1985, as I stand here on the

House floor tonight, I have voted over 19,700 times on behalf of the people of the Sixth District of Texas. I have an attendance record of 94 percent. I have had a large number of bills that I sponsored become law. I will talk about some of those in a minute.

In this current House, in the 115th Congress, I am number eight in seniority. There are four Republicans ahead of me and, I guess, three Democrats. In the all-time history of the House of Representatives, the House historian is not sure where I stand seniority-wise, but I am in the top 100.

In the Texas delegation, we have had about 250 Congressmen represent the great State of Texas, and I am tied for eighth place in seniority in Texas. The folks ahead of me are an all-star list of former Congressmen: Sam Rayburn, who was Speaker of the House; Wright Patman, who was chairman of the Ways and Means Committee; George Mahon, who was chairman of the Appropriations Committee; Bob Poage, who was chairman of the Agriculture Committee; Jack Brooks, who chaired the Judiciary Committee; Henry Gonzalez, who chaired the Banking Committee; and Jim Wright, who was majority leader and Speaker of the House. That is not bad company, Mr. Speaker, for service from Texas.

Some of the bills that I am proud of that have become law that I was the leader on or the chief sponsor of, we started with the Tax Limitation/Balanced Budget Amendment. That did not become law, but it did pass the House. It did go to the Senate, and it did fail in the Senate by one vote.

I sponsored a bill that reformed the National Institutes of Health. That was the last bill that passed the House and Senate in December of 2006. In January of 2007, the Democrats took the House back, and Congresswoman PELOSI of California became Speaker. Then-Speaker Denny Hastert kept the House floor open until, I believe, 3 o'clock in the morning so that my NIH bill could clear the Senate and come back.

That NIH bill created a common fund that has been utilized to form some of the cutting-edge research that is now bearing fruit. The immune cell therapy that is helping in some cases cure cancer is one result of that. Some of the stem cell research that is going on is another. I am very proud of that NIH bill.

We passed an FDA reform bill that, again, has helped reduce time to bring new drugs to market. It has cut some of the red tape in getting new drugs and medical devices approved by the FDA.

In the energy sector, as a young Congressman, I sponsored a bill to decontrol wellhead prices of natural gas. That bill was signed into law as a part of a larger bill signed into law by President George H.W. Bush, who just passed away.

In 2005, I was chairman of the Energy and Commerce Committee, and I led the effort to pass what was called the

Energy Policy Act of 2005. That bill included a reform in the review of import-export facilities, which we are now using to permit LNG facilities to export our natural gas overseas.

That bill also had a number of authorizations for renewable fuels and alternatives that have led to wind energy becoming a significant factor in this country and solar power becoming a significant factor in this country.

It authorized some subsidies and protections for corn-grown ethanol, and that has led to the ethanol industry becoming a significant factor in some parts of the country.

It also protected hydraulic fracturing from Federal EPA jurisdiction except in a few limited circumstances. That one thing, if we hadn't done anything else, has led to the boon in oil and natural gas production in this country that is the envy of the world.

Three years ago, with Congressman HENRY CUELLAR, my good Democratic friend from Laredo, we sponsored and passed the bill that led to the repeal of the ban on crude oil exports, Mr. Speaker.

At the time, people kind of poohpooed that bill, but as I stand here on the House floor this evening in this month of December 2018, there are going to be days this month that we export more crude oil than we import, and that is a huge, huge accomplishment, and we are doing it based on market principles.

The U.S. is now the number one producer of crude oil in the world, surpassing Saudi Arabia and Russia. We are producing in the neighborhood of 12 million barrels of oil per day, and that number is going to go up. Literally, the sky is the limit.

The Lord has blessed the United States of America with great natural resources, and with the energy legislation that I have helped to lead the fight on and helped to get passed, we have the human resources and the capital resources and the natural resources so that the United States is going to be the leader in energy production and energy innovation for the foreseeable future, for the next 40, 50, 60 years, and I am very proud of that, Mr. Speaker.

So I could talk for quite some time, Mr. Speaker, about my legislative accomplishments, but you really don't run for Congress just to legislate. This is the people's House. You are expected to be an ombudsman for the people you represent, in my case, the Sixth District of Texas, which has changed because of redistricting three times since I have been elected, but the core is kind of south central Texas: Ellis County, Navarro County, Tarrant County, and at various times we have gone as far south as Montgomery County. I have gone up into Tarrant and Parker County to the west, and Hood County and Hill County. As it is currently configured, there are a little over 600,000 people.

When you run for Congress, Mr. Speaker, you really run because you

want to help people. You want to be their spokesperson on the House floor, but also with the bureaucracy, with the executive branch, and in some cases with the private sector to make sure that they get a fair shake.

In any given year, we have over 1,000 pending cases in the district and a success rate of around 80 percent, but some of these cases stand out more than others, and I want to give you a few.

As a young Congressman back in the late 1980s, we still got a lot of what I call real-mail letters, handwritten letters from people. One night I was in my office in Longworth going through the mail and jotting down responses or looking at draft responses that my staff had prepared, I came across a letter from an 11-year-old boy, Mr. Speaker, in Burleson, Texas. His name was Garrett Roper—Garrett Roper, 11 years old.

□ 1930

I am going to paraphrase his letter, but it was:

Dear Congressman BARTON: My name is Garrett Roper. I am 11 years old. I live in Burleson, Texas. I had a good friend, Adam Settle, who was also 11. He was riding a three-wheel ATV on his grandparents' farm, and it flipped over, crushed his chest, and killed him. What are you going to do about that, Congressman? What can you do?

I thought about it and I thought, I don't know that I can do anything about it. But he had a phone number in his letter. Every Congressman has a phone on his desk, and I picked up the phone on my desk and dialed the number in Burleson, Texas. It was probably about 9 o'clock at night.

In any event, the little boy's mother answered the phone. I said: I am Congressman JOE BARTON. I am calling from Washington, D.C. Could I talk to Garrett Roper?

And she said: You are who?

And I said: I am Congressman JOE BARTON.

And she said: Are you sure?

And I said: Yes, ma'am. This isn't a joke.

She said: Well, he is in the bathtub.

I said: Well, I hate to bother him, but could you ask him to come out of the tub and talk to me?

And she did. He came on the phone. I identified myself and I said: Did you write me a letter?

And he said: Oh, yes, I did.

And I said: Well, I am here to tell you that I have read it. I am not sure what I am going to do, but I am going to try. What do you want me to do?

He said: Those three-wheelers are unsafe. It killed my friend. And, if you can, I want you to prevent them from being used, so that other little boys and adults don't get hurt or killed.

And I said: Well, that is a pretty big order, but let me see.

To make a long story short, Mr. Speaker, I started the work. That issue was in the jurisdiction of the Energy

and Commerce Committee. I was the junior member of the minority party. The chairman was the great John Dingell of Michigan, one of my very best friends to this day. But, at that time, he was the powerful chairman, and I was the junior member of the minority.

The ranking Republican on the committee then, I think, was Norm Lent of New York. So I went to Mr. Lent, and I went to Mr. Dingell. They decided that it needed to be investigated.

We did an investigation. We had a number of hearings that the Justice Department came to, and the ATV industry and the Consumer Product Safety Commission. The little boy who had been killed, his mother, Anne Settle, who today is one of my best friends and still lives in Burleson in the same house, she came and testified.

Over a 3-year period—I believe it was 3 years—a consent agreement was formed among the Justice Department, the Consumer Product Safety Commission, the ATV industry, and the Congress. That consent agreement was signed and ratified, and three-wheeler ATVs, Mr. Speaker, were taken off the U.S. market.

It was a 10-year agreement. When it expired, I don't know if the agreement was renegotiated. But, in any event, the three-wheelers did not come back, and the industry really moved to four-wheelers, which are much safer and not nearly as dangerous.

Mr. Speaker, that one letter from that one little boy, who was 11 years old, to his Congressman made a huge difference. It saved hundreds of lives per year, thousands of injuries, hundreds of millions, if not billions, of dollars, and it made the country safer. It took that little boy writing that letter to his Congressman, and then that Congressman, who in this case was me, doing something about it, picking up the phone, calling the little boy, then calling a Congressman. And people in the executive branch and people in the industry made a difference.

I will give you another case of a young woman, I believe she lived in Waxahachie, Texas, named Robin Benton. She was a nurse. Her mother became ill. She quit her job and moved, I think down to Houston, to take care of her. She took out insurance on an individual basis instead of a group basis where she had worked. She moved back after her mother improved, and Robin developed breast cancer—double. She had cancer in both breasts.

The insurance company that she had been covered by dropped her coverage, returned her premiums, and told her that they wouldn't cover her. Her doctor said she needed a double mastectomy, and she needed it immediately.

She didn't write a letter. She called my congressional office in Arlington and asked for help. My staff looked into it, touched base with the insurance company, and got the answer that the insurance company had checked their files and they didn't believe that they had made a mistake, that they had the right to cancel her coverage.

My staff brought the file to me. This was a desperate situation, Mr. Speaker, so I checked with the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation in Dallas and got their take on it.

Then I picked up the phone, and I called the president of that insurance company. I explained the situation to him. I said: It is my opinion that your internal review has made a mistake. I think this woman should be insured by your company, and I think her surgery should be covered. I would sure like for you to take a look at it. If I am not factually correct, then I won't pursue it. But if I am, if what I say is factually correct, I would ask that you reinstitute her coverage.

To his credit, the president of that insurance company checked his facts and checked the case file. He called me back and said: You are right, Congressman. We should cover her.

They did. She had the surgery. And to my knowledge, Mr. Speaker, she is alive today.

That is the power of the Congress, the power of the people, the power of an individual asking their Congressman for help, and the Congressman trying to help, and, in this case, the private sector checking the facts out and agreeing that the facts dictate that the woman should have been insured.

I will give you one more example. When I was chairman of the Energy and Commerce Committee, we got jurisdiction over the internet. We had an investigation in the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee of child pornography in America, Mr. Speaker. We had a number of witnesses in and a number of hearings.

The FBI had set up a special task force on child pornography. We had asked if they could send someone, one of their agents who was involved with that task force, to testify. The FBI said their policy was that their agents didn't testify before Congress.

We went back and forth, the staff to the FBI staff, without any resolution. Then I saw that the particular individual from the FBI who we wanted to testify, Mr. Speaker, did an interview on a national news show. When I saw that, I said, well, if that agent can appear on national TV, that agent ought to be able to appear before Congress and testify.

I picked up the phone on my desk, and I put in a phone call to the FBI Director. I was told that the FBI Director was unavailable. So I called back and I said: Well, where is the Director?

"Well, the Director is on travel, and he is out West."

And I said: Well, I need this agent to testify. I checked with the ranking member, Mr. Dingell, and if he is not willing to testify voluntarily, I am willing to issue a subpoena that the minority will support to compel testimony from the FBI.

I got an agitated phone call that you couldn't do that, that it wasn't proper. The President at the time was my good

friend President George W. Bush. So we said: Well, just check with the President of the United States and then let us know whether you are going to send your agent or not.

Well, sure enough, later that afternoon, I got a phone call from the FBI Director. He was very cordial, what could he do to help, that there would be no problem. I said: Well, I really appreciate that. I am just curious why the change of attitude.

He said: Well, we called over to the White House, and the President said that Congressman BARTON was a good man, meant business, and, if it was not totally impossible, the FBI should cooperate.

The agent came the next day. We had good testimony, and that hearing led to a renewal of purpose in terms of the task force against child pornography. The FBI went on and did some really good work, and we passed some legislation that has tightened the law and the laws against child pornography on the internet.

Mr. Speaker, what is the point of all that? The point of those stories is that any Member of Congress who is given the privilege to have the voting card has a great opportunity. There are 435 phones on the desks of offices in the Rayburn, the Longworth, and the Cannon office buildings, and every Member has the potential to pick up that phone and call to help somebody in their district or their country or the world: the power of the people in the United States of America through the Constitution, delegated to the Congress, delegated to the House and Senate, delegated to individual House districts, given to Members who win elections.

And every Member who walks on this floor, Mr. Speaker, comes because they have won an election, not because they have been appointed by the President or the Speaker or the Governor, but because they have won a free and fair election in the congressional district they wish to represent, and a majority of those voting have said: You are the person. You are the man, you are the woman, to come to Washington.

So we are allowed to come up here and take the oath, be sworn in. Then we represent for a 2-year term, Mr. Speaker, our constituents, and we have an opportunity to help people.

In the 34 years that I have served here, I have done some great things legislatively. But the thing, Mr. Speaker, that I will miss the most, that I will really miss, is, every now and then, when I see something that is injurious to a person in my congressional district that I represent, I will not have the ability any longer to pick up that phone and call on behalf of that person. I will miss that. It is not an entitlement. It is a privilege won by being freely and fairly elected.

I have stood for office 17 times. I have won 17 primaries, one primary runoff, 17 general elections. I had the privilege to serve the people of the Sixth District for 34 years. As I said, I

think, earlier, in the history of the House, we are not sure where I stand in lifetime seniority, but it is in the top 100. I am tied for eighth in terms of senior service from the great State of Texas.

I have had the privilege to meet great people. John Dingell, the dean of the House, who served longer than any other person in the history of the House, is a role model for what a Congressman should be. Newt Gingrich, who was a backbencher bomb-thrower from the Conservative Opportunity Society and rose to be Speaker of the House, is probably the most brilliant person I have met who served in the House: inspirational, innovative, and a visionary. It has been a real privilege to get to know him and call him a friend.

□ 1945

Phil Gramm, who was the Congressman before me for the Sixth District, got elected to the Senate and represented the great State of Texas in the Senate until his retirement a number of years ago. He is another absolutely brilliant man who really has been a role model and a mentor for me.

In the current House, our current Speaker, PAUL RYAN, I think has done yeoman's work to move this country in the right direction.

The incoming probable Speaker, NANCY PELOSI, we have different views philosophically, but she and I, when she was a junior Member and I was a junior Member, we worked together to pass the Chinese Student Asylum Act that let all of the Chinese students who were here in the country when Tiananmen Square happened, they were allowed to stay in this country legally until it was safe for them to go back to China.

Most of them did eventually return home, but some of them did choose to stay here. That is a bill that I worked on, and I am proud that she and I were able to get it passed.

The current chairman of my committee, GREG WALDEN, I think he is doing a great job as chairman. I had the privilege to meet wonderful people, like the immediate past chairman, FRED UPTON; senior Members like JOHN SHIMKUS of Illinois, who has worked so hard on Yucca Mountain.

On the other side of the aisle, BOBBY RUSH from Chicago, a former Black Panther, and I have a bill that passed the House and is standing in the Senate, to reform the strategic petroleum reserve.

This afternoon, Mr. Speaker, on this floor, Congresswoman KATHY CASTOR from Florida and I passed a bill called the IMPROVE Act, but within it are the ACE Kids Act. That bill passed the House 400-11. And if the Senate can pass it this week or next week—and I think they will—that bill will transform the way we provide healthcare for the poorest of the poor children who are already Medicaid eligible.

Mr. Speaker, it has been a privilege to serve the House of Representatives

for the great people of Texas in the Sixth District for the last 34 years.

I consider it the highest honor of my life to have had the title of United States Representative, and I yield back the balance of my time.

#### RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 7 o'clock and 47 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 2005

#### AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. WOODALL) at 8 o'clock and 5 minutes p.m.

#### REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 2, AGRICULTURE AND NUTRITION ACT OF 2018

Mr. NEWHOUSE, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 115-1074) on the resolution (H. Res. 1176) providing for consideration of the conference report to accompany the bill (H.R. 2) to provide for the reform and continuation of agricultural and other programs of the Department of Agriculture through fiscal year 2023, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

#### LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. JONES of North Carolina (at the request of Mr. MCCARTHY) for today and the balance of the year on account of illness.

#### ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled bills of the House of the following titles, which were thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 315. An act to amend the Public Health Service Act to distribute maternity care health professionals to health professional shortage areas identified as in need of maternity care health services.

H.R. 3946. An act to name the Department of Veterans Affairs community-based outpatient clinic in Statesboro, Georgia, the Ray Hendrix Department of Veterans Affairs Clinic.

#### ADJOURNMENT

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 8 o'clock and 6 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House ad-

joined until tomorrow, Wednesday, December 12, 2018, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

#### EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

7123. A letter from the Acting Principal Deputy, Defense Pricing and Contracting, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's final rule — Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement: Sunset of Provision Relating to the Procurement of Certain Goods (DFARS Case 2018-D007) [Docket DARS-2018-0028] (RIN: 0750-AJ71) received December 3, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Armed Services.

7124. A letter from the Program Specialist, LRAD, Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the Department's interim final rule — Liquidity Coverage Ratio Rule: Treatment of Certain Municipal Obligations as High-Quality Liquid Assets [Docket ID: OCC-2018-0013] (RIN: 1557-AE36) received November 28, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Financial Services.

7125. A letter from the Director, Office of Legislative Affairs, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, transmitting the Corporation's final rule — Transferred OTS Regulations Regarding Fiduciary Powers of State Savings Associations and Consent Requirements for the Exercise of Trust Powers (RIN: 3064-AE23) received December 3, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Financial Services.

7126. A letter from the General Counsel, Federal Housing Finance Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Miscellaneous Federal Home Loan Bank Operations and Authorities-Financing Corporation Assessments (RIN: 2590-AA99) received December 3, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Financial Services.

7127. A letter from the Regulations Coordinator, Health Resources and Services Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — 340B Drug Pricing Program Ceiling Price and Manufacturer Civil Monetary Penalties Regulation (RIN: 0906-AB19) received November 29, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

7128. A letter from the Correspondence and Regulation Specialist, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act; Elimination of Internal Agency Process for Implementation of the Federally-facilitated User Fee Adjustment [CMS-9917-F] (RIN: 0938-AT93) received December 3, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

7129. A letter from the Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to serious human rights abuse or corruption that was declared in Executive Order 13818 of December 20, 2017, pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 1641(c); Public Law 94-412, Sec. 401(c); (90 Stat. 1257) and 50 U.S.C. 1703(c); Public Law 95-223, Sec. 204(c); (91 Stat. 1627); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

7130. A letter from the Assistant Legal Adviser, Office of Treaty Affairs, Department of State, transmitting reports concerning international agreements other than treaties entered into by the United States to be transmitted to the Congress within the sixty-day period specified in the Case-Zablocki Act, pursuant to 1 U.S.C. 112b(a); Public Law 92-403, Sec. 1(a) (as amended by Public Law 108-458, Sec. 7121(b)); (118 Stat. 3807); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

7131. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's semiannual report from the Office of Inspector General for the period ending September 30, 2018, pursuant to the Inspector General Act of 1978 (Public Law 95-452), as amended; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

7132. A letter from the Director, Human Resources Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting two (2) notifications, one of a vacancy, and one of a nomination, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 3349(a); Public Law 105-277, 151(b); (112 Stat. 2681-614); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

7133. A letter from the Chairman, National Transportation Safety Board, transmitting the Board's annual Performance and Accountability Report for FY 2018, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 3515(a)(1); Public Law 101-576, Sec. 303(a)(1) (as amended by Public Law 107-289, Sec. 2(a)); (116 Stat. 2049); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

7134. A letter from the Chairman, Securities and Exchange Commission, transmitting the Commission's Semiannual Report to Congress, of the Office of Inspector General, covering the period from April 1, 2018, through September 30, 2018, pursuant to Public Law 95-452, of the Inspector General Act of 1978; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

7135. A letter from the Acting Commissioner, Social Security Administration, transmitting the Administration's Semiannual Report to Congress, of the Office of Inspector General, covering the period from April 1, 2018, through September 30, 2018, pursuant to the Inspector General Act of 1978 (Public Law 95-452), as amended; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

7136. A letter from the Director, Office of Legislative Affairs, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, transmitting the Corporation's final rule — Rules of Practice and Procedure (RIN: 3064-AE75) received December 3, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

7137. A letter from the Regulation Development Coordinator, Office of Regulation Policy and Management, Office of the Secretary (00REG), Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department's final rule — Per Diem Paid to States for Care of Eligible Veterans in State Homes (RIN: 2900-AO88) received December 3, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

7138. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's IRB only rule — 2018 Required Amendments List for Qualified Retirement Plans [Notice 2018-91] received November 29, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

## REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. WALDEN: Committee on Energy and Commerce. H.R. 350. A bill to exclude vehicles used solely for competition from certain provisions of the Clean Air Act, and for other purposes (Rept. 115-1073). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. NEWHOUSE: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 1176. Resolution providing for consideration of the conference report to accompany the bill (H.R. 2) to provide for the reform and continuation of agricultural and other programs of the Department of Agriculture through fiscal year 2023, and for other purposes (Rept. 115-1074). Referred to the House Calendar.

## PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. BRADY of Texas (for himself and Mr. SHIMKUS):

H.R. 7247. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to clarify the authority of MA organizations to provide waivers from Medicare Advantage plans' prior authorization requirements; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. MARCHANT (for himself and Ms. SEWELL of Alabama):

H.R. 7248. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to direct the Secretary of Human Services to solicit information from providers and suppliers of services on ways to reduce administrative and regulatory burdens under the Medicare program, to provide for transparency and public feedback for evaluating a post-acute care prospective payment system under such title, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. REED:

H.R. 7249. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for certain prior authorization notifications by Medicare Advantage organizations; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania (for himself and Mr. GUTHRIE):

H.R. 7250. A bill to direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to conduct a study and submit to Congress a report on the feasibility of using certain technologies to facilitate the administration of prior authorization requirements under part C of the Medicare program; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a pe-

riod to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. FLORES:

H.R. 7251. A bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act and the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 to prevent the inter partes review process for challenging patents from diminishing competition in the pharmaceutical industry and with respect to drug innovation, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Financial Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. MCNERNEY:

H.R. 7252. A bill to direct the Attorney General to enter into an agreement with the National Academies to conduct a study to develop guidelines, best practices, and examples for congressional redistricting; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. SMITH of Missouri:

H.R. 7253. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to minimize costs and burdens under the Medicare program by providing for consideration of the removal of certain measures applicable to inpatient hospitals and post-acute care inpatient providers and providing for meaningful measures; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. HECK:

H.R. 7254. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow the deduction of moving expenses of Federal employees; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. GALLAGHER (for himself and Mr. GALLEGO):

H.R. 7255. A bill to direct the President to impose penalties pursuant to denial orders with respect to certain Chinese telecommunications companies that are in violation of the export control or sanctions laws of the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. CARSON of Indiana:

H.R. 7256. A bill to implement recommendations related to the safety of amphibious passenger vessels, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. POLIQUIN:

H.R. 7257. A bill to amend title 31, United States Code, to require \$1 coins issued during 2019 to honor President George H.W. Bush and to direct the Secretary of the Treasury to issue bullion coins during 2019 in honor of Barbara Bush; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mrs. BUSTOS (for herself, Mr. GIANFORTE, Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, and Mr. KEATING):

H.R. 7258. A bill to recognize and honor the service of individuals who served in the United States Cadet Nurse Corps during World War II, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Armed Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. CLARKE of New York (for herself, Mr. SIMPSON, and Mr. GOSAR):



H.R. 7259. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exclude from gross income certain Federally-subsidized loan repayments for dental school faculty; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. FASO (for himself, Mr. TONKO, and Ms. STEFANIK):

H.R. 7260. A bill to allow for safety regulation of vehicles that are modified to increase seating capacity, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas:

H.R. 7261. A bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to permit individuals to select a monthly benefit payment date; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. RICHMOND (for himself, Mr. CUMMINGS, Ms. LEE, and Ms. MOORE):

H.R. 7262. A bill to make housing more affordable, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services, and in addition to the Committees on Ways and Means, the Judiciary, Transportation and Infrastructure, and Education and the Workforce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. TIPTON:

H.R. 7263. A bill to require the Secretary of Agriculture to provide notice in the case of certain ski area closures, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, and in addition to the Committee on Natural Resources, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. McEACHIN (for himself, Ms. JAYAPAL, and Ms. BARRAGÁN):

H.J. Res. 144. A joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States respecting the right to clean air, pure water, and the sustainable preservation of the ecological integrity, and aesthetic, scenic, and historical values of the natural environment; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. MATSUI (for herself and Mr. GUTHRIE):

H. Res. 1175. A resolution supporting increased awareness of sepsis and the importance of early diagnosis and appropriate intervention; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. McCAUL (for himself, Mr. ROYCE of California, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. FORTENBERRY, and Ms. MCCOLLUM):

H. Res. 1177. A resolution recognizing the need for China to maintain its ban on rhinoceros and tiger parts; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Natural Resources, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. TURNER (for himself, Mrs. WALORSKI, Mr. LIPINSKI, and Mr. MEEKS):

H. Res. 1178. A resolution celebrating the centennial of Romania's Great Union of 1918 and reaffirming the strategic partnership between the United States and Romania; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

## MEMORIALS

Under clause 3 of rule XII, memorials were presented and referred as follows:

268. The SPEAKER presented a memorial of the Legislature of the State of Alaska, relative to House Joint Resolution 19, commending the Arctic Waterways Safety Committee; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

269. Also, a memorial of the Legislature of the State of Alaska, relative to House Joint Resolution 4, urging the United States Congress to pass legislation providing for the exemption of legally acquired walrus, mammoth, and mastodon ivory from laws that ban the sale, use, and possession of ivory; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

270. Also, a memorial of the Legislature of the State of Alaska, relative to House Joint Resolution 33, urging the Alaska delegation in Congress to pursue the establishment of a U.S. Coast Guard port in the Arctic region; supporting the increase in defensive capabilities in the Arctic region; and encouraging the development of critical Arctic infrastructure; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

## CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. BRADY of Texas:

H.R. 7247.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

United States Constitution Article I Section 8

By Mr. MARCHANT:

H.R. 7248.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8: To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mr. REED:

H.R. 7249.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18: The Congress shall have Power to make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by the Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania:

H.R. 7250.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution

By Mr. FLORES:

H.R. 7251.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution. The Congress shall have power to regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian tribes.

and,

Article I, Section 8, Clause 8, of the United States Constitution. The Congress shall have power to promote the progress of science and useful arts, by securing for limited times to authors and inventors the exclusive right to their respective writings and discoveries.

By Mr. McNERNEY:

H.R. 7252.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. SMITH of Missouri:

H.R. 7253.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. HECK:

H.R. 7254.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the Constitution of the United States.

By Mr. GALLAGHER:

H.R. 7255.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution, specifically "To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes."

By Mr. CARSON of Indiana:

H.R. 7256.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 18 of section 8 of Article I of the Constitution.

By Mr. POLIQUIN:

H.R. 7257.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

"Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution which enumerates the power of Congress: To coin Money, regulate the Value thereof, and of foreign Coin, and fix the Standard of Weights and Measures;"

By Mrs. BUSTOS:

H.R. 7258.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the United States Constitution.

By Ms. CLARKE of New York:

H.R. 7259.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

the power granted to Congress under Article I of the United States Constitution and its subsequent amendments, and further clarified and interpreted by the Supreme Court of the United States.

By Mr. FASO:

H.R. 7260.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution

By Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas:

H.R. 7261.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution, to "provide for the common defense and general welfare of the United States."

By Mr. RICHMOND:

H.R. 7262.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is introduced pursuant to the powers granted to Congress under the General Welfare Clause (Art. 1 Sec. 8 Cl. 1), the Commerce Clause (Art. 1 Sec. 8 Cl. 3), and the Necessary and Proper Clause (Art. 1 Sec. 8 Cl. 18).

Further, this statement of constitutional authority is made for the sole purpose of compliance with clause 7 of Rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives and shall have no bearing on judicial review of the accompanying bill.

By Mr. TIPTON:

H.R. 7263.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2: The Congress shall have Power to dispose of and make all needful Rules and Regulations respecting the Territory or other Property belonging to the United States.

By Mr. McEACHIN:

H.J. Res. 144.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article V

#### ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 1318: Mr. COLE and Mr. BURGESS.  
H.R. 2315: Mr. LAHOOD.  
H.R. 2472: Mr. MORELLE.  
H.R. 3485: Mr. GOHMERT.  
H.R. 3692: Ms. LOFGREN.  
H.R. 3767: Mr. KILMER.  
H.R. 3875: Ms. BONAMICI.  
H.R. 4022: Ms. JUDY CHU of California.  
H.R. 4256: Ms. JACKSON LEE.  
H.R. 4485: Ms. LOFGREN.  
H.R. 4732: Mr. LAWSON of Florida, Mr. SMITH of Missouri, Mr. MOULTON, Ms. HANABUSA, and Mr. NUNES.  
H.R. 5222: Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.  
H.R. 5694: Mr. DEFazio.

H.R. 5697: Mr. PANETTA.  
H.R. 6043: Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. SHERMAN, Ms. LOFGREN, and Mr. DEFazio.  
H.R. 6071: Ms. NORTON.  
H.R. 6086: Mr. CARBAJAL.  
H.R. 6387: Ms. DEGETTE.  
H.R. 6543: Mr. ELLISON.  
H.R. 6637: Mr. KIND.  
H.R. 6654: Ms. ADAMS, Ms. BASS, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Ms. BLUNT ROCH-ESTER, Mr. BROWN of Maryland, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. CLAY, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. CLY-BURN, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. ELLISON, Ms. FUDGE, Mr. HAS-TINGS, Ms. NORTON, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. JEFFRIES, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mrs. LAW-RENCE, Mr. LAWSON of Florida, Ms. LEE, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. McEACHIN, Mr. PAYNE, Ms. PLASKETT, Mr. RICHMOND, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. VEASEY, Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Mr. LYNCH, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. EVANS, and Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.  
H.R. 6713: Mr. RUPPERSBERGER.  
H.R. 6764: Ms. NORTON and Ms. KAPTUR.  
H.R. 6824: Mr. NORMAN.  
H.R. 6850: Mr. TIPTON.  
H.R. 6927: Mr. TIPTON.  
H.R. 6956: Miss RICE of New York.

H.R. 7050: Mr. CARBAJAL and Ms. NORTON.  
H.R. 7059: Mr. LONG.  
H.R. 7062: Mr. COLLINS of New York.  
H.R. 7079: Ms. NORTON, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, and Mr. KILDEE.  
H.R. 7102: Mr. CRIST.  
H.R. 7146: Ms. WILD.  
H.R. 7228: Mr. PETERS, Mr. RASKIN, Mr. SCHIFF, and Mr. CARSON of Indiana.  
H. Con. Res. 81: Mr. POLIS.  
H. Con. Res. 138: Mr. POLIS.  
H. Con. Res. 142: Mr. POLIS, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Ms. DEGETTE, and Mr. SMITH of Washington.  
H. Con. Res. 145: Ms. SHEA-PORTER.  
H. Res. 69: Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, and Mr. CLAY.  
H. Res. 757: Mr. MCGOVERN.  
H. Res. 1031: Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. SPEIER, Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire, Mr. MOULTON, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. NORCROSS, and Mr. CART-WRIGHT.  
H. Res. 1034: Mr. MARSHALL, Mr. HURD, Mr. BURGESS, and Mr. COLLINS of New York.  
H. Res. 1087: Mrs. MURPHY of Florida.  
H. Res. 1165: Mr. ENGEL and Mr. DEUTCH.  
H. Res. 1169: Mr. SOTO.  
H. Res. 1172: Mr. BOST, Mr. PETERS, and Mrs. HARTZLER.  
H. Res. 1174: Mrs. TORRES and Ms. MENG.