

Unfortunately, as the President recognized, himself, this national emergency could be tied up in the courts for years with no guarantee that judges will rule in favor of the wall to be built. It is Congress' job to provide the resources our Nation needs to keep us safe, and I am concerned that if this is tied up in the courts, we will be stuck with the status quo of no wall and a border that isn't secure.

My vote to disapprove of this unilateral executive action had nothing to do with the merits or need to build President Trump's wall; it was about our Constitution and this body's exclusive Article I powers to make laws and use the power of the purse.

I spoke out strongly when President Obama said that if Congress didn't act, he would use the pen and the phone, and then he proceeded to act alone on DACA and act alone in reappropriating money within ObamaCare and regulating every mud puddle in America.

Remember, President Obama initially said he couldn't act alone on DACA because he wasn't a king or an emperor. After a robust debate in Congress, he flip-flopped and took executive action. His executive action took away Congress' authority to act, and DACA still isn't solved.

These unilateral actions by President Obama put more power in the hands of unelected people sitting in cubicles in Washington, D.C., and they turned elected Representatives into elected bystanders. When Representatives become irrelevant, citizens become irrelevant, and we the people are powerless against faceless, unelected bureaucrats.

Unilateral executive actions set bad precedent. If it is okay for the executive branch to act alone after the legislative branch doesn't reach an agreement, where does that take us?

Governor Jay Inslee already has said that he would be willing to declare a national emergency on climate change allowing for drastic Federal action that would never have to be approved by Congress.

What if, without any congressional approval, a future President used a national emergency to take money from our VA clinics, Fairchild Air Force Base, or force management at the Colville National Forest to force a Green New Deal on the American people?

Whether it is at the border or upholding the separation of powers in our Constitution, we, conservative Republicans, must be consistent about being the party for the rule of law. It is those principles that define us.

Mr. Speaker, I say to Speaker PELOSI: I am 100 percent with Trump on the wall. I am also 100 percent with the Constitution. As Representatives of the people, it is our call to put aside any personal ambition or partisan divides so that the people are protected.

This isn't about political parties, personalities, or power. It never has been. It is about making sure that the prom-

ise of America is never breached and knowing that the only ones who can preserve it are we the people. I take this seriously and will always lead by upholding my Article I constitutional authority to be a strong voice for those I have the privilege of serving in the United States House of Representatives.

#### GUN VIOLENCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Ms. SHERRILL) for 5 minutes.

Ms. SHERRILL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in this Chamber today in support of H.R. 8.

Americans have been waiting for Congress to catch up to them. It isn't often that we hear that 70, 80, or 90 percent of Americans agree on something, but when it comes to universal background checks, 97 percent of Americans think it is a good idea.

In my own district, I have seen that unity. After Parkland, we had 13,000 people in Morristown, New Jersey, at the student-led March for Our Lives demanding gun safety legislation. After the horrific shooting at the Tree of Life synagogue, members of the community came together to denounce gun violence.

The 11th District of New Jersey understands that universal background checks are a responsible way to address the gun violence epidemic in this country. It is a way to keep our communities safe.

Here in New Jersey, we know that successful, responsible gun ownership looks a lot like the legislation we have on the books. We have good gun safety laws, but they are constantly undermined by States with weak gun safety laws.

As a Federal prosecutor, I worked on cases where we traced illegal guns to neighboring States with weak gun safety laws. That is why it is so important that we have stronger Federal gun safety laws. Gun violence is a national problem, and it deserves a national response.

Mr. Speaker, I grew up in a culture of gun safety. My father is a hunter, and he taught me how to shoot. I went on to serve in the United States Navy, and I was qualified as an expert shot in the M16, the Colt 45, and the 9-millimeter Beretta.

I am joined today by a fellow freshman veteran, the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania, and we have been trained and know the power of these weapons and the damage that they can do. Universal background checks are an easy step that we can take to improve gun safety in this country.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania (Ms. HOULAHAN).

Ms. HOULAHAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from New Jersey for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today also in support of H.R. 8, and I rise to tell the

story of one resident from my community, from Pennsylvania's Sixth Congressional District, Jamie Loeper, and his parents, Liz and Joe, from West Chester, Pennsylvania.

Jamie had just graduated college and was looking for a permanent postcollege job. In the meantime, he was working in a pizza shop in West Philadelphia when his life was tragically cut short in January 2004 when a worker accidentally shot him. This was not done in malice but was the result of a coworker accidentally mishandling a gun. Jamie passed away when he was 22 years old. Today would have been his 38th birthday.

I rise for the 1,600 Pennsylvanians and nearly 40,000 Americans who have lost their lives to gun-related incidents in 2017 alone.

The Loepers, like mine, are a military family. We understand the values of responsible gun ownership but also that we must take commonsense steps to reduce gun violence in our communities. We have seen for far too long far too many gun-related tragedies over the past several years with Congress doing nothing. We must act now.

#### SACRAMENTO-SAN JOAQUIN DELTA NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA

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

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, yesterday the House overwhelmingly passed the Natural Resources Management Act, including a provision sponsored by Senator FEINSTEIN and me that would establish California's first National Heritage Area, the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta National Heritage Area.

I want to thank my House colleagues from California, Representatives MATSUI, DESAULNIER, MCNERNEY, THOMPSON, HARDER, LOFGREN, and BERA, for their support as cosponsors of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta National Heritage Area Act, H.R. 357.

I also want to thank Chairman GRIJALVA of the Natural Resources Committee for bringing the bipartisan public lands bill to the floor of the House following Senate passage earlier this month.

I sponsored this legislation to establish the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta National Heritage Area since 2011 along with my colleague Senator FEINSTEIN.

A National Heritage Area designation will help conserve the California Delta, which I have had the great pleasure of calling my home for the last 40 years.

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This iconic working landscape is central to California's life and is the most productive watershed and delta in the Western United States and, indeed, from the coast of Alaska to Chile.

Specifically, this legislation authorizes \$10 million in Federal grants for

local development of cultural heritage issues, historic preservation, and working lands conservation projects.

This Federal grant funding will be available for the next 15 years to support local governments, historical societies, and nonprofit organizations throughout the delta.

Our National Heritage Area Act proposal is endorsed by the Delta Stewardship Council and the Delta Counties Coalition, consisting of Sacramento, Solano, Contra Costa, Yolo, and San Joaquin Counties, all of which represent the delta. It is also supported by the Delta Chambers of Commerce and Visitors Bureau, Restore the Delta, and the National Parks Conservation Association.

California's Delta Protection Commission is charged with developing the management plan for the new national heritage area.

Lastly, I want to address some of the persistent misconceptions about national heritage area designations, not only this new one but also those throughout the United States. Such designations do not affect individual property rights, water rights, land ownership, or local land use decisions, nor does the designation affect hunting and fishing. Rather, the national heritage area program simply makes Federal grant funds administered by the National Park Service available for local projects.

The national heritage area program and planning process is collaborative and voluntary, meaning that local groups, businesses, and landowners can choose to participate or not. I look forward to continuing to work with local governments, county governments, local businesses, communities, local action groups, and all others interested during the public management planning process.

After nearly a decade of work, the President is expected to sign the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta National Heritage Area Act into law. We thank all who supported the legislation and the local entities that have done so.

This is truly a historic achievement for the entire delta, including the farming communities, the families, and the immigrant communities who have settled in the area over the last 150 years and generated the rich cultural and agricultural heritage.

#### RECOGNIZING ASHLEY AND CHRIS GASPERI

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

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a family from Bucks County, Pennsylvania, who is dedicated to making our world a better and safer world.

Ashley and Chris Gasperi, ER nurses, were residents of Feasterville and worked at Temple University Hospital and St. Mary Medical Center. Despite

dedicating their careers to caring for others, they both craved more and later decided to move to Kenya to establish a nonprofit organization that seeks to break the vicious cycle of poverty in rural communities.

Together, they established Ekenywa. Ekenywa works to dig wells, sometimes hundreds of feet deep, to establish a reliable water source to communities and schools in rural Kenya. The creation of these wells allows for solar-powered irrigation systems, enabling communities to farm year-round, even in the presence of a drought.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud the work of the Gasperi family and Ekenywa. They are truly making a difference in the lives of countless people across the world.

I speak on behalf of our entire Bucks County community when we tell them how much we appreciate their service and their sacrifice.

#### RECOGNIZING WALKER ANDERSON FOR HIS NATIONAL SCIENCE COMPETITION ACHIEVEMENTS

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a young citizen in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, who recently was recognized in a national science competition.

Walker Anderson, a Doylestown resident and a senior at Central Bucks West High School, recently won \$2,000 as a semifinalist for the Regeneron Science Talent Search competition. This recognition was received by only 300 students nationwide and only four in the State of Pennsylvania.

As impressive as this may be on its own, this is only one academic achievement of Walker's. Walker previously placed first in the under-18 category at the World Puzzle Championship in Prague, competing on the U.S. team, and was recently accepted into the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Mr. Speaker, I am sure we will hear of Walker well into the future, as his STEM research and grasp of complex mathematical and scientific concepts is truly remarkable.

I wish Walker and his parents, Susan and Ken Anderson, all of the best. I also thank Mark Hayden, Walker's STEM Research Club adviser, for his guidance and his vision.

#### HONORING CIVIL RIGHTS ICON CLARA LUPER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Oklahoma (Ms. KENDRA S. HORN) for 5 minutes.

Ms. KENDRA S. HORN of Oklahoma. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight the visionary and unwavering leadership of civil rights icon and notable Oklahoman Ms. Clara Luper.

Six months ago, I got to witness history as Oklahoma City commemorated the 60th anniversary of the sit-ins she organized. I rise today because, even as a fifth-generation Oklahoman, I realized how little I knew.

Clara Luper and her students sparked a movement, the sit-ins that led into

our Nation's civil rights movement. They deserve to be a household name.

Clara Luper made her mark in a time when people of color couldn't even walk into the front door of Oklahoma City businesses. They were relegated to hidden back rooms.

But she had a vision for equality, a heart for service, and a commitment to justice. She, in her words, "believed in a sun when it didn't shine and the rain when it didn't fall." She knew that Oklahoma and this country could be a place where everyone is treated with respect, dignity, and humanity.

Even as a history teacher at Dunjee High School in Spencer, Oklahoma, Ms. Luper instilled those principles in her students. Her steadfast commitment to ending racism and systemic discrimination inspired her to organize America's first sit-in.

In August 1958, she and 14 of her NAACP Youth Council students walked up to a lunch counter they knew would refuse them, and they ordered a hamburger and a Coke. They were denied, but they did not waver. They knew what was on the line because, in Ms. Luper's words, "within that hamburger was the whole essence of democracy."

At their own personal peril, they returned each day with more people until they broke the barrier. It was never easy. The protesters were verbally and physically assaulted, and Ms. Luper received death threats.

Because of Ms. Luper and her students' fearlessness and determination, the Katz Drug Stores integrated their lunch counters, not just in Oklahoma City but also in Missouri, Kansas, and Iowa.

When the 1958 sit-in happened in Oklahoma City, a group of college students in North Carolina were inspired by what had taken place in Oklahoma City, and they took note. In 1961, those students launched the Greensboro, North Carolina, sit-in at the Woolworth lunch counter, which fueled momentum within the civil rights movement.

It didn't end there. For years, Ms. Luper and others continued their fight. The sacrifices continued, too.

Authorities arrested Ms. Luper 26 times during her fight for freedom. Clara Luper empowered young people to imagine a future brighter than their present and taught them how to make that future a reality.

She changed lives and planted seeds of ethical leadership into those who were lucky enough to be mentored by her. Each of her former students talks about the pivotal role Ms. Luper played in instilling confidence, character, and dignity in them.

Generations reap the benefit of her sacrifice and efforts to integrate not only businesses in Oklahoma City but educational spaces.

Ms. Luper integrated the history department at the University of Oklahoma, becoming the first Black graduate of that master's program. Her contributions are reflected across our