

Right now, candidates can use campaign funds for a whole range of expenses, from pizza for exhausted staff to cybersecurity for digital devices, but the law does not make it clear that childcare is among those allowed expenses.

Like so many laws, there is an assumption of a female caregiver behind every male elected official. In part because of that, moms who continue to shoulder the majority of childcare responsibilities also struggle to run for Congress.

Until women are fully and equally present in Congress, women's perspectives will continue to be underrepresented. The result is a weaker democracy for the people.

Mr. Speaker, I very much look forward to the enactment of H.R. 1 and the Help America Run Act.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize March as Women's History Month.

Throughout history, countless women have contributed to the character and success of the United States of America. During Women's History Month, we celebrate the scores of women who have worked to improve our society and who have fought inequality and discrimination in every form.

These women have created a legacy that lives on and continues to inspire generations of Americans, from Harriet Tubman to Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Susan B. Anthony to Helen Keller. Women's History Month is a time to honor the lives and legacy of all women, living and dead. Through sharing their stories, we are able to acknowledge how their contributions have enriched our lives.

In the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, legendary journalist Ida Tarbell was born at the onset of the oil boom. She is best known for her 1904 book, "The History of the Standard Oil Company." Ida Tarbell was known for her ability to take complex subjects and break them down into articles that could be easily consumed by the general public.

She had a successful career as an investigative journalist, and the Oil Region Alliance in northwestern Pennsylvania recently completed a full restoration of Ms. Tarbell's childhood home in Titusville so that it would be preserved for generations to come.

Mr. Speaker, by honoring women and their achievements, we can honor the past, inform the present, and inspire the future.

Many women have served as part of our Armed Forces throughout history and proudly continue to today, women like Mary Ludwig Hays McCauley, who fought in battles during the Revolu-

tionary War and was among the first women to receive a military pension, and modern-day women like Lisa Jaster, a major in the United States Army Reserve who completed Army Ranger School, which is one of the toughest courses in the military.

Major Jaster was in the first Ranger class that allowed women, and she is the first female Army Reserve officer to become a Ranger School graduate.

Mr. Speaker, many women have left their imprint on the pages of history, and there are numerous leaders who will continue to guide this Nation into the future. May we celebrate and honor them, not only during Women's History Month, but all year long, and thank them for their incredible contributions.

HEALTH AND NUTRITIONAL CHALLENGES FACING AFRICAN AMERICAN POPULATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I thank the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, which prepared this statement for me in acknowledgement of Black History Month.

Minority populations, especially the African American population, continue to remain in relatively poor health when compared to the majority population and also continue to be underserved by the healthcare delivery system.

One of the biggest health challenges facing our country today is obesity, and the African American community is especially at risk. In a 2015-2016 study by the CDC, the report found non-Hispanic Black adults, at 46.8 percent, had a higher prevalence of obesity than non-Hispanic White adults, which was 37.9 percent.

Compared to other States, Illinois' obesity rate is a significant area of concern, with 31 percent of adults having obesity. This statistic is higher than the U.S. median.

Illinois has the 27th highest adult obesity rate in the Nation and the 7th highest obesity rate for youth ages 10 to 17. Chicago's African American community is the demographic with the highest obesity rate at 39.8 percent.

With such a high percentage of the African American community falling in the obese category, this demographic runs a higher risk for obesity-related conditions, including heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, and certain types of cancer that are some of the leading causes of preventable, premature death.

Compared to the general population, African Americans are disproportionately affected by diabetes. African Americans constitute more than 35 percent of all patients receiving dialysis treatment for kidney failure but only represent 13.2 percent of the overall U.S. population.

High blood pressure is the second leading cause of kidney failure among African Americans and remains the leading cause of death due to its link with heart attacks and strokes.

With these troubling statistics, where do we go from here? Awareness, education, and access are the keys to changing our Nation's health, and food and nutrition practitioners play a very important role in leading the health revolution.

Obesity is partially attributed to poor nutritional intake and has been implicated as a contributor to cancer, heart disease, stroke, and diabetes.

Food and nutrition practitioners have an opportunity and an ethical obligation to positively influence the healthcare experience of individuals. These experts have the power to influence factors affecting health disparities at the individual and the population levels, including programs such as SNAP, WIC, adult care food programs, and other nutrition programs.

By connecting with individuals who are most at risk, food and nutrition practitioners can make a huge change when it comes to the health of African Americans, as well as the health of all Americans.

I thank the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics for preparing this information for me.

STATE OF AMERICAN WORKFORCE

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

Mr. SMUCKER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about our economy and the state of the American workforce.

With reforms enacted by the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, as well as needed regulatory relief, nearly every economic indicator is pointing up. The latest U.S. jobs report shows our economy is at its strongest rate in 13 years. Unemployment is at a record low across the board. Wages are growing at the fastest level in over a decade. Business investment is strong. Best of all, American families are keeping more money in their pockets. But new success brings a new set of challenges.

The number of job openings in the U.S. hit a record high last month of 7.3 million. We have gone from, "Where are the jobs?" to, "Where are the workers?" While it may seem positive that there are more jobs open than workers to fill them, I fear that, without addressing the needs of our workforce, we will stifle our incredible economic growth.

According to a study conducted by the National Federation of Independent Business, 22 percent of business owners cite the difficulty in finding workers as their single most important business problem. I hear this from every employer I meet with in my district. The number of job openings is staggering and must be addressed.

□ 1015

In fact, every few months I meet with a group of staffing companies. These individuals operate companies that fill positions ranging from temporary to permanent work in various industries. Between these staffing companies, they would be able to fill thousands of jobs today if they could find the necessary workers. Every day, these positions go unfilled and opportunities are lost.

To help alleviate this situation, I plan on introducing legislation to help build a workforce pipeline.

One bill, the USA Workforce Tax Credit Act, which I will be introducing next week, encourages charitable donations for community-based apprenticeship initiatives, career and technical education, workforce development, and K-12 educational preparedness.

Enacting this proposed legislation will help meet the urgent need to ensure the preparation of current and future workers for the changing needs of the U.S. economy. Job creation and job preparation must go hand in hand.

Another area we must evaluate to help fill out workforce shortages is our Nation's visa system. Our current system spans the spectrum of foreign work visas, but does not address a main driver of illegal immigration.

My bill, the Workforce for an Expanding Economy Act, would help address the gap in the spectrum. This legislation will create a market-driven immigration visa program targeted to workers in occupations that do not require a college degree, otherwise defined as "less skilled" to do year-round, non-farm work, creating a new "H-2D visa." This H-2D visa would only go into effect if the unemployment rate is 5 percent or lower in the metropolitan area where an employer is seeking employees.

Moreover, this bill would implement a two-track system in which employers and potential immigrant laborers are both required to receive a permit to work in the U.S.

Much like our other visa programs, employers will have to prove they are unable to hire a U.S. worker after undergoing the required market tests. Employees are only allowed to work for an approved employer, at the approved location, in the specific job that was approved, and all employers will be required to use E-Verify.

While just a start, Mr. Speaker, I believe these bills will help strengthen our workforce and help meet the needs of employers to continue supporting our economic growth. I urge my colleagues to support them and to help continue our country's track record of success and keep us on the right economic path.

GOVERNMENT BY THE PEOPLE,
FOR THE PEOPLE, AND OF THE
PEOPLE

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

Mr. STANTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address perhaps the most important reform legislation to protect and strengthen our democracy in a generation: H.R. 1, the For the People Act.

We have a responsibility, an obligation, to make sure that our government always remains one of the people, by the people, and for the people. But the truth is Congress has not done enough to protect the voices of everyday Americans and to make sure that our government institutions are working for them.

The American people know it, and, Mr. Speaker, I believe that is exactly why they voted for new leadership in our people's House. They know what is happening to our political system. The dark money, the attack ads from secret, fly-by-night groups, the incredible influence special interests seem to have over too many political leaders. They see it every day when the system that used to work so well for the middle class is now rigged against them.

So much of it is the result of the Supreme Court's Citizens United decision. Consider the facts: From 2008 to 2016, the amount of outside spending to influence our elections has increased tenfold, reaching an astonishing \$1.4 billion during our last presidential election.

These billions being spent to influence elections and politicians, they aren't coming from everyday Americans, but are more likely coming from Wall Street, Big Pharma, and other high-powered interests working against the rest of us. We can do better and, with H.R. 1, we will do better.

This transformative set of reforms will shine a light on dark money and return power to the people. It puts disclosure front and center by requiring political groups to disclose their large donors, bringing dark money out of the shadows for good.

H.R. 1 recognizes a simple principle: The American people ought to know who is writing big checks to their elected officials and candidates for office.

By curbing the influence of special interests, we can lift the voices of everyday Americans and we can better focus on the issues that matter most, like quality jobs, affordable healthcare, clean air and water, and strong infrastructure.

Mr. Speaker, history has its eyes on us today. Let us, once again, resolve to make sure that our government remains one of the people, by the people and, of course, for the people.

UNNECESSARY TINKERING WITH THE HIGHER EDUCATION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) for 5 minutes.

Ms. FOXX of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I rise as leader of the Republicans on the Education and Labor

Committee, which had a referral on H.R. 1 that did not even have a hearing, much less a markup on the provisions that fall within our jurisdiction.

Mr. Speaker, as you know, a referral means a bill should be debated by a committee of jurisdiction, but that did not happen.

It appears that every corner of American life would be touched by this overreaching, politically-motivated bill. Even colleges and universities did not manage to escape its reach.

We fully recognize the opportunity colleges and universities can provide for traditional 18- to 24-year-old students to register to vote. That is why we have always been supportive of voter registration efforts on campuses. But mandating voter registration efforts on campus doesn't show good intentions for student engagement.

Instead, it reveals the true motive behind this unnecessary tinkering with the Higher Education Act. Colleges and universities have not, do not, and must not ever exist to serve the Federal Government.

The provisions in H.R. 1 take institutions of higher learning and put them in the same category as your local DMV. It is bad enough that colleges and universities barely resemble the free marketplace of ideas they once were. This bill turns them into full-fledged government offices, with all of the customer service and freedom of thought for which government offices are known.

The reasons to oppose H.R. 1 are many, but we could not allow the provisions that impact educational institutions to go unnoticed as House Democrats clearly hoped.

H.R. 1 is one of the most cynical political stunts we have seen and, for that reason, Mr. Speaker, we should oppose it and oppose it with all our might.

CELEBRATING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF SUZANNE KLING POST

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

Mr. YARMUTH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in memory and in celebration of the life and legacy of my friend, Suzanne Kling Post, a tremendous force for good in the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

Suzy passed on January 2, after having spent her entire life in service to others, fighting for school desegregation, civil liberties, fair housing, women's rights, equality for all, and more. There was no challenge too daunting and no issue too controversial for Suzy to take on.

As reliable as the sun rising and setting each day, if there was injustice, prejudice, or discrimination, Suzy was right there, organizing and empowering. She helped lift the voices of those wronged, and demanded more from our city and our Commonwealth on behalf of those in need.