

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill and uphold the promise to provide students and schools with the resources they need.

HONORING THE LIFE OF JOHN BERSIA

(Mrs. MURPHY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. MURPHY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the life and legacy of central Florida community leader, faculty member, and editorial writer, John Bersia, who recently passed away.

Born and raised in central Florida, John earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Central Florida as well as masters degrees from Georgetown University, American University, and the London School of Economics.

He then returned to our community to begin writing editorials for the Orlando Sentinel. There, he won a Pulitzer Prize for an editorial series that exposed the predatory lending practices of irresponsible payday lenders, leading to legislation that cracked down on that industry.

In 2001, he began teaching at the University of Central Florida, where he helped establish the Center for the Study of Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery. Throughout his career, he inspired his students to pursue a love of travel, new cultures, and humanity-focused work, but his passion spread beyond that campus.

He hosted a weekly TV show on WUCF and chaired different institutions, including the Global Connections Foundation, the World Affairs Council of Central Florida, and the Orlando Area Committee on Foreign Relations.

John sought to broaden people's connections to the outside world while helping us see that global issues can also be local.

For that and much more, he will be truly missed.

CONGRATULATING VINCENNES UNIVERSITY MEN'S BASKETBALL CHAMPIONS

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

Mr. BUCSHON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the accomplishment of an outstanding group of young men from Vincennes University in Indiana.

For the first time since 1972 and the fourth time in school history, the Vincennes University Trailblazers captured the National Junior College Athletic Association Men's Basketball Championship.

Led by coach Todd Franklin, the Blazers had a benchmark year, ending the season with a record of 34-2 and defeating Ranger College in the championship game by a score of 87-77.

The team's standout in the finals was freshman forward Kevin Osawe, who scored 22 points and had ten rebounds,

earning the tournament's most valuable player honors.

Athletics provide a set of skills that will be with these young men for the rest of their lives.

The commitment and follow-through required to come together as a team and win a national championship are rare and should be commended.

Congratulations to the Vincennes University Blazers men's basketball team on a job well done, and good luck next year.

HONORING THE LIFE OF STEVE CERNAK

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

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to mourn the passing of a dear friend and remarkable professional, Steve Cernak.

As CEO of Port Everglades in Broward County, Florida, Steve oversaw the largest expansion in the port's history and helped Port Everglades grow to become the number one cruise port in the country.

He had a vision for the port, and he was an incredibly dedicated public servant.

Steve loved his work, community, and family.

He was a loving husband, father, and grandfather, and took any opportunity to share how proud he was of his grandchildren, often sharing photos of them before meetings, to which I can personally attest.

His professionalism was unmatched, and I am grateful for his unwavering commitment to keeping Americans safe.

Although Steve is no longer with us, his legacy will live on through the institution he helped propel into the leading port in our Nation.

Steve Cernak was a selfless, compassionate, and tireless public servant, and he will be profoundly missed, but never forgotten.

HONORING ROCK BRIDGE HIGH SCHOOL BOYS BASKETBALL TEAM

(Mrs. HARTZLER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. HARTZLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the Rock Bridge High School Bruins boys basketball team of Columbia, Missouri, for winning the Missouri State Championship Class 5 Basketball Championship in Springfield.

In winning the school's first boys basketball state title, the Bruins exhibited a never-say-die attitude, staging a comeback after being down by eight points heading into the final quarter against Christian Brothers College High School.

The Bruins came close last year, bowing out in the semi-finals, but this year's team would not be denied.

The long hours of practice paid off, as Rock Bridge came roaring back in the

final quarter to win 63-59 and bring home the championship.

This season finale is a testament to the great coaching of Jim Scanlon and the dedication and hard work of all the players, whose determination and teamwork brought home the victory.

So congratulations to the Rock Bridge High School Bruins, state champs from Missouri's Fourth District. We are proud of you and we wish you continued success.

DOUGLAS COUNTY, COLORADO: THE HEALTHIEST COMMUNITY IN THE UNITED STATES

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

Mr. CROW. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate Douglas County, Colorado, being named the healthiest community in the United States by U.S. News and World Report.

With all due respect to all of my colleagues in this body, there is no State like Colorado. We are home to 300 days of sunshine, the Rocky Mountains, and the best breweries and skiing in the country. And it should be no surprise that it helped make us the seventh fastest growing State in the country.

But this year we have added another accomplishment to our list: community health.

With seven of America's top 25 healthiest communities in Colorado, Douglas County tops that list. Home to countless walking trails, community-building events, 63,000 acres of protected land, and innovative infrastructure, Douglas County is truly a great place to live.

Mr. Speaker, I welcome my colleagues to Douglas County and the rest of our incredible district to see for themselves what makes The Centennial State so great.

THE AMERICAN PEOPLE DESERVE THE TRUTH

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

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, thus far, I have released four transcripts of interviews from the Judiciary Committee into the apparent wrongdoing at the FBI and the Justice Department.

Today, I release the fifth.

The American people deserve transparency, they deserve to know what transpired at the highest levels of the FBI, and the origin of the probe into President Trump's campaign.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I request the link, douglascollins.house.gov/nellieohr be placed in the RECORD so the American people can review the transcript of Nellie Ohr's interview.

I will continue to work to release as many transcripts as possible.

The American people deserve the truth.

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DISPARITIES IN PAY

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

Ms. PLASKETT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about the disparities in pay between men and women in this country.

Today, women are paid only 80 cents for every dollar paid to men, resulting in a gap of \$10,169 each year. The gap exists in every State, regardless of geography, occupation, education, or work patterns.

This disparity is worse for women of color. On average, Hispanic women are typically paid 53 cents; Native American women, 58 cents; and Black women, 61 cents for every dollar paid to White, non-Hispanic men.

The Paycheck Fairness Act would help to close these punishing gaps by eliminating loopholes in the Equal Pay Act.

The wage gap between America's men and women denies women \$900 billion in income each year. Across the country, this disparity directly affects children. In my district of the Virgin Islands, 32 percent of families with children live in poverty. Of that number, 76 percent are headed by a single mother.

We know that families who live in poverty have higher rates of instability and that children living in poverty perform worse in school than their counterparts. By paying each woman the \$10,000 they lose per annum to the wage gap, we can do the right thing, and the fiscally responsible thing, and raise millions of families above the poverty line.

OPPOSING BAN ON TRANSGENDER MEMBERS OF ARMED FORCES

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 252, I call up the resolution (H. Res. 124) expressing opposition to banning service in the Armed Forces by openly transgender individuals, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia). Pursuant to House Resolution 252, the resolution is considered read.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 124

Whereas, on July 26, 2017, President Trump announced via Twitter that the United States Government would reverse the existing policy of allowing transgender servicemembers to serve openly in order to implement a ban on transgender people from serving in the Armed Forces;

Whereas transgender servicemembers have served openly since 2016, bravely defending our Nation with distinction while preserving unit cohesion and contributing to military readiness;

Whereas a 2016 study by the RAND Corporation found that allowing transgender

Americans to serve openly in the Armed Forces would “have minimal impact on readiness and health care costs” and “little or no impact on unit cohesion, operational effectiveness or readiness”;

Whereas thousands of transgender Americans currently serve actively in the Armed Forces and in the Reserves throughout all branches and military occupational specialties;

Whereas the American Medical Association, the American Psychological Association, the American Psychiatric Association, and three former military Surgeons General each have affirmed the medical efficacy of transition-related care and have expressed opposition to President Trump's discriminatory ban;

Whereas the claims attempting to justify President Trump's ban are based on flawed scientific and medical assertions;

Whereas the Department of Defense report from 2018 falsely asserts there is “considerable scientific uncertainty” regarding the efficacy of transition-related care;

Whereas there is a global medical consensus that such care is effective, safe, and reliable;

Whereas the Department of Defense has failed to provide evidence the existing policy has impaired morale, unit readiness, or unit cohesion;

Whereas all five military Chiefs of Staff have testified publicly that the existing policy has had no adverse effect on military readiness;

Whereas, on August 1, 2017, fifty-six retired generals and admirals released a statement affirming, “This proposed ban, if implemented, would cause significant disruptions, deprive the military of mission-critical talent, and compromise the integrity of transgender troops who would be forced to live a lie, as well as non-transgender peers who would be forced to choose between reporting their comrades or disobeying policy”;

Whereas at least 18 nations allow transgender people to serve openly and effectively in their armed forces;

Whereas transgender members of the Armed Forces have fought in defense of our freedoms with honor and distinction since our Nation's founding and have been bestowed with such commendations and awards as the Bronze Star and Purple Heart for their courage and sacrifices;

Whereas President Trump's ban on transgender members of the Armed Forces targets and stigmatizes a whole class of people; and

Whereas President Trump's ban on transgender members of the Armed Forces would affect all transgender members of the Armed Forces and force them to serve under a policy that stigmatizes and devalues their contributions to our Nation's defense: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) strongly opposes President Trump's discriminatory ban on transgender members of the Armed Forces;

(2) rejects the flawed scientific and medical claims upon which it is based; and

(3) strongly urges the Department of Defense to not reinstate President Trump's ban on transgender members of the Armed Forces and to maintain an inclusive policy allowing qualified transgender Americans to enlist and serve in the Armed Forces.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The resolution shall be debatable for 1 hour, equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Armed Services.

The gentleman from Washington (Mr. SMITH) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. THORNBERRY) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Washington.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H. Res. 124.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 5 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution is very straightforward. The Department of Defense, in cooperation with the White House, recently issued a policy, which will be implemented in a couple weeks, that would, effectively, bar transgender people from being able to serve in the military. We have this resolution to reject that policy. It is that simple and that straightforward.

We believe the policy that the Pentagon is putting forward is unfair, based on ignorance and bigotry, and will actually harm national security. We ask the House, in this resolution, to express the sense of Congress that we oppose this policy from the Pentagon.

Again, what this policy is primarily based on is ignorance and bias against the transgender community. The policies being implemented will make it virtually impossible for them to serve in the military. This is unfair discrimination, and it is also harmful to national security.

The Army last year failed to meet its recruitment quotas. It is a constant challenge in the military to find the people who have the character, the capability, and the ability to serve in our military.

We have the best military in the history of the world. We need high-qualified people to serve. To single out a particular group of people, to discriminate against them and say that they cannot serve, not because they can't meet the qualifications—it is not because they can't run fast enough or shoot straight enough or work hard enough—to be a member of the military, but because of something that literally has nothing to do with their ability to do their job, is bad for national security and is unfair discrimination.

We have heard a lot from people about how difficult it is for unit cohesion to have transgender people in the military, a whole bunch of arguments. The only problem with that is the military leaders who have actually been responsible for this—and I am just going to read one quote. There are many, and some of my colleagues will say it as well.

Army Chief of Staff Milley, who is about to become the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, last year said