

McCOLLUM's Keep Community Service Local Act.

At a time when Americans, particularly our young people, report feeling evermore disconnected from their government, programs like national service and civics education are crucial in helping to repair the fabric of our democracy.

Let's not let this decision stand. Let's see it turned around. Keep these offices open.

COMMENDING THE TOXIC 18 GROUP

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

Mr. MAST. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a great group who has been documenting something tragic going on in our community, the Toxic 18 group on the Treasure Coast of Florida.

The administrators and the members of Toxic 18 have dedicated countless volunteer hours to taking pictures, videos, and looking at the destruction which has included dead animals, sickness, destroyed environment, and businesses being forced to close across the Treasure Coast, all as a result of the harmful algal blooms going on in our area.

Their administrators, people who I have had the chance to get to know, like Cyndi Lenz, Jennie Pawlowsky, Cristina Maldonado, Kim Streiber, and Troy Brown have done an outstanding job, and because of their work, I am very optimistic for a great 2019 and future beyond that because of the work they have already done in 2018 and before.

VIOLENCE IN AMERICAN CHURCHES

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

Mr. LEWIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to express a sense of righteous indignation about the violence peaceful people of faith must now concern themselves with in places of worship all over America.

We have come to the point in this Nation where we can no longer attend church or go to the synagogue or the mosque without fearing the worst. How many lives must we lose before we decide there is not any room in America for hate?

Martin Luther King, Jr., once said: "Hate is too heavy a burden to bear." We must bring an end to wanton gun violence before it robs this Nation of its very soul.

The people in my district pray without ceasing for the victims of the Poway shooting.

As leaders of this Nation, let's commit ourselves today to bring this violence to an end here and now.

CONGRATULATING RUDY DORY

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

Mr. WALDEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Rudy Dory who is a great Oregonian and this year's recipient of the National Grocers Association's Clarence G. Adamy Great American Award.

Established in 1982, this award is presented to an individual or a company whose leadership in the food industry best exemplifies active and effective participation in government relations as a citizen and industry representative.

Rudy Dory is the executive chairman of Newport Avenue Market, which is an employee-owned, independent grocery store in Bend, Oregon, in my district, and I had the pleasure to get a full tour from Rudy of Newport Avenue Market in Bend just last August.

He has been in the grocery industry for 40 years. He has helped Newport Avenue Market through its migration from a traditional store to the award-winning, employee-owned, specialty grocery store it is today.

Rudy is a tireless advocate of the independent supermarket industry and advocates in support of a public policy agenda that benefits Main Street grocers throughout the Nation.

Local grocers like Rudy help job growth, support Oregon's producers, and help feed our communities.

So please join me in congratulating Rudy Dory on receiving this prestigious award, and working on behalf of not only Newport Avenue Market, but for all businesses and independent grocers across the country.

□ 1930

RECOGNIZING THE SOUTH MEDIA FIRE COMPANY

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

Ms. SCANLON. Mr. Speaker, in Pennsylvania, volunteer fire departments have long played a central role in the life of our towns and boroughs. In recent years, changing demographics and funding issues have seriously impacted the volunteer fire company tradition. However, it has also had one benefit of spurring recruitment of first responders from nontraditional quarters.

I want to take a minute to acknowledge the history made by two volunteers at the South Media Fire Company just last week. When an emergency call from a local middle school came in at 7:30 a.m. Wednesday morning, Ellen Yarborough, a schoolteacher, and Dora Giannakarios Preston, a local business woman, put their day jobs on hold to answer the call, unaware that they were making history. This was the first time in the 100-year history of the firehouse that an all-female crew had handled an emergency call.

To Ellen, Dora, the South Media Fire Company, and all of our volunteer firefighters, thank you for your service and for answering the call of duty to keep us safe.

GA-12 NATIONAL SCIENCE BOWL PARTICIPANTS

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

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, over this past weekend the 2019 National Science Bowl finals took place down the road in Chevy Chase, Maryland.

I am proud to rise here this evening to congratulate Stallings Island Middle School and Lakeside High School—both located in Georgia's 12th district—for their students' stellar performance in this year's competition.

The path to the finals is no easy task. With over 1,000 high schools and nearly 650 middle schools participating in the regional tournaments nationwide, these Georgia-12 students worked hard to advance to the finals and compete at the national level. The students' brilliance solving technical problems and answering questions about all branches of science and math is truly incredible.

I would like to thank and congratulate the educators, coaches, and especially the bright young students of Stallings Island Middle School and Lakeside High School who made this tremendous run possible.

Georgia-12 is certainly proud, and we look forward to cheering them on again next year.

RECOGNIZING CECIL SMITH OF SOUTH JERSEY

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

Mr. VAN DREW. Mr. Speaker, I am grateful for the opportunity to speak about an outstanding member of south Jersey.

Cecil Smith of Salem County has served south Jersey's community for many years as the editor of the South Jersey Times south edition, founder of The Partners of Salem County program, and most recently as executive director of the Salem County College Foundation. The Partners of Salem County program contributes to numerous local community and educational programs and has raised more than \$1 million in scholarship funds.

Mrs. Smith has also served on several boards for local organizations that serve and help our entire community. Her many achievements were recently recognized at the 18th Annual Educational Foundation Leadership Recognition and Scholarship Dinner.

Her community involvement over the years has benefited many, and for this south Jersey is honored to call Cecil Smith a very special member of our community.

CONGRATULATING CAITLIN LANTERMAN AND MADISON COLLINS

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

Mr. FULCHER. Mr. Speaker, most Americans watching these proceedings right now are watching them on C-SPAN.

C-SPAN is a public service funded by the cable industry which receives no taxpayer dollars. Every year C-SPAN holds a documentary contest for middle and high school students called StudentCam. This year students addressed the theme: What does it mean to be an American?

Today I am proud to announce that some of my young constituents, Caitlin Lanterman and Madison Collins from Mountain View High School, were chosen as winners. The winning videos can be viewed at studentcam.org.

On behalf of the people of Idaho, congratulations on winning this prize out of nearly 3,000 entries.

EXPANDING SOCIAL SECURITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2019, the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. LARSON) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, let me first, before we begin, given the tragedy that, once again, has visited our country over the weekend, pause and acknowledge—with Rabbi Lazowski from Connecticut in Washington, D.C., this evening and his son, Alan Lazowski, joining him at a Holocaust museum dedication, and after listening to the eloquence of SCOTT PETERS and our own JOHN LEWIS—how indeed saddened we are by these events.

As Mr. LEWIS said, we remain focused on ending and focusing on hoping and praying that these horrific events will stop, but I assure you they will not stop without action on behalf of the United States Congress.

Mr. Speaker, we are honored to rise this evening and discuss Social Security 2100. We are honored to be joined by the deputy chair of the committee, BILL PASCRELL from Paterson, New Jersey. We want to make sure that citizens all across this country understand the number of hearings that are going on in districts all across the country and here in the Nation's Capitol, because it is long overdue that we address the issue of not just protecting Social Security, but enhancing it.

Mr. Speaker, in fact, the last time that the United States Congress significantly addressed the issue of Social Security was in 1983. Tip O'Neill was then Speaker of the House, and Ronald Reagan was President. It does demonstrate that Democrats and Republicans can work together in the best in-

terests of the country, and there is no bill currently before the body that does that in a better way than Social Security 2100.

I say that because it is the only bill that has an actuarial report that verifies that it does everything that it says it will do: keep Social Security solvent, sustainably solvent beyond the 75-year requirement by law. But also, not just make it sustainably solvent, but enhance the program so that people all across this country can benefit from the Nation's leading insurance program.

Now, the point we always try to make and get across is something that is intuitively obvious to American citizens, but not often explained graphically, and that is this: that Social Security is not an entitlement. Mr. Speaker, you hear people speak of Social Security and say: we need entitlement reform.

Certainly, you are entitled to Social Security because you paid for it. This is what every American citizen understands from the first time they get a paycheck and they look at its stub, and it says: FICA. FICA stands for Federal Insurance Contribution.

Whose contribution?

Yours.

American citizens throughout their work life contribute into the program. They do so knowing that since 1940 they have been able to get a check in return for either their retirement or because of a disability or spousal or dependent coverage. That is why it is the most effective and unique governmental program paid for by American citizens through their FICA premiums that are taken from their paycheck weekly, biweekly, or monthly.

But what every American knows is that this is the insurance you have paid for, not an entitlement program that the government somehow just grants you.

So we come to Congress in this session, as we have in the past, proposing a bill, but one that we have already had four public hearings on. In those hearings, we have discussed why, in fact, it is necessary for us not to just protect and preserve Social Security, make sure that it is sustainably solvent for 75 years, but, in fact, enhance it, starting with the fact that the last time we strengthened the program was in 1983.

So to say that we are overdue is an understatement. We are overdue at a time when baby boomers are retiring at a record rate. In fact, Mr. Speaker, 10,000 baby boomers a day become eligible for Social Security. That, in and of itself, should require an actuarial adjustment, one that should have been indexed into the law in 1983 but was not.

So now it is incumbent upon the Congress. Citizens can't do this on their own. They make their premium payments every week, biweekly, or monthly, but it is up to Congress to make sure the program is actuarially sound.

So we proposed a bill that is not only actuarially sound beyond 75 years, but also one that is enhanced to make up for the lack of indexing and make sure that people now in their retirement can have a rational increase in their Social Security.

Nobody is getting wealthy on Social Security. Nobody is hoarding their Social Security money. They spend it weekly, biweekly, and monthly in their respective communities. It is an economic boost to every community and essential for the survival of many of our citizens.

We have opted to make sure that we enhance Social Security in the following four ways: number one, there is a modest, 2 percent across-the-board increase for everyone who is receiving Social Security and who will receive Social Security in the future.

Number two, we make sure that the new level of Social Security payments is now changed so that as long as you have paid in your quarters, you have put in your time, and paid your Social Security benefits, the new floor for Social Security will be 125 percent of what the Federal Government determines the poverty rate is at that time, therefore lifting so many people, especially women, and more directly especially women of color, in this country who have been the caregivers of our children and family members whether through birth or through sickness, and therefore have not been in the workforce as long as their male counterparts. We also know that while they were in the workforce, they were making 70 cents for every dollar their male counterpart was. So to raise people out of poverty so they can make their payments to maintain a lifestyle or quality of life that is just above the poverty level is the right thing to do.

The third thing we do is something that the AARP has long advocated, and that is to make sure that we have a COLA that actually reflects the cost that people incur when they are in retirement.

What are those costs?

Those costs happen to be utility bills—heating and cooling your home—the doctor visits, the prescription drugs, the nutrition, and the physical therapy. Those are the essential—along with food—elements that you need to exist. It ought to be factored into how COLAs are given. Currently a COLA is just given based on the consumer price index and an average which incorporates a multitude of expenses, and, frankly, oftentimes, as every senior in America will attest, they have gone without COLA payments at a time when the disparity of wealth is getting greater in this country of ours. So a COLA payment makes sense and is geared towards your actual expenses, something that we call CPI-E, E standing for the elderly and the expenses that they incur.

□ 1945

Lastly, we also do a fourth thing. We provide a tax break to seniors.