

Mr. Speaker, because we want to encourage people, and we want to not expose them to danger or intimidation—including from the most powerful person on Earth, the President of the United States—or retaliation. Yet we continue to hear: Tell us who the whistleblower is. Let us throw the whistleblower into the lion's den.

In fact, of course, what we do know is the whistleblower, the information that was brought forward, A, led to the release of funds to the Ukrainians just shortly thereafter and, in addition, has led to substantive testimony corroborating the information that the whistleblower either saw or heard.

If you see something, say something.

It is irresponsible, it is wrong, and, in fact, in almost every jurisdiction, there are criminal penalties for threatening a witness, for impeding justice.

So, Mr. Speaker, when people say, "Show me the whistleblower," what they are doing is not only trying to intimidate that whistleblower, they are trying to intimidate every other whistleblower who might deign to come forward because they saw something or heard something.

I would hope all of my colleagues would think to themselves: Why do we have a whistleblower statute?

I represent 62,000 Federal employees, and, very frankly, I want them to have the confidence to come forward if they see wrongdoing in the Federal Government, even if it is about the President of the United States, and even if the President of the United States wants to make an analogy to a capital offense—despicable—undermining the very essence of why the Congress of the United States enacted a whistleblower statute and the essence of why police departments all over the United States have anonymous tip lines and why almost every State has a statute which imposes a criminal penalty for the intimidation of witnesses.

We are a nation of laws, not of men. We are proud of that. But if we are to be a nation whose top leaders try to intimidate those who would come forward if they see something or hear something and they say something, then we will be a lesser nation, less focused on a nation of laws.

Mr. Speaker, I would hope that Members on both sides of the aisle, political pundits, commentators, and, yes, the President of the United States would cease and desist from trying to intimidate this whistleblower and all of those who may be whistleblowers.

The intent of that legislation, the intent of those protections, the intent of witness protection statutes and intimidation of witnesses is so that we will get at the truth and that our government of the people, by the people, and for the people will be more honest, will be more safe, will be more just.

TRACED ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from

North Carolina (Mr. BUDD) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BUDD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss an issue that has afflicted nearly every American, including me, and it is the influx of annoying and deceptive robocalls. These seemingly endless automated calls disrupt every part of our daily lives, constitute a serious form of harassment, and expose millions of Americans to dangerous financial scams.

A prime example of the insidious nature of these calls occurred last year in New York when scammers pretended to be from the Chinese consulate and demanded money from people with what they considered to be Chinese-sounding last names. As a result, 21 Chinese immigrants lost a total of \$2.5 million.

In another instance, scammers attempted to phish personal information by calling people and threatening them with fines unless they signed up for health insurance.

These incidences are financially devastating and are happening to far too many people across our country. If there is one thing Republicans and Democrats should be able to agree on is that Congress can no longer sit back and ignore this problem. Our efforts must be focused on adding teeth to the Federal Government's ability to detect and punish individuals and organizations that abuse automated dialing technology.

With that in mind, I am proud to be a cosponsor of the TRACED Act, introduced by my friend, DAVID KUSTOFF. This legislation expands the penalties and the timeframes under which the Federal Communications Commission can identify robocallers and pursue civil action. This is entirely bipartisan, and it passed the Senate, last May, 97-1.

Under the TRACED Act, the FCC will be able to impose fines of up to \$10,000 for each individual scam call. Currently, telemarketing scammers face a maximum fine of only \$1,500. I am confident that increasing the maximum penalty up to \$10,000 will deter many scammers by making the cost of getting caught simply too expensive.

To make these harsher penalties the norm and not the exception, the FCC needs to be given more time to find the perpetrators of illegal robocalls. If the TRACED Act becomes law, the period in which the source of a robocall can be investigated and found liable will be tripled from 1 year to 3 years.

This important provision will work in lockstep with the increased fines. The FCC has told Congress that extending the statute of limitations in this way would improve the Commission's enforcement efforts.

During my time in office, I have heard frustration from countless constituents on this issue. Robocalls frequently interrupt our daily lives, ringing our phones during important work-hours, and distracting us from time spent at home with our families.

The TRACED Act is an important bipartisan bill that is supported by attor-

neys general in all 50 States, along with FCC Chairman Ajit Pai.

As scammers adjust the way they perpetrate fraud on the American people, it seems like common sense that our laws should be updated to fight back. No matter which side of the aisle we find ourselves on, we should all be able to agree that it is time for these illegal robocalls to be stopped once and for all.

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HONORING THE LIFE OF THADDEUS SEYMOUR, SR.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Mrs. MURPHY) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MURPHY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Thaddeus Seymour, Sr., who passed away recently at the age of 91.

In the obituary that appeared in our local, hometown paper, the Orlando Sentinel, Thad was described by one of his many admirers as a community treasure, and I think that sums up his life and legacy perfectly.

Thad moved with his beloved wife, Polly, and their children to the Orlando area over 40 years ago when Thad was named the 12th president of Rollins College, where I had the privilege to teach before being elected to Congress.

Thad served for a dozen years as the president of Rollins, from 1978 to 1990, and although he had long left by the time I arrived, his name was spoken on campus with respect and affection.

Thad was recognized as a popular and effective leader of the institution, helping make this gem of a school shine even brighter.

One decision Thad made during his tenure may seem modest, but it was meaningful to people who know Rollins best. In the 1950s, one of Thad's predecessors established Fox Day. Each spring, as finals loomed and on a day considered too beautiful to sit in a classroom, the school's president would cancel classes and provide students with a surprise day off.

The tradition was ended during the Vietnam war, but Thad brought it back. As Thad would recall years later: "The world had grown so grim, I thought we needed to cheer ourselves up." It is a choice that underscores both Thad's love of life and his belief that, at core, a college should be a close-knit community where young men and women live together; learn together; and, in many cases, become lifelong friends. Because Fox Day helped foster a sense of community and shared experience, Thad believed it mattered.

Thad left Rollins in 1990, but he never left central Florida, and he never stopped caring about our community. In fact, he literally helped build it, co-founding a chapter of Habitat for Humanity in Winter Park and in Maitland.

There is a wonderful picture of Thad in the Orlando Sentinel obituary. He is helping construct a home for someone less fortunate. He is perched on a ladder. His shirt is splattered with paint. He has a broad smile on his face. That is how I will always remember Thad: happily helping, happily building.

May President Seymour rest in peace.

RECOGNIZING FORMER MISSISSIPPI SPEAKER BILLY MCCOY

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

Mr. KELLY of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the former speaker of the Mississippi House of Representatives, the Honorable Billy McCoy, who is pictured here.

Former Mississippi Speaker Billy McCoy passed away on November 12 after an incredible, lifelong career of public service.

Billy was directly responsible for revolutionizing the economy of Mississippi and bringing thousands of jobs to our great State. As speaker, Speaker McCoy championed the 1987 infrastructure plan that created four-lane highways throughout Mississippi. The four-lane highways brought industries and added more than 1,300 miles of highways to the State.

Billy was also dedicated to improving public education in Mississippi and giving every child a chance for success. His influence on the lives of numerous Mississippians will not be forgotten, but his honorable demeanor and commitment will be greatly missed.

I just think back to being at Jacinto, an ancient courthouse that predates the Civil War in Mississippi near Rienzi, where Speaker McCoy was from. Whether you are a Republican or a Democrat, when you got ready to run, you had better go pay homage to the great Speaker Billy McCoy, who did so much for Mississippi.

And I can still see him sitting on the front lawn in front of the trailer with the hay bales on it, where I would speak for my first political speech, and seeing Speaker McCoy out there, knowing that I would have gone by and gotten advice from him, even though we were on opposite political parties.

May Mr. Speaker rest in peace.

RECOGNIZING JUDGE SADIE HOLLAND

Mr. KELLY of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Judge Sadie Holland, another icon in history. And thank goodness she is still here with us. She is just retiring.

She is retiring from Lee County Justice Court as a judge, after 16 years of service in that capacity. She also has a history of being Lee County's first female justice court judge. She served, before that, as the Tupelo court administrator and mayor of Nettleton, a small community in Lee County.

Judge Holland's influence in the community has been so significant, Lee County proclaimed November 3 as Sadie Holland Day.

I also have to mention that one of her sons is retiring as a State representative of over 36 years, who I will recognize next, and her other is a supervisor in her home county of Lee County.

The Hollands are icons in Lee County, and I thank Judge Sadie Holland for her service.

RECOGNIZING STATE REPRESENTATIVE STEVE HOLLAND

Mr. KELLY of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize soon-to-be former—he is about to retire from the Mississippi House of Representatives—Representative Steve Holland.

Steve has served in the House of Representatives in the Mississippi legislature for 36 years. He was also a desk mate, I think, of former Speaker McCoy, and they were good friends.

Steve has represented the 16th District of Mississippi proudly, as he has represented all of the people of his district. He is a true Mississippian who prioritized legislation that would create a brighter future for Mississippi.

And, if you have never met Steve Holland, he is a character who is not large enough for this body to contain. What a gentleman. Always for the State of Mississippi and a true Mississippian at heart, but always with a quip and quick humor. He was always willing to never take himself too seriously, although all the matters that he achieved were very serious.

Steve Holland is an icon in Mississippi politics. I look forward to working with Steve in his retirement and thank him for his service.

IMPEACHMENT PROCESS

Mr. KELLY of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I just want to talk a little bit about this impeachment process, or whatever you want to call it that we have going on.

The American people deserve the facts—and just the facts—not supposition from witnesses who have second- and third- and fourth- and fifth-hand information.

They have a right to not have lawyers and alleged whistleblowers, who the lawyer has—the coup started in 2017 as soon as our President took office, or impeachment next.

Mr. Speaker, the people of America deserve the facts. They don't deserve secret proceedings, leaks, misinformation, and disinformation.

And I just want to make a small point. A whistleblower is not afforded anonymity by the statute. They are afforded the protection from firing or retaliation, not anonymity. It is not a hotline or an anonymous tip line.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that the misinformation and disinformation stop. Just the facts.

RISING PRESCRIPTION DRUG COSTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from

Connecticut (Mr. COURTNEY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, last Friday, November 8, the Department of Health and Human Services announced that the new Medicare part B premiums starting in January 2020 will increase by \$9.10 a month, a 6.7 percent increase over last year.

In dollars and cents, this means that premiums will go to \$144.60 a month, up from \$135 a month. As seniors know all too well, that \$144 will be deducted automatically from their Social Security checks, which is a bitter pill given the fact that Social Security itself is slated only to rise by 1.6 percent starting January 1.

Very simply, that \$9-a-month increase for millions of seniors will chew up a large part of any COLA that they can possibly receive starting in January.

So, Mr. Speaker, I just want to footstop that point about the fact that the Social Security system's COLA, which is tied to general inflation in the economy, is going up 1.6 percent; whereas, the Medicare part B premium, which is tied to healthcare costs, is going up 6.7 percent.

This is something that we know is endemic throughout the healthcare system. In the State of Connecticut, the Department of Insurance increased commercial insurance rates, that went up again above inflation, and identified the fact that prescription drug cost was the primary cost driver.

The Center for Medicare Services last Friday, when they announced the Medicare part B premiums, also confirmed the fact that it is prescription drug costs that are driving that 6.7 percent increase.

The increase in prescription drug costs that Medicare paid from 2018 to 2019 was 10 percent, and they are projecting that it is going to go to 10.10 percent in 2020; thus, we have a \$9 increase coming up in terms of people's premiums.

This is not going to come as a great surprise to the American people. If you go back to last year's election in 2018, the exit polls showed that the number one issue that people cared about and were concerned about and wanted Congress to act on was healthcare costs—more specifically, prescription drug costs.

That was an election that had the largest voter turnout since 1914 in a midterm election and elected a new majority with a 10-million-vote plurality.

So, that is the context that we are in right now, at a moment where this Congress, and particularly the House of Representatives, is poised to take up H.R. 3, which is the Lower Drug Costs Now Act. And in the midst of all the media focus on impeachment, it is important to know that the committees that have cognizance over healthcare—the Ways and Means Committee, the Energy and Commerce Committee, and the Education and Labor Committee,