

I join all Arkansans in congratulating Michael on this achievement and look forward to seeing more of his work throughout Little Rock in the years to come.

HONORING THE NURSES OF PARKLAND HEALTH & HOSPITAL SYSTEM IN DALLAS, TEXAS

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 19, 2020

Ms. JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor the nurses of Parkland Health & Hospital System in Dallas, Texas, for their commitment to serving their patients and our community during this novel coronavirus pandemic.

Madam Speaker, the sacrifices that the nurses fighting COVID-19 have been immense. At Parkland Memorial Hospital, over 300 medical staffers are caring for coronavirus patients in the Tactical Care Unit. One of these nurses has moved into an RV and has not seen her 7-month-old daughter in more than five weeks. Another has only had contact with her 2-year-old when she wore an N95 mask and gloves for a birthday hug. A third, who lives alone, has volunteered for every shift she can get to nurse the most critically ill COVID-19 victims.

As the first registered nurse elected to Congress, I am deeply aware of the sacrifices and expertise that medical professionals bring to their work, and I honor their selfless, dedicated service during this public health crisis. What our society is asking of them, the support staff, and all their families is immense, and we must endeavor to provide absolutely every possible resource for their work. This means that the current nationwide struggles to acquire personal protective equipment and testing materials are unacceptable, and I am committed to pushing for all our essential medical professionals to be properly equipped to provide the care our communities need and depend on at this time.

Madam Speaker, the contributions of the medical professionals serving in the city of Dallas, state of Texas, these United States, and across the globe are truly immeasurable. Therefore, on behalf of the U.S. House of Representatives and Texas' 30th Congressional District, I ask that my colleagues join me in recognizing and honoring the sacrifices and commitment of these essential medical staffers during this unprecedented novel coronavirus pandemic."

HEALTH AND ECONOMIC RECOVERY OMNIBUS EMERGENCY SOLUTIONS ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. SUZANNE BONAMICI

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 15, 2020

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 6800, the Health and Economic Recovery Omnibus Emergency Solutions (HEROES) Act. Our nation is experiencing unprecedented job loss as our communities deal

with a global health pandemic that is responsible for the deaths of more than 85,000 individuals in our country in just the past few months. We cannot wait another day, another week, or another month to take action. Our communities need help now and they are looking to Congress to lead. I'm grateful for the leadership of the House of Representatives, Speaker PELOSI, and our committee chairs and staff for working with us to put together an ambitious bill that will send needed help to individuals and families in the form of an additional direct stimulus payment; to our state and local governments, which are experiencing extreme budget shortfalls; and to our small businesses that are the backbone of our local economies and the heart of our communities. Although I am disappointed that the bill does not include several provisions including ongoing payments for individuals and families, additional funding to support child care, and a strong investment in our workforce systems, among other things, I will support this step forward.

We heard loud and clear from our state and local governments—they need more support to keep our communities safe. This bill includes \$915 billion in emergency funding to state and local governments, funding that can be used to help prevent teacher job loss and funding cuts to education and, importantly, the bill expands the use of funds to cover lost, delayed, or decreased revenue from the public health emergency. The HEROES Act also includes \$90 billion for the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund that can be used to provide emergency support to students—including Dreamers, who were previously excluded from receiving emergency grants—schools, and institutions of higher education. These funds are critical to supporting public colleges and universities, addressing student mental health needs, and purchasing technology and mobile hotspots to support distance learning. Under this proposal, my home state of Oregon would receive approximately \$980 million.

During this public health crisis, no one should have to choose between affording basic needs or making payments on their student loans. The CARES Act suspended involuntary collection like wage garnishment or reduction of Social Security payments for delinquent federally-owned student loans. The HEROES Act follows my recommendation to extend these protections to all borrowers, including those who have privately held student loans.

Building on my earlier efforts to make sure K12 students can access school meals during school closures, this legislation funds school meal and child and adult care food programs with emergency relief that will help schools continue to meet the needs of children and their families. This bill will further help families access nutritious meals by increasing the SNAP benefit level by 15 percent.

I am grateful that this bill provides \$7 billion for child care, but this is far from the investment that is needed to support families, providers, and the child care workforce at this critical time. I will continue to fight for significant, additional funding in future relief packages. If child care is not available and affordable, families will not be able to return to work. Additionally, I will continue to fight for additional funding for the Community Services Block Grant program to support the vital anti-poverty work of the more than 1,000 Community Action agencies across this country.

We cannot overcome this virus until we drastically increase our public health efforts. The HEROES Act provides crucial funding to conduct national testing, implement a contact tracing and surveillance strategy, and allow all Americans to seek treatment for COVID-19 without worrying about the cost. The bill also increases support for our frontline health care providers, invests in public health infrastructure, and expands access to health coverage whether employer-provided, publicly supported, or on the open market. The HEROES Act also provides key resources to older adults and people with disabilities. The bill provides an additional \$85 million in funding for Older Americans Act (OAA) programs that were reauthorized earlier this year by legislation I was proud to lead. This means more resources for supportive services, nutrition programs, assistive technology, and elder rights protection activities.

The direct payments to individuals in the CARES Act was an important first step, but I know that too many people in Northwest Oregon and across the country need more support during this health and economic crisis. Although this bill does not provide at least \$2,000 per month for individuals through the duration of the pandemic, which I advocated for, it does provide a second stimulus payment of \$1,200 to most individuals and, importantly, it retroactively fixes a problem in CARES and will now extend direct payments to individuals filing with Individual Taxpayer Identification Numbers.

More than 396,000 Oregonians have filed for unemployment insurance in the last two months. I know how important this support is during the pandemic, and I'm working in Congress to strengthen and expedite access to these benefits. The HEROES Act expands the additional \$600 in federal benefits added to every weekly unemployment compensation check through January 2021, and it extends eligibility for self-employed individuals, gig economy workers, and independent contractors. This vital economic support must continue until workers can safely get back on the job. Also it is truly unfortunate that, despite the merits of a more comprehensive approach, the HEROES Act does not include the Paycheck Guarantee Act, legislation spearheaded by Congresswoman PRAMILA JAYAPAL. The Paycheck Guarantee Act would allow most individuals to stay on payroll during this national emergency and keep their benefits, and it would also significantly reduce the number of people filing for Unemployment Insurance. I will continue to advocate for creative approaches like the Paycheck Guarantee Act that maximize the benefits to workers and the economy while also reducing bureaucracy.

We need to do more to protect workers from hazardous conditions on the job, and I will keep fighting for workplace protections and personal protective equipment for all workers during the COVID-19 pandemic. I am an original cosponsor of the COVID-19 Every Worker Protection Act, and I'm pleased that it is included in the HEROES Act with additional funding for the Occupational Safety and Health Administration. Protecting essential workers during the pandemic is one of my top priorities. I have also advocated for premium pay for essential workers to recognize their role in sustaining our communities and the sacrifices they are making during the pandemic. The HEROES Act will provide frontline

workers who are in contact with patients, the public, or co-workers—including grocery store workers, health care workers, and first responders—with an additional \$13 per hour in premium pay on top of regular wages, up to \$10,000.

As more communities start to lift stay-at-home orders, all workers need access to paid family, medical, and sick leave benefits. The HEROES Act will help expand access to emergency paid sick leave and emergency paid family and medical leave by eliminating exemptions for health care workers, first responders, workers at businesses with fewer than 50 employees, and workers at businesses with 500 or more employees. And I will keep working with my colleagues to secure permanent paid sick leave and paid family and medical leave for all workers.

I started working at Legal Aid while I attended community college, and learned there that people do not struggle by choice. With our national economy upended, consumers face even greater financial hardships and predatory actors continue to take advantage of people facing this crisis. We should have implemented the strengthened consumer protections in the HEROES Act at the beginning of this crisis, and I have continued calls for their passage. I'm glad that the HEROES Act suspends consumer debt collection during the COVID-19 emergency and for 120 days after the end of the national emergency to make sure consumers can fully recover. I worked with the Congressional Progressive Caucus to make debt collection suspension a priority in relief legislation.

We know that Oregonians are struggling through no fault of their own, and they should not be further harmed financially. Negative credit reporting will be suspended under the HEROES Act for the duration of this crisis and any future national emergencies. This is an essential step to safeguard consumers most affected by the current outbreak. I have also continued to call for medical debt collection and credit reporting suspensions—needed reforms to prevent a hospital visit from destroying the credit of consumers. I am glad to see that medical debt related to coronavirus treatments will not result in adverse credit information; however, we must give consumers the flexibility to settle their medical debt before it shows up on a credit report and we must continue to fight so everyone can access affordable health care.

The HEROES Act also clarifies the intent of the CARES Act by preventing the garnishment, levy, or seizing of direct payment for private debts. I have been a vocal advocate for stopping unfair garnishment and protecting payments like Social Security and other essential earned benefits.

Oregon has strong laws to prevent unfair price hikes during crises like the current pandemic. I am continuing to work with Oregon Attorney General Ellen Rosenblum on ways to expand Oregon's protections to all Americans. It's beneficial that the HEROES Act includes provisions to stop unconscionably excessive prices on necessities like food, hygiene products, personal protective equipment, and health services.

Workforce boards, labor unions, community colleges, community-based organizations, small businesses, and other stakeholders are training health care, direct care, and front-line workers, but they are in desperate need of

more resources. I am pleased that the HEROES Act includes \$2.5 billion for adult education, youth training, dislocated worker grants, migrant and seasonal farmworker programs, and public health worker recruitment and training as authorized in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, but this funding is insufficient to meet the scale of the crisis at hand. For comparison, the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act provided more than \$7.7 billion in workforce funding. To respond to the economic consequences of the coronavirus pandemic, we need at least \$15.1 billion in supplemental federal investments to help prevent further layoffs and provide dislocated workers and employers with access to employment services like training, career navigation, and supportive services. I will keep working with my colleagues on the Education and Labor Committee to advance the Re-launching America's Workforce Act because the historic unemployment levels over the last two months require an equally historic response to support workers.

No one should be forced to choose between paying their bills and paying for food, but as Oregonians face the ongoing economic consequences of COVID-19, this is becoming a reality for too many working families. This bill includes \$175 billion to assist renters and homeowners make monthly rent, mortgage and utility payments, and other housing-related costs. The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) is an important wraparound support that helps low-income families pay for heating and cooling bills. The HEROES Act includes another \$1.5 billion in supplemental funding for LIHEAP, but many more households will need and likely qualify for assistance in the coming weeks and months. Additionally, as individuals comply with stay-at-home orders across the country during the pandemic, they will likely be using more electricity and heat or air conditioning to keep their homes habitable. As we work to craft the next response package, I will keep fighting for more funding for LIHEAP to provide tangible assistance to families who are struggling to pay their bills. I also advocated for assistance similar to LIHEAP that would help households economically affected by COVID-19 with drinking water and wastewater services during this national emergency. The HEROES Act includes an additional \$1.5 billion for this support.

The success of our economic recovery will depend on the success of our small businesses. The Paycheck Protection Program was a good first lifeline for many, but many business owners are concerned about artificial timelines and a lack of flexibility in the program. I'm glad that the HEROES Act will extend the coverage period to the end of 2020 and give businesses additional flexibility while still adhering to local stay-at-home orders that may not allow them to fully open and resume operating for some time to come. The bill would also expand PPP eligibility to additional nonprofit organizations of all types and sizes, as well as provide an additional \$10 billion in economic injury disaster grants (EIDL) through the Small Business Administration.

Fisheries are an important part of our economy in Northwest Oregon, and I know that our coastal communities need more assistance to get through these challenging times. The HEROES Act provides an additional \$100 million in disaster funding, and I will keep working to

secure more direct assistance for fisheries and the domestic seafood supply chain. Northwest Oregon is known for its prestigious specialty crops, and our farmers have been struggling to make ends meet during the pandemic. The HEROES Act will also support our specialty crop farmers by providing \$100 million for specialty crop grants and \$50 million for support for local farmers markets and other direct to consumer markets.

This bill addresses one of the key shortcomings of previous legislative efforts; the exclusion of individuals from direct economic relief because of their immigration status. The HEROES Act retroactively extends direct payments to mixed-status families and immigrants who file taxes using ITINs, and it expands eligibility for other economic support. It removes barriers to testing, treatment, vaccines, and other health care based solely on immigration status and automatically extends work permits for individuals with DACA or TPS. The bill offers protections from ICE removal and employment authorization for individuals in critical industries, including agricultural workers and meatpackers. It also requires ICE to review its detention policies and find alternatives for individuals not subject to mandatory detention.

Importantly, the HEROES Act strengthens our democratic institutions with new resources to conduct secure, reliable elections using vote-by-mail. Oregonians have used this trusted method of voting for more than twenty years, and it should be implemented nationwide as a simple and safe solution that will increase access while allowing voters to maintain physical distancing measures.

We must act quickly and decisively to curb the spread of COVID-19 and create conditions that will allow us to begin our recovery, but we must also act boldly so our response is sufficient to prevent a widespread resurgence of the virus. We must also not leave behind any segment of our society as we work to repair the immense and harmful economic damage that we see across Oregon and the country. We are all safer and healthier when everyone in our communities is safer and healthier. I commend House leadership for putting forward a proposal that responsibly addresses the desperate need we are currently facing while also acknowledging the potentially disastrous costs of doing too little. I urge all my colleagues to support our nurses, first responders, grocery workers, and all frontline heroes by supporting this legislation.

REMEMBERING THE LIFE OF
JENNIE L. LANDOLFI

HON. TIM RYAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 19, 2020

Mr. RYAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Jennie L. Landolfi, 65, of Niles, Ohio, who passed away Friday, May 15, 2020, after a long and courageous battle with Multiple Sclerosis.

Jennie was born April 19, 1955, in Niles, the daughter of Gregory and Antonette "Toni" Landolfi.

Jennie was a 1973 graduate of John F. Kennedy High School, attended Kent State University, graduated from the Trumbull Memorial Hospital School of Nursing, and received a master's degree in adult health from