

The GAO found that, on average, just 1 out of every 10 children who are eligible for Federal childcare subsidies actually received them. Moreover, 1 in 10 parents have reported being demoted, transferred, or fired due to childcare problems.

Overall, inadequate childcare costs our economy nearly \$60 billion, annually. Meanwhile, we are leaving money on the table. For every dollar invested in quality early childhood programs, we get a \$7 return on our investment.

As challenging as it has been over the years for parents to find affordable childcare, COVID has massively compounded the problem. It has demanded even more of our childcare workforce, while stretching budgets to the absolute limit.

In the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, some childcare centers have had to turn parents away in order to make the necessary public health accommodations, such as reducing class size. A childcare center in the city of Lawrence went from serving 715 children pre-COVID to 360, a nearly 50 percent reduction. What is more, 97 percent of the households with children in that program were eligible for subsidies.

What is a parent to do when they can't afford to miss work but also has no childcare support?

It is long past time for America to assist them by investing in reliable, affordable, high-quality childcare.

Each day we hear praise for our essential workers, and they deserve every word of it. They have been keeping us safe for months while risking their own lives. It is obvious that thank-yous will no longer cut it. The least we can do is guarantee that they aren't left penniless due to the cost of childcare.

If we are going to show our commitment to workers and to families, the Child Care Is Essential Act should advance through the upper Chamber without delay.

HONORING ANITA MONOIAN

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

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the career of Anita Monoian, the president and CEO of Yakima Neighborhood Health Services, who announced her retirement after 41 years of tireless service and advocacy.

At a time when community health is of the utmost importance, it is a privilege to honor an individual who has spent her life's work advocating for the care and well-being of the people of Yakima Valley.

Anita describes her career's work as a labor of love. With that labor, Anita expanded the scope of Yakima Neighborhood Health Services from a single clinic to 10 clinics across the Yakima Valley, reaching 92,000 patients, annually.

Anita's voice has influenced State and Federal healthcare policy through

her work on the board of the National Association of Community Health Centers and the Washington Association of Community and Migrant Health Centers.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to recognize Anita's legacy of improving healthcare in central Washington, and I urge my colleagues to join in me in congratulating her on an impactful career of service.

RECOGNIZING DR. JAMES IRWIN

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the life of one of central Washington's American heroes, James Irwin.

Dr. James Irwin served as chief of surgery at the U.S. Navy Hospital in Oak Harbor, Washington. Following his service, Dr. Irwin treated patients in north central Washington for 13 years before opening a medical practice in Moses Lake. He was named chief medical officer of Samaritan Healthcare and was an original member of the Moses Lake Medical Team.

He and his wife, Frances, were active members in their church and spent many years on medical missions across Africa, where he provided surgical services and shared his knowledge with local doctors.

At age 62, Dr. Irwin, once again, answered his country's call. He deployed to Iraq as a naval surgeon before retiring as a captain in 2004 with over 40 years of military service.

In central Washington, Dr. Irwin was known for his kind attitude toward the patients he cared for. To his fellow brothers in arms, he was known as a hero. He passed away on June 30, but he has left a lasting legacy of providing care wherever it was needed.

Mr. Speaker, my prayers go out to his family and loved ones, and I urge my colleagues to join me in honoring Dr. Irwin's life and service to our country.

REMEMBERING BRAD FISHER OF KENNEWICK, WASHINGTON

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, Brad Fisher of Kennewick was a friend, a businessman, and a passionate advocate for the Tri-Cities community.

A devoted husband, father, grandfather, and dedicated community leader, Brad found endless ways to serve others. Over the years, he served as a Rotarian, a city council member, the mayor of Kennewick, and a member of numerous community service boards.

One of Brad's many contributions to his community was his role as a fierce champion of local governance. He helped spearhead the reconveyance effort in the Tri-Cities to return thousands of acres of river shore land from the Federal Government and placed it back into the hands of the local community. His work is not yet complete, but I look forward to continuing his advocacy in accomplishing this effort to improve our community.

Mr. Speaker, Brad Fisher is an example of the engaged and selfless citizenship that we should all strive to emulate. May his family and our commu-

nity continue to be blessed by his memory, and may he rest in peace.

□ 0930

INTRODUCING THE BLUE PACIFIC ACT

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

Mr. CASE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 7797, the Boosting Long-Term U.S. Engagement in the Pacific Act, also known as the BLUE Pacific Act.

I am proud to have introduced this bill, together with my colleagues, Congressmen AMI BERA, TED YOHO, BRAD SHERMAN, and DON YOUNG, as well as other members of our Congressional Pacific Islands Caucus.

Scattered across the vast waters of the Pacific, from Hawaii to Rapa Nui to Palau, and New Caledonia, are countless isles and atolls that constitute what we know as the Pacific Islands and their subregions of Melanesia, Micronesia, and Polynesia. The collective land and maritime exclusive economic zones of the Pacific Islands cover more of the Earth's surface than the land areas of China and Russia combined. These islands are home to diverse and dynamic cultures and people on the front lines of climate change and facing significant challenges to long-term sustainable development.

The United States is not some remote power in this integral part of our world. For two centuries plus, we have been, and today we are, a Pacific nation. We have jurisdictions of our own among the family of Pacific Islands, including my home State of Hawaii. We have longstanding ties with all of the Pacific Islands, be they independent nations, countries in free association, or territories of our friends and allies.

Countless Americans died to liberate our Pacific neighbors in storied battles, including Tarawa, Peleliu, Guadalcanal, and more, during the Second World War.

In my own district is the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific, the final resting place of so many of these warriors. Our foreign policy in the Pacific Islands is driven by this deep historical relationship and the shared interests and values built by decades of consistent but quiet engagement.

Over the past 20 years alone, the United States has provided over \$5 billion in assistance for the region. In just the past decade, multiple administrations and Congresses have heightened our engagement in the Pacific Islands as we have focused our attention increasingly in the Indo-Pacific region.

Reflecting this renewed attention to the Pacific Islands, last year I joined several of my colleagues in cofounding our first-ever, bipartisan Congressional Pacific Islands Caucus. We are dedicated to promoting greater understanding of this region and advocating for a sound United States foreign policy in the Pacific Islands that advances our shared interests and values.

Our BLUE Pacific Act establishes a comprehensive, long-term framework for United States foreign policy in the Pacific Islands, focusing on three essential pillars:

Security, development, and shared values.

Our legislation would expand diplomatic and development presence; increase maritime security cooperation and assistance; deepen and diversify trade; support regional economic and social development in areas like public health and education; invest in climate adaptation and climate resilient infrastructure; coordinate with existing regional institutions and like-minded allies and partners; promote shared values like press freedom and gender equality; and strengthen people-to-people relationships and civil society. It would back up our commitment by authorizing \$1 billion in assistance programs for the region for each of the next five fiscal years, more than triple current levels of assistance.

In naming this bill, we not only pay tribute to the concept of the “Blue Pacific” embraced by leaders of the Pacific Islands Forum themselves as a shared identity and platform for collective action, but also intend for our efforts to be informed by and coordinated with the work of existing regional institutions and frameworks. This legislation would also integrate these programs with those of our like-minded allies and partners, including Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Taiwan, and more.

I have no doubt that the introduction and enactment of the BLUE Pacific Act will be welcomed by our partners and allies in the Pacific Islands.

In uncertain times, this legislation sends a clear and powerful statement of what our foreign policy seeks to achieve—a regional order, built on mutual assistance and benefit, free of coercion, and fully respectful of the sovereignty of all nations. We seek to empower the countries and people of the region to determine the course of their own destinies. As a Pacific nation, we hope to share in that future alongside our Pacific Islands neighbors.

The BLUE Pacific Act is the first step in that direction. I encourage my colleagues to join me in cosponsoring the BLUE Pacific Act and urge swift consideration of this critical legislation.

CONGRATULATING EDDIE DRILLING

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

Mr. HILL of Arkansas. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize my longtime friend, Eddie Drilling, who recently announced that he will be retiring later this year after a 41-year career with AT&T.

Eddie currently serves as the senior vice president for External and Regulatory Affairs at AT&T, where he leads the national regulatory organization.

His ties to Arkansas remain strong. He currently serves the University of Arkansas Board of Advisors, the Sam Walton College of Business Dean's Executive Advisory Board, and the Razorback Foundation Board.

Eddie has been a leader in Arkansas for four decades, and a member and mentor of many organizations. He received the Pinnacle Award from the Little Rock Regional Chamber of Commerce, the highest award our chamber gives for service to the community. He also received the Lifetime of Service Award from the city of Little Rock.

Mr. Speaker, I join all Arkansans in congratulating Eddie Drilling.

RECOGNIZING KEN REEVES ON HIS RETIREMENT FROM THE GAME AND FISH COMMISSION

Mr. HILL of Arkansas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Ken Reeves' outstanding contributions to conservation in Arkansas and his dedication at keeping Arkansas the “Natural State.” Ken served on the Game and Fish Commission as chairman for 5 years.

He grew up in Harrison, Arkansas, where he attended Harrison High School and went to the University of Arkansas School of Law. Ken's love of fishing and passion for conserving wildlife from a young age made him an easy and successful appointment to the commission.

Ken has demonstrated his passion for making a positive change as the chairman of the commission. He is leaving behind a legacy of improved outdoor services that will be enjoyed for generations to come.

My congratulations to Ken Reeves.

JERRY EVANS—OUTSTANDING COACH OF THE YEAR

Mr. HILL of Arkansas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Jerry Evans for being named one of Arkansas' Outstanding Coaches of the Year.

This year, Coach Evans led the Searcy High School Girls Wrestling Team to victory as the girls Arkansas State champions, also picking up two individual championships on the team.

In 2019, he was the 5A Wrestling Coach of the Year for the Arkansas Wrestling Coaches Association, and was chosen by the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette as the All Arkansas Preps Wrestling Coach of the Year, and named the Arkansas High School Coaches Association Wrestling Coach of the Year through the Arkansas Activities Association.

Coach Evans received his master's in kinesiology at Harding University in Searcy, graduating as the first member of his immediate family to earn a college degree. In an interview with the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Coach Evans said, “I knew I wanted to be a coach ever since I was in 8th grade. I knew I wanted to be in education and become a teacher.”

Mr. Speaker, I thank Coach Evans for his commitment to his students and his leadership as their coach.

GUY-PERKINS PTA PURCHASING SCHOOL SUPPLIES

Mr. HILL of Arkansas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Parent

Teacher Association at the Guy-Perkins School District for once again providing students with school supplies for the upcoming academic year. All students in grades K–12 will have school supplies provided to them, regardless of whether students have chosen on-campus instruction or distance learning for this fall.

As parents, teachers, students and educators begin a uniquely challenging school year, the PTA's long tradition will help parents with back-to-school costs and ensure that our teachers do not have to purchase their own supplies.

According to Betty Vickers, Guy-Perkins PTA's secretary and treasurer, the initiative helps boost the community's economy because all the supplies are purchased locally. I am happy this wonderful tradition has continued into the 2020–2021 school year, especially during these extraordinary times where educating our kids presents unique challenges.

JENNIFER CARNAHAN RECEIVES SERVICE AWARD

Mr. HILL of Arkansas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Jennifer Carnahan as CHI St. Vincent's recipient of the 2019 Sister Teresa Joseph Babcock Service Excellence Award.

Jennifer was born in Dumas, Arkansas, and received her nursing degree from the University of Houston before attending the Academy of Health Care Professionals for surgical technology.

Jennifer has been serving in the medical field since she was 19 years old, starting in the ER, and she currently works in neurosurgery. Sister Teresa Joseph worked at CHI St. Vincent for nearly 30 years, exemplifying St. Vincent's core values of reverence, integrity, compassion, and excellence. Jennifer currently works in the neurology area in the North Campus.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate Jennifer Carnahan.

FARMERS FEEDING UTAH

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

Mr. MCADAMS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize some incredible things that have happened in my State.

In Utah, COVID-19 has hit families and the food-buying public very hard. Many supply chain elements have closed, leaving farmers unable to sell their Utah-grown products.

But Utah farmers are passionate about feeding people, so the Utah Farm Bureau launched “Farmers Feeding Utah.”

Donations to the nonprofit campaign went to farmers to purchase their products, and the Utah Farm Bureau handled processing costs and partnered with hunger relief organizations to get the food directly to needy families.

Since May, they have received more than \$300,000 in donations that allow