

Mr. PALAZZO. Mr. Speaker, 2 years ago this Friday, the Deepwater Horizon explosion took the lives of 11 Americans, including four Mississippians, and caused an oil spill of epic proportions. For 86 days, millions of barrels of oil gushed into the waters of the Gulf of Mexico, washed up on gulf coast beaches, and threatened the ecosystems and the economic stability of an entire region of the country.

The images of oil gushing into the Gulf of Mexico, wildlife coated in crude, and tar balls washing up on beaches have long vanished from the national media spotlight, but the spill left lasting effects on the lives of gulf coast residents and businesses.

I ask my colleagues to take a moment this week to pause to remember the lives lost and the millions affected by this tragedy. I urge them to show their support once more to all those affected by the single largest manmade disaster in our history by voting “yes” for today’s bill.

Restoring and replenishing the gulf coast is more than just a responsible decision; it’s the right thing to do.

**HONORING SERGEANT DENNIS WEICHEL**

(Mr. CICILLINE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Sergeant Dennis Weichel, Jr., of the Rhode Island National Guard. Last month, while serving our country in Afghanistan, Sergeant Weichel saved a young Afghan child who had crawled underneath a moving armored vehicle in order to collect a brass shell casing. Responding quickly, Sergeant Weichel moved the child to safety, even though doing so placed him in the path of the same armored vehicle and took his life. Sergeant Weichel is an American hero who gave his life to protect a child he did not even know.

Rhode Islanders are often reminded that we come from the smallest State in the Union, but today, Sergeant Dennis Weichel’s actions have touched our entire Nation and are an example of the sacrifices made every day by our brave men and women in uniform.

My thoughts and prayers go out to his mother, Linda; his father Dennis, Sr.; his fiancée, Ashley; and his three children.

**THE SMALL BUSINESS TAX CUT ACT**

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

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. I rise today in strong support of H.R. 9, the Small Business Tax Cut Act.

In my home State of Georgia, there are more than 150,000 small businesses which employ over 1.5 million people. These are the folks that tell me every

day when I come home that a tax break would allow them to hire more employees. Consider this: between 2005 and 2008, more than 130,000 new jobs were created by small businesses in Georgia. But under the current administration, in just 1 short year, Georgia’s small businesses have had to let go nearly all of those jobs. That’s a crushing 120,000 people out of work because of the Obama administration’s policies.

Democrats somehow think that they can solve our unemployment crisis by raising taxes. But job creators know that the only way that they can put people back to work is if they have more money to hire folks. That’s why I support H.R. 9 and also why I introduced my JOBS Act, H.R. 660, which would lower taxes for everybody. I urge my colleagues to support both bills.

**REMOVING THE PEOPLE’S MUJAHEDIN ORGANIZATION OF IRAN FROM THE FOREIGN TERRORIST ORGANIZATION LIST**

(Mr. SIREs asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. SIREs. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge that the MEK be removed from the U.S. Department of State’s list of Foreign Terrorist Organizations. Since its listing in 1997, the MEK has denounced violence and provided valuable intelligence on the Iranian regime, yet they remain on our terrorist list.

Even important allies acknowledge that the MEK no longer poses a terrorist threat. In 2009, the United Kingdom and the European Union removed the group from their lists. The unjust listing has been considered by the U.S. courts, but the Department of State continues to drag its feet regarding the delisting.

In July 2010, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit criticized the Department of State’s designation of the MEK as a terrorist organization since the group’s due process rights had been violated, and the Department of State has yet to provide specific information demonstrating why the group is a terrorist threat today.

The battle over delisting the MEK has gone on far too long with far too little evidence. I urge my colleagues to follow me in calling for the immediate delisting of the MEK by the Department of State.

**STUDENT LOAN DEBT**

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

Ms. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, last week, one of our colleagues who represents a portion of my alma mater, Wake Forest University, stated that she has “little tolerance” for those who graduate with high student loan debt, based on her personal experience of working her way through school.

I want to share my personal experience. I come from a military family of six children. My father served nearly 30 years. My parents, like many across this country, couldn’t afford to pay for all of my college education. But they knew that a college education was our way to achieve the American Dream. And so I had to take out student loans in addition to scholarships and work. I took out nearly \$100,000 in student loans from undergraduate school to graduate school, and I borrowed that. I only paid off my last student loan payment 1 month before my primary election in 2008. I was struggling as a single mother and meeting my other responsibilities, but I was thrilled when I made that last payment.

Contrary to what’s been said about those who take out student loans to finance their education, I’m glad the Federal Government now directly issues all student loans rather than through private banks.

Comments that disparage college students and would deprive middle class families like mine to live their American Dream are just out of touch with what’s happening across this country and minimize the lengths to which Americans seek higher education to better themselves and their families.

The rungs of the ladders of opportunity must be stable and available to all of us—the Federal student loan program, Pell Grants, work study, private scholarships, and, yes, work all provide the package that so many of our students need for college success.

**THE REPUBLICAN BUDGET AND WOMEN’S HEALTH**

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

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Let’s talk about who wins and loses in the Ryan Republican budget. If you’re a millionaire hedge fund manager, this budget is made for you. You get an average tax cut—cut—of \$394,000. If you’re a senior citizen woman living on a median income of \$22,000, sorry, you’re out of luck.

The Republican budget repeals ObamaCare so you pay more for prescription drugs and preventive services. It takes away your Medicare guarantee and increases your costs. It changes Medicaid to a block grant, meaning you may be on your own if you need long-term care services. And the Republican budget even cuts the Older Americans Act services like Meals on Wheels.

Older women and men shouldn’t have to sacrifice so that millionaire hedge fund managers can become even richer. Under the Democratic budget, they don’t have to.

**THE REPUBLICAN BUDGET**

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