

while, and there were the words of one of the best Republican doctors that ever served in the Congress. Bill Frist has said he's encouraging his Republican colleagues to embrace the insurance exchange which is central to President Obama's health care plan. He said:

Originally it was a Republican idea. The State insurance exchanges will offer a menu of private insurance plans to pick and choose from, all with a required set of minimum benefits to those without employer-sponsored health care insurance.

Now, here's a Republican doctor who was the Majority Leader in the Senate. Contrast him to who we have there now. We have 31 times in this body tried to repeal this, and here you have a Republican doctor who was Majority Leader of the Senate saying we ought to do it.

Read it and weep.

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#### SEQUESTRATION

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

Mrs. ROBY. Mr. Speaker, once again, President Obama displays his lack of leadership and refuses to take charge in order to avoid the forthcoming devastating ramifications associated with sequester. That's why I enthusiastically agreed to cosponsor H.R. 5872, the Sequestration Transparency Act of 2012.

For months, the House Armed Services Committee has repeatedly asked DOD and OMB for specifics of how sequestration would be implemented and its impact. In response, we have received nothing.

Once H.R. 5872 is implemented, the President will be forced to forgo his laissez-faire approach to crisis resolution and will be required to report to Congress the details of the administration's plans to implement the budget sequestration cuts. He will be forced to include an estimate of the sequestration percentages and amounts necessary to achieve the reduction for both defense and non-defense categories.

Of course, the impact on our military personnel and their families cannot be overstated. Frankly, it's inexcusable that these men and women who sacrifice so much for our Nation should suffer through these uncertainties while Senate Democrats and the White House refuse to offer a specific proposal to fix the sequester. As such, I urge Senator REID to take this bill up immediately.

#### BUFFALO IS BACK IN BUSINESS

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

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, I come to the House floor to talk about the ex-

traordinary transformation in the city of Buffalo and Buffalo's waterfront. The national publication, *The Economist*, had declared last week that the city of Buffalo is back in business.

Buffalo was once an industrial economy and an industrial working waterfront. Today, there is a transformation of public places along the water's edge attracting some 800,000 people from all over Buffalo, western New York, and southern Ontario into the city of Buffalo. There are 425 cultural and arts events. Four years ago, there were none.

Buffalo's last 36 months have been a period of great progress, with tens of millions of dollars of private sector investment following the public investment of infrastructure that has transformed Buffalo's waterfront. The last 36 months have been a period of great progress. The next 36 months are poised to be a period of even greater progress.

#### HONORING THE FIREFIGHTERS OF HIGH PARK, COLORADO

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

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the brave firefighters, the sheriff's department officials, and first responders who fought the High Park fire near Fort Collins, Colorado, and those who cared so deeply for their neighbors and their communities by providing a helping hand.

The High Park fire was the most destructive in the history of northern Colorado, burning over 87,000 acres, destroying 259 homes, and displacing hundreds of families for weeks. At its peak, over 2,000 firefighters, National Guardsmen, law enforcement, and others braved extremely rugged terrain, 100-plus-degree temperatures, and high winds to battle this complex and fast-moving fire. In some cases, local volunteer firefighters fought on the fire line for the good of the community, despite knowing that their own homes would likely be burned to the ground.

As signs popped up across the front range of Colorado thanking those brave men and women for their service, this Congress salutes you. Because of the brave and immense effort of these firefighters, lives were saved, homes were preserved, and generations to come will be able to continue to enjoy some of the most beautiful and majestic forested areas in the country as we work to restore those areas that were lost.

I'm proud to recognize the great and heroic efforts of our firefighters.

#### HONORING GAIL PENNYBACKER

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

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Gail Pennybacker, an award-winning, longtime television

journalist who has covered local news in the District, Maryland, and especially Virginia for the ABC Channel 7 news team since 1986.

During her time as the northern Virginia bureau chief, Gail has garnered the respect of law enforcement, legislators, and everyday citizens alike. Gail has covered the Capital region's top stories for the last quarter century, including the September 11 terror attacks, the beltway sniper shootings, and the Columbine High School massacre. She has reported directly from the Persian Gulf during the Iraq war, conducted exclusive interviews with nationally known individuals, and earned several Edward R. Murrow Awards and other accolades.

Active in her community, Gail has been deeply involved with a variety of civic associations and organizations, including the Alzheimer's Association and the American Diabetes Association.

Her recognition by the Northern Virginia Victims Coalition for the "objective, fair, and compassionate portrayal of crime victims" is truly a testament to her respect for all persons, no matter their situation.

Mr. Speaker, in conclusion, I'm honored to ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Gail Pennybacker upon her retirement from ABC7. Her dedication to making news reporting a reliable source of information has made her an institution in our community. While Gail's familiar face will be missed, we wish her only the best as she begins the next phase of her life.

#### HONORING THE MEMORY OF WILLIAM RASPBERRY

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

Mr. NUNNELEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of a great man, Mr. William Raspberry of Okolona, Mississippi, who died Tuesday at the age of 76.

He was hired by *The Washington Post* straight out of the Army and worked his way up from teletype operator to the op-ed page. At the time, he was only one of a handful of nationally syndicated and widely read African American columnists.

And though Mr. Raspberry lived most of his life away from Mississippi, he never forgot Okolona. He devoted much of his time in retirement to the foundation in Mississippi that bears his name that helped children from at-risk families be prepared for entrance into kindergarten.

He was a model of how to talk about complicated and divisive issues in a respectful and civil tone. In fact, he once said:

Perhaps it was then that I found myself trying to write in such a way that people who didn't agree with me might at least hear me. Then I found they were talking back to me in similarly civil tones. And it felt good.

His attitude would be a model for all of us that debate public policy.