currently headed by the Honorable Michael N. Cook, President, Thomas B. Cannady, First Vice President, Joe Rosenstengel, Second Vice President, Laura K. Beasley, Secretary and Garrett P. Hoerner, Treasurer.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the St. Clair County Bar Association on their 50th Anniversary and to wish them the very best in the future.

PRESERVING THE WELFARE WORK REQUIREMENT AND TANF EXTENSION ACT OF 2013

SPEECH OF

HON. DAVID G. REICHERT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 13, 2013

Mr. REICHERT. Mr. Speaker, in addition to Chairman CAMP's arguments against the Motion to Recommit, the following are additional reasons for opposing this motion.

1. Totally unnecessary and obviously political. The States already have complete flexibility to decide which needy families with children to cover. So States can and should place a priority on the groups the MTR specified—the unemployed, veterans, victims of violence, grandparents, as well as anyone caring for children with financial need. Democrats argued in the general debate on H.R. 890 that States should be trusted when it comes to the work requirements and that States should have virtually unlimited flexibility in implementing them. Why do they think in their MTR that States cannot be trusted when it comes to the even more elemental issue of whom to cover with TANF assistance? The answer is the MTR is an obviously political statement in search of a problem.

2. Potentially harmful. Current law includes a broad provision allowing States to screen for and identify victims of domestic violence and then create special programs and services designed to address their needs, such as waiving time limits, child support cooperation and related requirements as appropriate. Many States have done so. The MTR, coming afterward, suggests that "Nothing in this Act shall prohibit or limit" States from "providing assistance, job opportunities, or educational training" for "women who are victims of domestic violence." Why is this necessary? Are the current law protections applied by States, which would be extended for nine months under H.R. 890, not sufficient? Are States implementing them poorly or not at all? The MTR does not say. But given that the current protections afforded by States may be broader than the short list of protections in the MTR, is the MTR supposed to be limiting on States in terms of how and what they provide in terms of special help for such individuals? Again, the MTR does not say, creating confusion and potentially narrowing protections for a sensitive group.

3. Restoring the individual entitlement to welfare benefits—regardless of income? The MTR suggests a fundamental change in the nature of the TANF program. States must now spend TANF funds on "needy" families with children, with States defining financial need. However, the MTR suggests that "Nothing in this Act" (which if added to the underlying bill would mean effectively the TANF program) "shall prohibit or limit" States from providing "assistance" to "unemployed parents" or "grandparents" caring for the children of individuals in, or who died while serving in, the Armed Forces. It does not State that such adults and families must be "needy." While many of these families will no doubt be "needy" by States" definition, not all will be. Yet the MTR says that all must receive "assistance" (which generally means a welfare check) from the TANF program. Is it really the intention of the authors of the MTR to require the payment of welfare checks to families that are not "needy"? This smacks of a return to the pre-TANF era when there was an individual entitlement to welfare benefits in Federal law, which was a key impediment to States' engaging low-income families in work and productive activities needed to help them support themselves. Even worse, especially given the capped nature of TANF funds, requiring States to provide welfare checks to households in which one parent may be unemployed, for example, while the other works full-time in a high-paying job, would certainly diminish funds available to assist truly needy families with children.

4. Points to other key flaws in the Administration's waiver proposal. When Ways and Means staff reviewed HHS internal documents about their waiver plan on February 8, 2013, one of the key findings was that HHS staff has long believed the Secretary has the authority not only to waive work requirements for welfare recipients, but also other key program features like time limits and even the requirement that States must limit TANF benefits to families that include children. Yet the MTR, whose supporters argued in support of the Administration's waiver authority, lists supposed protections for parents and grandparents caring for children. Which begs the question—do supporters of the Administration's waiver authority and MTR want to allow States to pay welfare checks to single adults without children, as the Administration believes it has the authority to do? Or do they think that TANF assistance should continue to be payable only to families with children, as current law provides and the MTR seems to suggest?

BETINA PIETERSE

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 19, 2013

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Betina Pieterse for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Betina Pieterse is a 12th grader at Wheat Ridge High School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Betina Pieterse is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Betina Pieterse for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

REMEMBERING THE 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE IRAQ WAR

HON. BILL FOSTER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 19, 2013

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask the House to observe a moment of somber remembrance for the 10th anniversary of the start of the Iraq War. On March 19, 2003, the U.S. Armed Forces invaded Iraq in what would become one of the most drawn-out missions in our military's history—a mission that would end in more than 4,000 fatalities and 31,000 wounded.

All too often, these brave men and women risk their lives to serve our country, only to return home to face a different type of battle—a battle to receive the care and benefits that they deserve.

Earlier this month, in a commitment to provide high-quality healthcare to our veterans, the Department of Veterans Affairs opened a new Veterans Outpatient Clinic in Joliet, Illinois. As part of the Edward Hines Jr. VA Hospital, the 60,000 square foot facility will offer state-of-the-art healthcare, providing a variety of services including: primary care, physical, occupational, and speech therapies, health education, mental health treatment, women's healthcare, nutrition, and retinal imaging.

With more than 5,000 veterans already signed up to receive treatment at the Joliet Clinic, the facility will go a long way toward providing the healthcare that our men and women in uniform deserve. I am proud to have the Edward Hines Jr. Veterans Hospital Outpatient Clinic serving our veterans.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to not only join me in remembering those who lost their lives serving our great nation, but to also recognize and thank those veterans who have returned home after defending our country bravely and honorably.

INTRODUCTION OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA MEDICAID REIMBURSEMENT ACT OF 2013

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 19, 2013

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, as we approach the third anniversary of the enactment of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, March 23, 2013, which, among other things, expands eligibility for Medicaid to reduce the number of Americans without health insurance, I introduce the District of Columbia Medicaid Reimbursement Act of 2013 today to increase the federal government's reimbursement for the District of Columbia's Medicaid costs from 70 to 75 percent. Medicaid is financed mostly by the federal government and the states. However, the District, a city that has no state to support it, must alone absorb the state portion of Medicaid. For example, the District pays for 30 percent of Medicaid. New York City pays less than 25 percent, since a