

Absent congressional action, interest rates on student loans will double from 3.4 to 6.8 percent on July 1. This bill prevents this from happening and ends what has become an annual debate within Congress on how to set the rates for student loans, a process that has served neither students nor taxpayers.

H.R. 1911 builds on a proposal put forward by President Obama in his fiscal year 2014 budget request which would move to a market-based interest rate. The bill would allow students to take advantage of low interest rates but also protect them with reasonable rate caps during higher rate environments.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to join in support of this bill, which will offer students the lowest possible cost for higher education and ensure the solvency of these important programs.

□ 1340

REMARKABLE WOMEN OF WEST PALM BEACH, FLORIDA

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

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to place in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD the names of six phenomenal women who have positively influenced the lives of the people of my hometown of West Palm Beach, Florida:

Sheri Brooks, Renee Kessler and Ilene Silber, dynamic educators who have devoted their lives to the future of the youth of our community;

Sherry Hyman, an exceptional lawyer who has helped shape our county's physical environment;

Mona Reis, a courageous crusader for women's health and reproductive rights;

and Young Song, a brilliant architect whose projects bring joy to thousands of visitors each year.

Best yet, these phenomenal women have beautiful hearts and remarkable children.

IN HONOR OF THE SERVICE OF FIRE CHIEF KENNETH BRISCOE

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

Mr. MEADOWS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Lenoir Fire Chief Ken Briscoe as his term of president of the North Carolina Association of Fire Chiefs comes to an end this August.

It is a well-earned rest after serving 7 years and traveling across the State of North Carolina and the United States in representing more than 1,500 fire chiefs and 45,000 firefighters in North Carolina.

Chief Briscoe has been the fire chief for the city of Lenoir since 2004 and has worked in the fire service for over 35 years. During that time, his main focus has been improving the training and

education of firefighters in North Carolina. Chief Briscoe will continue to serve on the board of directors as the past president of the North Carolina Association of Fire Chiefs.

Today, we honor his years of service and express our appreciation for his continued commitment to North Carolina firefighters. We are grateful to Chief Briscoe and to his fellow firefighters across North Carolina for their bravery and selfless dedication to protecting our communities in the face of danger.

OPPOSING THE REPEAL OF THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

(Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, instead of taking steps to create jobs and grow the economy, Republicans yesterday voted to repeal the Affordable Care Act for the 37th time.

The Affordable Care Act is working, and its benefits are being felt throughout the country, especially in my home State. Almost 525,000 New Mexicans now have access to free preventative services, such as mammograms, flu shots and colonoscopy screenings. Almost 19,000 seniors have benefited from lower prescription drug costs, and over 26,000 young adults in New Mexico can stay on their parents' insurance plans until they are 26.

So why in the world would we want to hurt seniors, women and young people by repealing the Affordable Care Act?

Let's not forget that the Affordable Care Act is a job creator. The Medicaid expansion alone will create 6,000 to 8,000 jobs in New Mexico and will pump more than \$5 billion into our economy over the next 6 years.

Mr. Speaker, let's stop trying to repeal the Affordable Care Act, and let's get back to work on behalf of the American people.

DIABETES

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

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, I stand before you today to address a mounting health crisis and on behalf of nearly 26 million Americans and 532,000 Kentuckians who suffer from diabetes.

This disease kills more Americans each year than breast cancer and AIDS combined and costs our Nation more than \$200 billion in health care expenses each year. Tragically, every 17 seconds, someone is diagnosed with diabetes, and current estimates project that, by 2050, as many as one in three Americans will suffer from diabetes.

We cannot sit idly by and accept the likelihood of this bleak future. Diabe-

tes can be devastating, but it can be managed. Like most chronic diseases, diabetes can be attributed to poor behaviors, such as lack of physical activity, poor nutritional choices and other risky behaviors. By not only changing our behaviors but by improving access to education, proper diabetes care and continued funding for research to find a cure, we can truly make a positive, sustained change in the quality of life for millions of Americans.

REDEFINING THE NATION'S CAPITAL AS A FREE-STANDING FEDERAL AGENCY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Ms. NORTON. I thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I come to the floor to discuss a bill addressed only to my district, the District of Columbia, which will come to a hearing next Thursday in the Judiciary Subcommittee on the Constitution, chaired by Chairman TRENT FRANKS.

In point of fact, over the last month, there have been two such bills introduced in this House, bills that can only fairly be characterized as abuse of power. They are both directed against only one jurisdiction—my own district.

H.R. 7 would appear to be a Federal matter. That bill would make permanent the Hyde amendment, which annually passes this House every year, barring the use of Federal funds for abortion. Wherever you stand on abortion, at the very least, that is a Federal matter. In the very same bill however is an outrageous abuse. The bill seeks to do the same for the District of Columbia, barring permanently the use of local funds—funds raised by local taxpayers—for abortions for low-income women. Local funds are similarly used for abortions for low income districts in districts across the United States because, after all, they are local funds. But H.R. 7 redefines the Nation's Capital which was given home rule in 1973, as a free-standing jurisdiction—instead of a Federal agency for purposes of abortion.

Imagine having your district defined as a Federal agency so that the Congress can make ideological points by overturning local legislation at will. Yep, this is still America. That bill is H.R. 946. As to the District of Columbia, it's simply an expanded way to interfere with the business of a local jurisdiction.

I must say that I think that H.R. 7 and H.R. 1797 I will discuss shortly do point to the bankruptcy of the Republican agenda in the 113th Congress essentially does what is done anyway every year with respect to abortion. It hasn't come to the floor yet.

□ 1350

It hasn't come to the floor yet, and indeed very few bills have come to the