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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. PITTENGER).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
April 3, 2014.

I hereby appoint the Honorable ROBERT PITTENGER to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 7, 2014, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

CONGRATULATING COLONEL JOSEPH BUCHE

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

Mr. COTTON. Mr. Speaker, today, I want to recognize Colonel Joseph Buche, who will retire next month after 30 years of commissioned service in the United States Army.

Colonel Buche was born and spent the first 12 years of his life in Fayetteville, Arkansas, where he attended St. Joseph's Elementary School.

His father taught electrical engineering at the University of Arkansas, and Colonel Buche still remembers walking from his family's home down to Razorback Stadium to see President Nixon arrive for the 1969 Texas-Arkansas football game, also known as the game of the century. While it didn't end well for the Razorbacks, few Arkansans who were alive then have forgotten that day.

Following his father's death, Colonel Buche moved with his family to Wisconsin, where he received a 4-year Army ROTC scholarship from the University of Wisconsin, Madison.

He was commissioned as an infantryman upon his graduation with a bachelor of science in 1984 and began what would become an exemplary career in the United States Army.

As a lieutenant and captain, Colonel Buche was a platoon leader and commanded four infantry platoon companies. Colonel Buche also served in Operation Desert Shield and Desert Storm, Operation Iraqi Freedom, and Operation Enduring Freedom, as well as with the Old Guard at Arlington National Cemetery.

His military honors include the Legion of Merit, Bronze Star with oakleaf cluster, two Combat Infantryman Badges, and the Ranger tab.

On a personal note, Colonel Buche was my commander while I was stationed at the Old Guard in Arlington National Cemetery in 2007 and 2008 and while I was deployed to Afghanistan in 2008 and 2009. He set the highest standard for leadership, professionalism, and duty for every Old Guard soldier.

Finally, I also want to thank his wife, C.J., and their two daughters, Megan and Shelby. Military families carry a heavy load, too, and they also sacrifice much for our country.

C.J., Megan, and Shelby endured many days without their loving husband and dad, all so he could stand guard on the front lines of freedom around the world on our behalf. We are grateful to them.

On behalf of the United States Congress and a grateful Nation, I want to thank Colonel Buche and his family for their service and wish him all the best in retirement.

CONGRATULATING HOWARD ELEMENTARY READING CHAMPIONS

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, reading is a fundamental education skill that provides a foundation for academic and life success.

On March 29, the Central Intermediate Unit No. 10, located in Pennsylvania's Fifth Congressional District, hosted their Elementary School Interscholastic Reading Competition. This is a great event that is integrated throughout the school year to promote reading.

Each year, the IU chooses a list of books to be read, and this year, 41 books were utilized for the competition. Students read books from the list and answer test questions that are created to measure the students' comprehension and recall of the books.

On competition day, students learn the value of hard work, the importance of reading, as well as teamwork. Along the way, they also have some fun.

The team with the highest number of points overall is awarded the grand championship. Clearly, every child that participates in this event benefits, as they are encouraged and motivated to expand their horizons through reading comprehension.

Congratulations to the students and faculty of the Howard Elementary School for being the 2014 Reading Grand Champions.

The Howard team, coached by Mrs. Amber Buchanan and Ms. Jalynn Woleslagle, scored a total of 68 points. Congratulations to Mia Simoncek,

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Noah Giedroc, Brayden Comly, Jayden Bechdel, Carter Rhoades, Olivia Reed, Hannah Ternent, Thomas Beck, Elyssa Greene, and Mikayla Irvin for a job well done.

This is the first time that Howard Elementary has ever won grand champion. Congratulations, and keep on reading.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 6 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer:

God of the universe, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

Lord, You have promised to be with all people wherever they are, whatever their need. We reach out in prayer for the homeless, the poor, those anxious about the future, those who are ill, or those to whom freedom has been denied.

Bless the Members of this people's House. Inspire them, as representatives of the American people, to labor for justice and righteousness in our Nation and our world, mindful of Your concern for those most in need.

For all the riches of our human experience, O Lord, we give You thanks. Make us aware of our responsibilities as stewards of Your divine gifts, and empower us with Your grace to faithfully and earnestly use our talents in ways that bring understanding to our communities and our Nation, and peace to every soul.

May all we do be done for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

SAVE AMERICAN WORKERS ACT

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, today's debate over the Save American Workers Act, which will attempt to fix another unintended consequence of ObamaCare, reminded me of the recent CBO report which estimated that regulatory changes created by ObamaCare would remove the equivalent of 2.3 million Americans from the full-time workforce.

Putting aside the tremendous human costs of this loss, let's simply consider the economic damage done to our Nation. Journalist Kevin Williamson compared removing 2.3 million from the full-time workforce to ''burning down 1,000 factories'' and further noted that ''that 2.3 million workers exceeds the current workforces of McDonald's, IBM, UPS, Target, Hewlett-Packard, and General Electric, combined.''

The Save American Workers Act will likely proceed to the Senate today, where it will join a cue of 30-plus other House-passed bills that would help the economy and create jobs.

Americans want to work. Why won't the Senate do its job and consider those bills?

EXTENDING UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

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

Mr. MCNERNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge my Republican colleagues to bring the Senate's bipartisan compromise on extending unemployment insurance to the House floor for a vote.

Our economy is recovering, but not fast enough. We need to continue helping our businesses create jobs that pay living wages; but, in the meantime, we can't forget about those who lost their jobs in the downturn. Many of them have families to support while looking for jobs in a tough economy.

An analysis by Moody's found that for every dollar spent on unemployment benefits the economy generates $1.64 in economic activity. That is money that gets spent on basic necessities like food; so the grocery checker gets paid; the truck driver that delivered the food gets paid; and the farmer who grows the food gets paid. It doesn't take a Ph.D. to do the math.

And speaking of math, the Senate deal is paid for, so unemployment insurance doesn't add to the deficit.

For all these reasons, I call on my Republican colleagues to bring this to the floor for a vote today.

HELPING THOSE WHO NEED IT MOST

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, according to a Hoover Institute study, 2.6 million Americans are at risk of receiving smaller paychecks because of reduced hours as a result of ObamaCare's harsh regulations on small businesses.

It is obvious that the President's broken health care promises have made lives more difficult. What do we tell single mothers who have been forced to pick up an additional job because their hours have been reduced? And what about the college students who are paying their way through school but are struggling to achieve an education because their paychecks will not cover expenses?

At a time with record unemployment and a record number of people not seeking work, the government should not make it more difficult for employers to hire workers. Later today, the House will vote on a bill, which I have gratefully cosponsored, that provides relief for millions of Americans who have received smaller paychecks because of the President's health care takeover which destroys jobs.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

Welcome, Mead Hall Episcopal School of Aiken, South Carolina.

SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

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

Mr. HIGGINS. Madam Speaker, across the Nation, Social Security offices are experiencing increased backlog, longer wait times, and insufficient staff levels. Despite this, the Social Security Administration has proposed the closing of four New York regional offices, including the Amherst office in my western New York community.

Since 2010, 96 field offices have been consolidated into 46 without a uniform closure process. In response, I have introduced H.R. 3997, the Social Security Administration Accountability Act, which brings transparency to the Social Security field office closure process.

This legislation requires the Social Security Administration to consult with local officials and the public before deciding to relocate or merge offices. In my own community, after the notice of proposed closure of the Amherst field office, we learned from the Buffalo Fire Department that the new office has insufficient capacity and would be a fire hazard. If this bill were already law, this would have been discovered before a proposed closure was announced.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in protecting our communities from hastily planned and ill-conceived Social Security field office closures.

CONGRATULATING BLACKMAN HIGH SCHOOL

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

Mr. DESJARLAIS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend Blackman High School boys' and girls' basketball teams for winning State championships last week.

The boys' team defeated Oak Ridge by a score of 60–58 by making an exciting comeback in the final minutes. In doing so, they captured their first State title and the first boys' basketball championship for a Rutherford County team since 1965.

The girls' team, the Lady Blazes, had captured the school's first State championship in any team sport a week earlier.

I especially want to acknowledge the Lady Blazes' Crystal Dangerfield for her work both on and off the court. Named the No. 7 college prospect for 2016 by ESPN, Dangerfield was also awarded this year's Tennessee Gatorade Player of the Year. This prestigious accomplishment recognizes a student's athletic achievement, as well as academic success and overall character. Ms. Dangerfield certainly fits the bill, with volunteer work with her church and active involvement in the local literacy outreach program.

I know the city of Murfreesboro is so incredibly proud of these young men and women, and I wish them continued success in the future.

NO MORE SNAP CUTS

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, over the past 6 months, this Nation's premier antihunger safety net program, SNAP, has been cut by nearly $20 billion. Forty-six million Americans saw a cut of about $30 a month for a family of three, and hundreds of thousands more will see a cut of about $90 because of two separate cuts that took effect in November and in February.

But those pale in comparison to the Ryan budget. This budget, which will be voted on by this House next week, cuts at least $137 billion from SNAP—$137 billion. That is simply devastating.

Budgets are moral documents, and the Ryan budget is immoral. What kind of nation are we if all we do is continue to take food from the mouths of the hungry?

We can't keep balancing our budgets on the backs of poor. It is time to say enough is enough, no more cuts to SNAP. We should protect the vulnerable and the least well off in this country instead of punishing them simply for being poor.

SAVE AMERICAN WORKERS ACT

(Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of my Hoosier colleague, Representative TODD YOUNG's excellent bill, the Save American Workers Act of 2014.

We are a country built on hard work. We are a country where people want to work. But right now, the Affordable Care Act is stopping people from working the hours they need and the hours they want to work. By redefining a full-time employee as someone who works 30 or more hours a week, the Affordable Care Act has caused workers' hours to be reduced in vital industries across the Nation. 2.6 million workers are losing because of this provision. America is losing because of this provision.

A school employee from my district in Elwood, Indiana, recently shared with me the pain losing 10 hours from her workweek has caused. She said:

> It just doesn't make sense to me. I'm trying to be a self-supporting person and was doing good. It could have been better, but I was making it. How am I supposed to pay a house payment, utilities, car insurance, let alone food?

This is an unwise provision that must be repealed. That is why we must take action and restore the traditional 40-hour workweek. Let's pass the Save American Workers Act of 2014. If we do, our workers win, our employers win, and our Nation will win.

RAISING THE MINIMUM WAGE

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

Ms. EDWARDS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to call on just 25 Republicans to join 195 Democrats to raise the minimum wage to $10.10 an hour and to raise wages for tip workers whose $2.13-an-hour wages haven't been raised in 23 years. The current minimum wage of $7.25 an hour has failed to keep pace with the cost of living, leaving families struggling to fill the gap.

Even if you work 40 hours a week at minimum wage, you still live below the poverty line. You rely on taxpayer-funded programs such as nutrition assistance, energy assistance, and housing assistance.

In short, the profit lines of multinational corporations are being subsidized by taxpayers who fill the gap between the mandated minimum wage and what constitutes a fair wage, what people need to live on.

This has an even greater impact for women, who often work for only 77 cents on a dollar; for African American women, 64 cents on a dollar; for Latinos, 58 cents on a dollar. Seventy percent of low-wage workers in this country are women.

So, essentially, we need to raise the tip minimum wage and raise the regular minimum wage. It is the fair thing to do. I call on my Republican colleagues, just 25 of them, to raise the minimum wage.

THROW-BACK THURSDAY

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

Mr. DUFFY. Madam Speaker, if it is Thursday, it is throw-back Thursday.

I want to take a look back to April 15, 2011, the House Republicans passed a budget that balanced.

March 29, 2012, House Republicans led the charge to pass a budget that balanced.

March 21, 2013, we passed a budget that balances in 10 years.

Just last night, we passed a budget that is again going to balance in 10 years.

The bottom line is that we can't do it by ourselves. If you look to the President who introduces budgets that never, ever, ever balance, and you look to the Democrats in the Senate who don't even introduce budgets, we can't get this job done.

We have Americans who are young that want opportunity, that want jobs and don't want to pay higher taxes. If we don't balance our budgets, they are the ones who are going to pay.

But it is the poorest among us who look to government for a little bit of help. If we have a debt crisis, we won't be there to help them.

Let's work together. Let's balance our budget. Let's be sustainable in government spending.

□ 1215

CONGRESSIONAL PROGRESSIVE CAUCUS BUDGET

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

Ms. HAHN. Madam Speaker, yet again, we have been presented with a budget that stands at odds with the morality of this Nation. The Ryan budget attempts to balance our budget on the backs of the middle class and low-income families while bowing to special interest groups and giving billionaires unnecessary tax cuts.

This out of touch budget leaves hard-working families in my district in California and across this country in the cold by cutting more than $135 billion from the food stamp program. PAUL RYAN's budget also eliminates the Affordable Care Act and breaks our promise to seniors by fundamentally ending the Medicare program as we know it. With one in three women struggling on

the brink of poverty in this country, this budget would effectively push them over the edge.

Americans deserve better.

The Congressional Progressive Caucus' Better Off Budget, in stark contrast, restores critical social safety nets such as SNAP benefits and unemployment insurance, programs that many American families rely on to make ends meet. This budget also protects and strengthens Medicare and Medicaid without cutting benefits for our seniors. It is a budget I stand by because it is right for the country, for working families, for seniors, and for our future.

SAVE THE AMERICAN WORKERS

(Mr. COLLINS of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. COLLINS of New York. Madam Speaker, I come to the House floor today to express my support for the Save American Workers Act. This legislation will repeal ObamaCare's definition of full-time employment as 30 hours a week.

Every American knows that full time is 40 hours a week, so it is time to reverse this ill-advised provision of ObamaCare. Redefining full time as 40 hours a week will have a big impact. Constituents like Colden Repka of Attica, New York, and Richard Markel of Clarence, New York, have shared with me their stories of lost wages and lost hours due to this provision of ObamaCare. Testimony at the Small Business hearing I chaired on this matter was clear—the 30-hour definition of full time must be revised.

ObamaCare is turning our Nation into a part-time economy. It discourages economic growth and results in the erosion of our Nation's middle class. The Save American Workers Act will do just what the title says. It will put hardworking Americans back where they want to be—working and supporting their families.

SUPPORTING THE SAVE AMERICAN WORKERS ACT

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

Mr. MARCHANT. Madam Speaker, most people agree that a 40-hour workweek is considered the average for a full-time American worker. However, ObamaCare defines full-time employment as being only 30 hours a week. The legislation before us will restore the commonly held 40-hour workweek standard.

Unless we take action, many businesses in my district will reduce the hours of their employees or will be unable to hire new workers. This will hurt many hardworking Americans who want to work more to provide for their families but who will not be able to do so because of the changes in ObamaCare.

Washington should not place barriers in front of job creation. Washington should not discourage people from working more to provide for their families or to further their careers. We can change this. I urge all of my colleagues to join me today in supporting the Save American Workers Act.

BUTLER GIRLS' BASKETBALL TEAM

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

Mr. YARMUTH. Madam Speaker, there is only one way to finish a season on a 20-game winning streak, and Louisville's Butler High School Bearettes girls' basketball team just did it, taking the Kentucky State championship and cementing the school's legacy as a powerhouse in our Commonwealth.

With a deep 10-player rotation that had perfected its stifling press by tournament time, the Bearettes used defensive pressure to drive their offense, romping through the Sweet 16 on the play of outstanding underclassmen and the steadying hand of senior Danielle Lawrence. In the championship game, the second-ranked Bearettes shut down top-ranked Elizabethtown High School, relentlessly dismantling the E-town offense and holding their opponent scoreless in the final 5 minutes and 27 seconds.

A great defense wins championships, the saying goes, but it also helps create unbreakable bonds among teammates. This team truly functioned as a unit, both on and off the court, maintaining a cumulative 3.7 GPA in the classroom while taking the Louisville Invitational Tournament championship earlier this year and adding the school's fourth State title last month.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to congratulate Coach Larry Just and the Butler High School girls' basketball team on an amazing championship season.

Go, Bearettes.

THE RYAN BUDGET HAS THE WRONG PRIORITIES

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

Mr. KILDEE. Madam Speaker, we are at that time of the year when we are dealing with another set of budget decisions. A budget is supposed to be a demonstration of this Congress' and our Nation's values and priorities, a plan that helps lift people up and ensure that everyone, if you play by the rules, has got a fair shot at success.

But budgets require tough choices.

The Ryan budget, which passed out of committee yesterday, unfortunately chooses to make things more difficult for hardworking middle class Americans in order to subsidize big tax breaks to big oil companies, to multinational corporations, and to the wealthiest Americans.

Yesterday, I introduced a very simple amendment to the Ryan budget in the Budget Committee, one that would simply say this: if you make more than $1 million, which is a very small percentage—97 percent of small business owners make less than that—you pay your fair share. Warren Buffett famously observed that he pays a lower tax rate than his own secretary. My amendment would have said, if you make over $1 million, you pay at least 30 percent. Unfortunately, that amendment failed on a party-line vote.

I hope we have an opportunity to offer that amendment here on the floor, and I urge my colleagues, if they have the chance to do so, to support that.

IN MEMORY OF CARLTON MOORE

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

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Madam Speaker, the day before yesterday, I lost a dear friend. Carlton Moore was a former city commissioner and president of the NAACP. To his mother, Ada, and family, I offer my heartfelt condolences.

I had the good fortune of witnessing Carlton's entire career. He served with distinction in our community, and he was a businessman par excellence. He was a visionary, and fortunately, many of the things that were his concepts did come to fruition.

My community, Florida, and this Nation have lost a warrior for truth and justice.

KATYN MASSACRE REMEMBRANCE

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

Ms. KAPTUR. Madam Speaker, I rise today to mark the Katyn Annual Remembrance at the National Katyn Memorial in Baltimore, Maryland.

This Sunday, April 6, Polish Americans and other liberty lovers will gather at the National Katyn Memorial after a remembrance Mass is said at the Holy Rosary Church in honor of the victims of the Katyn massacre.

In 1940, the Soviet secret police were directed by dictator Joseph Stalin to systematically murder over 22,000 of Poland's most important leaders, including military officers, religious leaders, educators, and intellectuals, in and around the Katyn Forest in Russia.

In 1951, a U.S. House of Representatives select committee was tasked with conducting an investigation into the Katyn genocide, and it concluded that the Soviets were responsible for this mass murder.

In 2010, after decades of denial and despite protests from its Communist members, the Russian Parliament approved a statement that ultimately acknowledged Stalin's complete responsibility in perpetrating these heinous crimes.

While we honor the memory of the Polish victims of Katyn at this time every year, it is especially important this year as Eastern Europe, Crimea, and Ukraine once again face the illegal aggression of their territorial sovereignty from Russia and its leader.

Let the world of nations continue to work in conjunction with the Polish government and with victims' families to uncover the complete truth of what happened at the Katyn Forest and nearby killing fields. Our world holds a moral obligation to honor the victims and to reveal the whole truth to enlighten future generations.

Madam Speaker, history must record fully these mass crimes against humanity, and it must heal the fissures of tyranny to prevent such grave atrocities into the future.

SAVE AMERICAN WORKERS ACT

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

Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas. Madam Speaker, at a time when our economy is sluggish and job creation is stagnant, the last thing American workers can afford are reduced hours. Yet, because of the redefined 30-hour full-time employee definition in ObamaCare, that is exactly what many Americans are facing.

In addition to higher premiums and canceled coverage, millions of Americans are at risk of losing hours. Many of them are women, young moms and dads, and those working hard to support their families and to make ends meet. Now they are paying the price for the President's broken health care law.

The Save American Workers Act will help them. It will restore the 40-hour workweek. It will help Americans bring home their paychecks, and it will provide relief to those who need it most.

SAVE AMERICAN WORKERS ACT OF 2014

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. FOXX). Pursuant to clause 1(c) of rule XIX, further consideration of the bill (H.R. 2575) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the 30-hour threshold for classification as a full-time employee for purposes of the employer mandate in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and replace it with 40 hours, will now resume.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. When proceedings were postponed on Wednesday, April 2, 2014, 1 hour and 46 minutes of debate remained on the bill, as amended.

The gentleman from Indiana (Mr. YOUNG) has 54½ minutes remaining, and the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL) has 51½ minutes remaining.

Without objection, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. GRIFFIN) will control the time of the gentleman from Indiana, and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) will control the time of the gentleman from New York.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arkansas.

Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise today in support of H.R. 2575, the Save American Workers Act. This Act would restore the traditional 40-hour definition of a full-time job.

Washington may think that it knows best, but that is simply not true. This provision in ObamaCare is a perfect example of how the law hurts the very people it was intended to help. In Arkansas, we try to apply a little common sense. We all know 30 hours isn't full time, but that is what ObamaCare says, and no one seems to know why. We had a hearing in the Ways and Means Committee, and many of those who testified were puzzled as to why 30 hours was chosen. Even in France, a full-time job is 35 hours a week. Because of ObamaCare's mandates and taxes, employers are cutting workers' hours and are replacing full-time folks with part-time folks. This is real. We have seen this in Arkansas.

Let me give you some examples:

Arkansas State University reduced some workers to a maximum of 29 hours per week. The Area Agency on Aging of Western Arkansas cut hours for hundreds of home health aides and drivers to 28 hours per week. Pulaski Technical College limited hours for adjunct faculty, directly impacting students' education choices.

□ 1230

Just yesterday, I received a letter from the Arkansas Hospitality Association. They say ObamaCare's 30-hour rule will hurt roughly 100,000 hospitality workers.

These are folks who are working hard, playing by the rules, and trying to make it. All they want is a fair shot at success. That is what they deserve, but ObamaCare has taken that away.

According to research by the Hoover Institution, this ObamaCare rule puts 2.6 million workers making under $30,000 a year at risk. Almost 90 percent of these workers do not have college degrees. Over 60 percent of them are women. These are good, hardworking Americans, but they may lose their hours or even their jobs thanks to ObamaCare.

Wasn't this law supposed to help people get health insurance? But what are they getting? They are getting no insurance and less pay. Incredible.

I want to thank my colleague and good friend, Mr. YOUNG, for introducing this important bill, and I urge my colleagues to support this bipartisan solution that will help people keep their jobs and higher wages.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LEVIN. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

The gentleman who has just spoken has it backwards. What would hurt American workers is not the Affordable Care Act. Millions have signed up to be covered. What would hurt American workers is this bill.

I said yesterday—and no one has refuted it—this bill would mean that 1 million people, according to CBO, would lose their employer-based health insurance. By definition, these are people who are working. They would lose their employer-based health insurance. That is what CBO has estimated, and no one has refuted it.

It would increase the number, according to CBO, of uninsured by half a million. No one has refuted this.

CBO also says that it would add $74 billion to the deficit—again, this is CBO—and no one on the Republican side has refuted this.

This would put five times more people at risk of adverse effects than would be true under any other circumstance.

So, essentially, you have a bill that would cost 1 million people their employer-based health insurance, would increase the number of uninsured by about half a million, and would add $74 billion to the deficit.

Instead of talking about unemployment insurance, instead of talking about minimum wage, instead of talking about immigration legislation, we have a bill up today that would have these adverse consequences.

We would be passing a bill that will never go anywhere in the Senate, and because we aren't acting on these other measures, they are spreading out debate on this bill for 2 days. When it leaves here, it goes nowhere. It will be vetoed by the President, if it ever passed the Senate, which it never will.

So this is worse than an exercise in futility. This is an exercise in doing harm, when ACA is bringing benefits to millions and millions of people. It is deeply unfortunate.

Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the remainder of my time be controlled by the gentleman from Washington (Mr. MCDERMOTT).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Michigan?

There was no objection.

Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. MULLIN).

Mr. MULLIN. I would like to thank my colleague from Arkansas for bringing this to the people's attention.

Madam Speaker, it is almost funny. The President wants to take something that is the heartbeat of America—and that is our work ethic—and redefine it by saying that 30 hours is considered full time now. What are we teaching the generations that are coming behind us if we say you can work less and still be considered full time?

The backbone of this country was created by entrepreneurs and individuals that got up and worked hard, worked long hours, and they did what it took to be successful.

Now, this President has given the generation coming behind us, which is my five kids, and redefining what is called full time by saying it is okay to work 30 hours because it is convenient to a piece of legislation that is bankrupting this country called ObamaCare.

Now, what is it that we are really trying to teach this generation? Are we trying to teach this generation that staying home and working fewer hours is okay?

My colleagues on the opposite side stood up and said that it is good for people to work less hours because they can spend more time at home, but yet the people this is going to affect want to work more. They are trying to pull themselves out of the situations they are in.

My goal as a father is to teach my kids the value of work. We want to make sure our kids get a great education. I get that. But what is an education without a work ethic?

And yet this administration, the one that is trying to say they are going to protect the youth, is making excuses and excuses and excuses for them to sit home and be okay with 30 hours a week.

Being okay isn't what drove this country to be the greatest country in the world. We are better than okay. We are above being okay. We are the best, and it is because of our work ethic. This shouldn't be used as a political ploy by this President.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, on a rainy September day in 2008, a constituent of mine named Ingrid was badly injured after a terrible fall in her home. She was rushed to the emergency room, where she was cared for and her life was spared, yet Ingrid came out of that experience stuck with a $23,000 hospital bill because she couldn't afford to have health insurance. A few months later, Ingrid was forced to sell her home to pay off that enormous hospital bill.

Today, on a rainy day in April of 2014, there is a different story to tell. It is a rainy day in Seattle, not here. It is the story of the Affordable Care Act, the story of 7.1 million mothers and sons, fathers and daughters, who have a newfound sense of health security and peace of mind.

That is 7.1 million honest, hardworking Americans, in addition to the 2 million young adults who are protected by staying on their parents' plan, in addition to the millions more who are now covered through the Children's Health Insurance Program and Medicaid expansion. One of them is Ingrid.

Ingrid's life is vastly different now from what it was in 2008. She still is one of the hardest working people her friends and neighbors have ever met. She still loves the outdoors and drives a pickup truck, but today, she is happy, healthy, and covered because of the ACA.

So as this Chamber, for the 52nd time, considers a radical and extremist Republican bill to kill the Affordable Care Act, I stand with millions of people who have been covered because of the ACA and the millions who still need health security. I stand in opposition to the idea that this Nation is incapable of guaranteeing health security for all its citizens.

Republicans have no plan to cover the American people. Speaker BOEHNER earlier this week would not commit to releasing a Republican plan until after the election. How transparent can you be? Proof that this is political.

So the introduction of this bill is simply surrender in the face of the health care crisis in America. How else can you explain the Republicans' introduction of a bill that cancels the health insurance policies of 1 million Americans? That sounds like surrender to me.

How else can you explain a bill that raises the deficit by $75 billion? More surrender.

How else can you explain a bill that puts five times the number of American workers at risk of losing hours at work? How else do you explain a bill that does anything but dare employers to slash work hours for workers in order to avoid the responsibility to offer health insurance coverage?

How can they say this bill solves a problem of employers cutting hours and refusing benefits when it really only makes it worse?

It is unconditional surrender by the Republicans, pure and simple, to force yet another vote on a bill that has no chance of becoming law. There isn't one chance in a million.

One thing I learned in medicine was you never say never, but this is one time I can say it. It will never, ever pass the Congress. It is a bill crafted purely to appeal to the Koch brothers and the producers of FOX News, rather than forged to protect honest Americans like Ingrid.

The latest Republican bill also denies a confirmed truth; the ACA is succeeding in its primary mission to expand access to quality health care for each and every American.

So make no mistake. I have got news for you. The ACA is not going away. It is not going away. It is here to stay.

The mission before the Congress now should be—in fact, must be—to move forward to further implement the ACA and to improve the law, where needed.

I talked to Bill Frist about a year ago, former Republican leader of the Senate. He said: Don't repeal; fix.

That is what we ought to be about doing—but we are not doing that—in order to guarantee not just access for each and every American, but to lower health care costs across the board; yet this rather perverse bill raises health care costs for everyone by increasing the number of uninsured. That is surrender, pure and simple surrender.

It is surrendering to an idea that our Nation is no longer capable of accomplishing great things and surrendering to the idea that America, the richest and the most advanced country on the Earth, can't guarantee that its citizens won't lose their homes when they get sick. That is what you are admitting by this bill.

You are saying they have to choose between food on the breakfast table instead of medicine on their bedside table. That, in my view, is a situation that has no explanation, other than the fact that you have surrendered. You have given up the idea that America can take care of its own people.

It was a choice that Ingrid once had to make, but she will never have to make again. That is what is true about the ACA. She has health care coverage. That is what is right about the ACA, and this bill under consideration, H.R. 2575, has nothing to do with what is either true or right.

I urge my colleagues to vote ''no,'' and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I think it is instructive to think about what this bill does in the context of the ACA.

ObamaCare defines full time as 30 hours. That doesn't surprise me coming from this administration; but we all know that just because Washington says it is so, doesn't make it so.

□ 1245

Thirty hours isn't full time. When we asked some experts who testified in Ways and Means, they had no idea where the 30 hours came from. They surmised that people were sitting around at the White House and just said 30 is a good number. They could have said 20. How about 10? How about 1 hour a week is full time?

If we tried to change it, and it was 1 hour, of course people that had insurance would have their situation changed. But this is about what is full time and what isn't.

The French consider 35 hours full time. Can we not at least agree that in this country 40 hours used to be full time?

That is the issue.

Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to my good friend from Illinois (Mr. RODNEY DAVIS).

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, we are here yet again talking about another failed aspect of ObamaCare. It is simply unacceptable that a law meant to improve our health care system has not only failed to do that, it has actually become a job killer for this country.

The need to change the 30-hour workweek is personal.

My dad started out working at a local McDonald's as an hourly employee and eventually worked his way up to become a franchise owner. Not only did my dad teach me that anyone could achieve the American Dream if

they just worked hard enough, but he also taught me that policies, policies passed right here in this Chamber, have real-life consequences.

If this provision is not fixed, workers are going to see fewer hours, which means they are going to see smaller paychecks. Studies show that there could be upwards of 2 million less full-time workers by 2017 and the potential to short workers out of $75 billion in wages.

Supporters of ObamaCare want the American people to believe that we are just wasting our time talking about changing ObamaCare and that we should just simply move on. I want folks in the 13th District of Illinois to know I will not move on. I will not quit talking about the complete failure of ObamaCare, and I will continue to advocate for commonsense fixes to this disastrous bill which will protect hardworking Americans in my district.

I also want to point out, you are going to hear a lot of discussion from the other side of the aisle that this will take hardworking Americans off of employer-based insurance. I want to remind my colleagues that the architect of ObamaCare, Zeke Emanuel, it was reported just a few weeks ago that he expected that the private insurance-based health care system, coverage system, would be gone by the year 2025. Well, that means the employer-based health care system will be gone by the year 2025.

He also said he expects 1,000 hospitals to close. I ask my colleagues, which hospitals, especially those like in my small town of Taylorville, Illinois, which is our largest employer? Which hospitals will close?

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Madam Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN).

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam Speaker, last night in the House Budget Committee, we had a big debate, and at the end of the debate, we voted on the House Republican budget.

During that debate, there was a lot of talk about how we can reduce our long-term deficits. Our Republican colleagues in their budget said they didn't want to close one special interest tax break to help reduce our long-term deficit. They would rather cut the budget that helps provide for our kids' education. They wanted to reopen, in their budget, the doughnut hole so seniors with high prescription drug costs will pay $1,200 more per year.

So they were willing to do all that, but they wouldn't close a single tax loophole. But they said they cared about reducing the deficit. Now, lo and behold, we have a bill on the floor of the House that, in one fell swoop, if it is voted on, will increase the deficit by $74 billion.

Republicans have a rule that they put into the rules of the House that says you can't do that. You shouldn't be increasing the deficit. There should be some offset. You should cut somewhere else. We think you should also be able to cut some tax expenditures for very special interests. But the idea is that we shouldn't be doing things that increase the deficit. But those rules were waived for this, a little special wand in the Rules Committee: we are not going to abide by the rules, and so $79 billion increase to the deficit.

Now, here is the really interesting thing. We had a debate last night in the Budget Committee about the Affordable Care Act. We made the point that the Republican claim that their budget is balanced in year 10 is totally inconsistent with the claim that they want to get rid of the Affordable Care Act, and here is why:

In the Republican budget—and we all hope it will come to the floor next Thursday. In the Republican budget, they get rid of all the benefits for people in the Affordable Care Act. Right? They get rid of the tax credits that help more Americans purchase insurance. They get rid of the provision that says you can keep your child on your insurance policy until age 26. They get rid of that. But you keep very important parts of the Affordable Care Act. You keep all the revenues, $1 trillion in revenues. And you know what else you keep? You keep all the Medicare savings. In fact, you have $2 trillion embedded in the Affordable Care Act in your budget from the Affordable Care Act.

Today is the smoking gun, because if you pass this bill, the budget that was claimed to be balanced yesterday in the Budget Committee is no longer in balance. You know why? You claimed that in year 10, under your budget, in year 10, that you would have a surplus of $5 billion. But that's not true, because you can't at the same time claim with a straight face that you are getting rid of the Affordable Care Act because the Affordable Care Act provides, as I said, $2 trillion in your own budget.

In that year 10, when you pass this, $9 billion disappears from the Treasury in year 10. So today, by your own accounting, the budget that Republicans claimed to be balanced last night in the Budget Committee today will already be unbalanced, and that is just getting rid of a little piece of the Affordable Care Act. If you get rid of all of it, then you get rid of all the revenues that are in your budget, and you get rid of the savings in your budget, and your budget will not possibly balance.

So, Madam Speaker, it is a fraud to claim that the Republican budget balances and, at the same time, for Republicans to say they are in favor of getting rid of all of the Affordable Care Act. Both things cannot be true at the same time.

So either Republicans level with the American people that their budget is not in balance—and starting today, it won't be, by their own terms—or they acknowledge to the American people that they have gotten rid of all the good stuff in the Affordable Care Act, the stuff that helps people afford health care, but they kept all the savings.

So the moment of truth is today. The smoking gun is today. We had this big debate. I hope the Budget Committee members on the Republican side will come down here and fess up.

Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING).

Mr. KING of Iowa. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding and, also, Mr. YOUNG for his authorship of this bill.

It changed dramatically what I had to say when I came down here when I heard that the Republican endeavor to reestablish the 40-hour workweek, which is a practical thing that is good for people, is a fraud. A fraud? People that have been the advocates for ObamaCare are using the word ''fraud''?

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Will the gentleman yield, because that is not what I said was the fraud.

Mr. KING of Iowa. No, I won't yield. I heard what the gentleman had to say.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Maryland will suspend. The gentleman from Iowa will suspend.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam Speaker, I ask for a point of order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Maryland may state his point of order.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam Speaker, what recourse, if any, do I have when the gentleman misstated my point totally?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will not provide an advisory opinion.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Well, if the gentleman would yield, we could clarify it, but apparently he won't.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman has not yielded.

The gentleman from Iowa is recognized.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Madam Speaker, may I inquire as to how much time I might have?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Iowa has 1 minute and 25 seconds remaining.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Madam Speaker, the gentleman used the term ''fraud.''

It is ironic that ObamaCare itself has been so misrepresented to the American people that, for the top three things that were stated by those who advocated for ObamaCare—if you like your policy, you can keep it; if you like your doctor, you can keep your doctor, and, by the way, we are going to save these families $2,500 a year. There is not a single family in America that that promise has been kept for, and yet I hear the word ''fraud'' from the other side of the aisle.

It is not very far down to Mount Vernon where, at least by legend, it is alleged that George Washington was asked who chopped down the cherry tree. He said: I cannot tell a lie. I chopped down the cherry tree.

Well, calling the Affordable Care Act the ''Affordable Care Act'' is not true. George Washington could not utter these words. He might be able to say the ''Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act,'' because that is technically the name for it, but to utter those words and try to tell the American people it is affordable by anybody is not true, and I don't think George Washington could state that.

So we are watching here as people have jobs where they get paid overtime, 56 hours a week, 45 hours a week. They are getting paid time-and-a-half over 40 hours because that is the standard workweek, and now we see ObamaCare dropped it down to 30.

Employers did the rational thing, and we are hearing that that gap between 30 and 40 cancels insurance policies. It doesn't cancel any insurance policies. Instead, it gives people an opportunity to work, work longer, earn overtime, and for the employers and the employees to keep their contract with each other.

I strongly support this bill, H.R. 2575.

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SCHOCK).

Mr. SCHOCK. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2575, the Save American Workers Act.

Simply put, this bill just reestablishes what most Americans think is full-time work—40 hours. It is what I grew up knowing. It was what my parents and grandparents grew up knowing.

Interestingly, we have been talking a lot about jobs here in America. The President continues to call on Congress to pass more jobs legislation. Well, let's look at jobs in his home State, where I hail from in Illinois.

The Illinois Policy Institute, since 2011, says that Illinois has lost 66,000 jobs just in retail, food, and beverage since 2011. Ironically, that is more job loss than job gains—jobs added—in every sector in the President's home State. His unemployment in his home State in Illinois stands at 8.7 percent, a full 2 percentage points higher than the national average. And among young people and minorities, it is even worse. Among African American men, the rate of unemployment is 19.6 percent; among Hispanics, over 11 percent; and among young men and women, young people, ambitious people, a whopping 30 percent rate of unemployment.

Six years since the economy tanked, 5 years into the Obama administration, 4 years after ObamaCare has become law, this is what we are left with.

Now, I recently met with a manufacturer in Quincy, Illinois, who had me meeting with several hundred of his employers—Knapheide Manufacturing, people that they like, people who are doing a good job, people who are getting paid a fair wage, people who like their job, but people whose jobs are being cut back by 25 percent because of the Affordable Care Act. In true dollars and cents, this is about $330 a month that they are losing in take-home pay. Now, to put this in perspective, every time the President gets on Air Force One, it costs about 500 times that amount for every hour on Air Force One.

I would suggest the best jobs bill that Congress can pass is a jobs bill that insures people who have a job and like it can keep it, and that is what this jobs bill does.

I urge passage.

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

A little history might be helpful here. There was a time in this country where people worked 60 hours a week, 7 days a week, 6 days a week. The only reason we have a 40-hour week at all were labor unions who went out and struck and forced the process to get a 40-hour workweek.

□ 1300

They also were the ones who created the health care system in this country after the Second World War. People didn't have health insurance prior to that. When the President said, we can't have an increase in wages, that we can't have an increase in benefits, that prices can't go up, the labor unions said, well, let's have something called a benefits package.

The benefits package that was created in the middle forties included health care and pensions. It came from the union movement. They are the ones that stood in the rain and the sleet and the snow on the picket lines to get these changes.

Now, we have a law that comes in and says, let's deal with everybody in this country, and the judgment of this Congress was that an employer had the responsibility to provide health insurance for his or her employees if they worked 30 hours a week. That was considered full time.

It doesn't change the other laws, the labor laws or any of the other things. It is for the purpose of this act that employers must consider their people full time if they work 30 hours.

Now, if employers don't care, if they say, well, let me figure out how I can cheat my people out of any benefits, I am going to drop them down to 29 hours—well, you know, there are people like that. But the law says, if do you that, then you have to pay a penalty for everybody you didn't cover.

So we tried in every way possible to make it possible to give people flexibility. But this law will not work, according to the American Enterprise Institute, without a mandate that everybody be covered.

We are not changing the labor law. We are not changing overtime rules. We are not changing any of that stuff. We are saying, for the purpose of this law, an employer must cover anybody who works 30 hours. And if they don't care about their employees, if they run a restaurant, and they don't want their employees to be healthy, knock them all down to 29 hours, and let them come in sick. Then you have got a restaurant where you are going to eat lunch, and the employees haven't been able to see a doctor. That is what you are asking for.

We are saying everybody in this country ought to have health insurance, and they ought to have the access to go to a doctor when they need it. So this business about we are somehow destroying the work ethic in this country and all that kind of nonsense is simply nonsense. That is not what this is about. This is about another way to destroy the act. And you know it. We know it. And the world should understand that this is the 52nd attempt to repeal the law, to undermine it so it will not work. I urge people to vote ''no.''

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. DENT).

Mr. DENT. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of this legislation today, the Save American Workers Act.

Let's face it. The health care law has redefined what it means to be a full-time worker in this country. Notwithstanding the comments of my colleague from Washington, I must disagree with what he has been saying about it.

This bill does not in any way repeal the health care law. What it does do, it amends the law. It does not end it. Many of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle have said, ''Amend it; don't end it.'' This amends it. Let's be very clear about that.

In my district, let me tell you who is affected by this. Cafeteria workers who work in school districts, like East Penn School District or the Southern Lehigh School District, they are getting their hours reduced below 30.

I have a major national employer who just opened a major distribution facility in my district with over 500 employees. They have over 50,000 people nationwide. More than half of their employees are part time. Many of those are being reduced below 30 hours per week as a result of this law.

This is a targeted fix. We know that these hourly workers are going to see wage reductions up to 25 percent as a direct result of the law. There are consequences to this law.

It is not about some employers wanting to cheat their employees, quite frankly. It is about many employers not being able to afford the people they have. If they don't reduce their hours, many will be laid off. They will have no wages at all. That is the worst of all worlds. But that is a real consequence of this particular law. We are all hearing it in our districts.

And, by the way, we should point out one other thing too. The folks who are most directly impacted by this particular provision of the health care law

are the young, are women. They are the ones who are more likely to be affected by this. There is no question about that. And I think we should be clear on those who are most directly impacted.

There was a Hoover Institution study that pointed that out, that the young, women, and those without a college education are the most likely to be impacted by the loss of hours, loss of wages. That means less money in their pockets.

We are having a debate about the minimum wage over in the Senate right now. Well, why don't we talk about letting people work, letting them work more hours than what this law allows them to.

I urge my colleagues to support the Save American Workers Act.

Mr. MCDERMOTT. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. HURT).

Mr. HURT. I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I thank him for his leadership on this important issue.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of the Save American Workers Act. This important bill will restore the traditional 40-hour definition of full-time employment as it relates to the President's health care law.

Under the Affordable Care Act, the 30-hour rule has resulted in fewer jobs and has reduced working hours for Virginians and for Americans, putting 2.6 million workers with a median income of under $30,000 at risk of losing their jobs and losing their working hours.

In Virginia's Fifth District, we have heard from many constituents who have seen their hours cut due to this 30-hour rule. When hours are cut and wages are cut, the American people suffer. I urge my colleagues to support this important bill so that America can get back to work.

Mr. MCDERMOTT. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlelady from Kansas (Ms. JENKINS), my friend, and I ask unanimous consent that she control the remainder of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Arkansas?

There was no objection.

Ms. JENKINS. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Madam Speaker, I would like to commend the gentleman from Indiana, Congressman YOUNG, for introducing this important legislation and Chairman CAMP for making it a top priority.

We have heard from employees and employers alike about the negative consequences of the employer mandate penalty. More specifically, we have heard firsthand that defining a full-time employee as one who works no more than 30 hours per week hurts the ability of employers to hire workers and grow their businesses, and it hurts the efforts of low-wage workers trying to enter the middle class.

Even though the President has unilaterally delayed the employer mandate twice, employers are already reacting to the employer mandate by reducing their employee hours. I spoke with one business owner in my district this week who told me that although he will not reduce the hours of current employees, he has not hired a single employee for more than 30 hours of work per week in over a year. Additionally, he told me that the number of his employees working 40 hours per week has naturally declined by 25 percent and that he will continue to replace these full-time employees with part-time employees.

It is also concerning that the employer mandate penalty is disproportionately affecting Americans who can least afford it—women, young people, and low-wage earners. A study done by the Hoover Institution concluded that Americans most at risk of having their hours reduced are the 2.6 million Americans who currently work over 30 hours but have an income slightly above poverty level. Madam Speaker, 1.64 million of these folks are women and another 1.56 million are young people.

I am proud to support this legislation to restore certainty to our employers and opportunity to employees by defining a full-time workweek as 40 hours.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

SOCIETY FOR HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT,
Alexandria, VA, April 2, 2014.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) and our 275,000 members, I urge you to support the "Save American Workers Act" (H.R. 2575) when it is brought to the House floor for a vote tomorrow, Thursday, April 3. Specifically, H.R. 2575 would amend the Internal Revenue Code to modify the definition of a full-time employee from 30 hours to 40 hours of service per week for purposes of the employer mandate, which requires employers to provide health care coverage for their employees under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA).

As you may know, SHRM is the world's largest HR membership organization devoted to human resource management. SHRM members implement critical workplace policies every day. To that end, employers are encountering difficulties implementing the new PPACA requirements. Specifically, defining "full-time" as an employee working 30 hours a week is inconsistent with standard employment practices and benefits coverage requirements in the U.S. and conflicts with other federal laws. Some employers have opted to eliminate health care coverage for part-time employees, while others have re-engineered their staffing models to reduce employee work hours below the 30–hour threshold that triggers the coverage requirements. According to a recent CBO report, the U.S. economy will have the equivalent of 2.3 million fewer full-time workers by 2021 as a result of the PPACA—nearly three times previous estimates. The Save American Workers Act restores a common understanding in America, spanning over half a century, of what constitutes full-time work.

SHRM and its members believe that effective health care reform should expand access to coverage, while not inhibiting or altering employer business models. The PPACA's definition of full-time as 30 hours of service per week severely restricts an employer's flexibility to offer a benefits package that best meets the needs of their employees.

I strongly urge you and your colleagues in the House of Representatives to vote in favor of the Save American Workers Act. If you have any additional questions about how amending the definition of a full-time employee would impact workplace operations please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

MIKE AITKEN,
Vice President of Government Affairs.

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Madam Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER).

Mr. BLUMENAUER. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Madam Speaker, I understand my friend and colleague from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN) was on the floor talking about the disingenuous approach here and the discontinuity between what we are talking about today and what we did yesterday in the Budget Committee.

It is an unusual approach to public policy. Where there is a claim that they are, under their budget, if they are able to enact it, going to completely eliminate the Affordable Care Act, but they are going to keep all of the taxes, and they are going to keep the adjustment to the Medicare Advantage Program that was such a focal point in their campaign attacks last year. It was bad when Democrats did it with the Affordable Care Act, but they are going to keep all of those changes.

Last week, we had, by a legislative sleight of hand, a short-term fix for the sustainable growth rate. Now, that is the adjustment that is made on an ongoing basis on physician reimbursement under Medicare that has gotten wildly out of whack. It was something that I voted against when it was first enacted. It is an annual charade that goes on here, where we force people in the medical space to come to Washington, D.C., to plead against draconian cuts.

We actually had been working in the Ways and Means Committee and the Commerce Committee on a bipartisan approach that would actually solve this problem permanently. Then last week, we had an approach that was advanced on the floor of the House by our friends from the majority side that turned its back on the carefully negotiated bipartisan solution that we were close to being able to move forward and patched together another 1-year extension that was going to continue this abuse of people in the medical space, having the threat of dramatic cuts hanging over them.

And what happened? We had a vigorous debate on the floor of the House, where it was pretty clear that this was not going to pass, where we had the medical association and a number of medical professions just opposed to the so-called "doc fix" because of the way that it was being done, because of the short-term expedience, because cherry-

picking items that were going to make a long-term solution even harder and subject them to that same treatment.

It was clear to a number of us that it was very questionable whether that would pass. It looked like there would be enough votes to defeat it on the suspension calendar, which would require two-thirds of us to vote in favor of it and is reserved for noncontroversial issues, but this certainly no longer was noncontroversial.

And what happened? The Republican leadership put somebody in the Chair. They went ahead and effectively orchestrated a voice vote that nobody knew was coming. I know that there are Republicans that were outraged about that treatment.

And now, what are we looking at today? We are looking at another effort to undermine the Affordable Care Act. We have people talking about problems with changing the definition of ''part-time employment,'' of people having their working conditions changed for something that—excuse me—is not going to be enforced for larger firms until 2016 and for smaller firms until 2017.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. McDERMOTT. I yield an additional 1 minute to the gentleman from Oregon.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. So they are conjuring up a problem here that—maybe people will use it as an excuse for things that they want to do. But nobody is forced to do this at this point. It is not going to take effect for years.

Their proposed solution to probably a nonexistent problem is to blow another hole in the budget of over $70 billion. And, oh, this isn't paid for. It was a requirement to pay for the doc fix. But this little maneuver, $70 billion worth, isn't paid for.

□ 1315

The hypocrisy and the double-dealing here really frustrates me more than I can explain. If we would be able to deal with things in a straightforward fashion, let people know what they are voting on, and try and solve real problems rather than trying to undermine the Affordable Care Act, we would all be a lot better off.

Ms. JENKINS. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACK), my friend and colleague on the House Committee on Ways and Means.

Mrs. BLACK. Madam Speaker, I would like to say thank you to my colleague from Kansas for yielding.

Madam Speaker, ObamaCare's arbitrary 30-hour, full-time workweek puts about 2.6 million American workers making under $35,000 a year at risk of having their hours and wages cut. And 63 percent of those adversely affected by this arbitrary, 30-hour rule are female workers, according to the Hoover Institution.

It is no wonder that a majority of Americans oppose this law—and certainly no wonder that a majority of women oppose it. For all the talk about the supposed ''war on women,'' it is ObamaCare that is waging a war against female workers. That is why I am proud to stand in support of women across this country to repeal this arbitrary, 30-hour, full-time workweek.

Mr. McDERMOTT. Madam Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. BECERRA).

Mr. BECERRA. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Madam Speaker, first the facts—not the facts from this side of the aisle, not the facts from the other party, but the facts that we get from the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office, which is in charge of telling all of us—Congress and the rest of the country—what does legislation that is proposed by Democrats and Republicans actually cost, and what will it actually do. They are the nonpartisan referee that we are supposed to rely on to sort of give us the facts without getting into these political battles.

What do the folks at the Congressional Budget Office say about this bill? One, it will increase the deficit by $75 billion; two, around a million American workers will lose their health insurance coverage that they get through their employer today; and three, around five times as many workers in America will be at risk of losing hours at work as a result of this bill should it become law. Okay, so those are the facts not from Republicans, not from Democrats, but from the nonpartisan CBO.

So let's now talk a little bit about those facts a bit more, because I think a lot of folks are very confused. What the heck is going on? We are going to lose hours at work? We are going to gain? What is going on? Essentially it is this. We have got to figure out how we make sure that employers who currently offer health insurance to their employees don't say, hey, I don't want to do it anymore, so I am going to stop offering it. How can I do that? I can make sure I keep my employees employed for less hours than is required by the law.

This bill says if you have that threshold that the number of hours you have to work is 30, well, a whole bunch of employers are going to say, hey, I can game the system if I drop the number of hours my employee works at the job to less than 30. That is true.

The problem is this. The vast majority of Americans don't work 31 hours, 32 hours a week. They work 40. A lot of Americans, in fact, work 42, 44. They work overtime. So what the Affordable Care Act did was made sure that most employers who currently offer employer-covered insurance to their employees continue to do it because very few employers are going to say, I can game the system by dropping my 40-hour worker to 29 hours. That is 11 quality hours, unless you were just letting these folks just sit on a couch.

What happens if you raise the number of work hours to qualify for the affordable care coverage to 40 hours? Well, that is why the CBO says about 1 million Americans will lose their insurance coverage, because if you are working a 40-hour workweek, an employer would say, gosh, it would be tough for me to drop you to 29 hours, it would be a lot easier to say, I will drop you to 39½ hours, in which case I no longer have to offer you insurance.

That is why the Congressional Budget Office said that over 1 million Americans would lose their health insurance coverage and why it would cost about $75 billion to do this legislation, because guess what? If the employers are no longer offering you insurance and you still have to go to the doctor for your child and you can't afford it anymore because you don't have insurance, guess who gets to pay? The folks up there in the audience in the gallery and those of us here who pay taxes, because guess what? They will go to the emergency room, and now they will use the Medicaid program to help cover that bill they can no longer afford because the employer cut them back a little bit.

If we all really want to make sure Americans get to work, then let's separate the myth from the fact. Remember 4 years ago death panels? If the Affordable Care Act, this new health security law, takes effect, death panels are going to decide if your grandmother gets to live. How many death panels have you heard that have told your family member he or she will have to die? Okay, I ask anyone in this audience, do you have a doctor? Do you have insurance? Do you know your doctor? Ask yourself this question: What is the name of your government doctor? You have a doctor. Did you know your doctor works for the government? You are going to say, no, I have known my doctor for a long time. He or she doesn't work directly for the government. If you believe the myth, yes, your doctor does because, remember, this was a government takeover of health care. It was a myth.

In fact, this Affordable Care Act's law requires you to use private health insurance coverage to get your health care through private doctors and private hospitals. But what it does is it requires you to do it, and it requires employers to do it, as well. That is what the law did. It didn't say, you are going to go to a government doctor or a government hospital.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. McDERMOTT. I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. BECERRA. I thank the gentleman.

So once you separate the facts from the myth, it becomes pretty clear what we have to do. We have to make sure if you are an American we reward you for your work. If you are an American and you get health insurance through your employer, we don't want your employer to game the system and put the burden on you now. And so what we

want is to make it affordable for the employee and affordable for the employer.

This bill makes it unaffordable for the employee moving forward, and it makes it, quite honestly, for the employer, as well, because you are losing your good workers. We need to defeat this bill and try to make the Affordable Care Act work for everyone.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded not to refer to occupants of the gallery.

Ms. JENKINS. Madam Speaker, at this time, I yield 3 minutes to our colleague from Michigan (Mrs. MILLER).

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. I thank the gentlelady for yielding the time.

Madam Speaker, helping those without health insurance to get coverage certainly is a very noble goal, but the method that was used to achieve it under ObamaCare has just done so much more harm than good. And a very vivid example of this is a provision that you are talking about today that requires employers to provide health insurance for any employee that works 30 hours or more a week. Their thinking must have been that more part-time workers would receive employer-sponsored care and that employers would not change their behavior and, simply, they would absorb these new costs.

Well, I guess when you think like the government, maybe you would think that you are unconcerned about costs and you are unconcerned about balancing your books, and so that thinking sort of makes sense. But in the real world, it just does not work. Employers need to live in the real world. They are in business to make money, and they have to balance their books. And these very onerous provisions of ObamaCare make it very, very difficult for them to continue with business as usual, to comply with the law and to stay in business. So employers have been forced to cut workers' hours.

We also need to look for a moment, Madam Speaker, at those who have been most negatively impacted by ObamaCare and this particular provision of it. According to a study done by the Hoover Institution, the 30-hour rule puts 2.6 million workers with a median income of under $30,000 a year at risk of losing their job or having their hours cut. And guess what? Eighty-nine percent of the impacted workers do not have a college degree, 59 percent are between the ages of 19 and 34, and 63 percent of these workers that are so negatively impacted are women, Madam Speaker.

So this rule impacts the most vulnerable in our economy who are just starting to make their way in the world or who are working hard to support their families. And do you know I didn't need a study to actually tell me that because I am hearing it directly each and every day from those whom I am so proud to serve.

I will just give you one example—a vivid example—of many, many that we got, especially women who have contacted my office. This is from a mother named Tracy in Macomb County, Michigan, who said:

> My daughter who is a single mom and struggles to make ends meet has had her hours at work cut by over 50 hours a month so that her company doesn't have to provide her with health care. So she is now looking for a second job, which means less hours for her and less time, of course, that she is able to spend with her children.

Madam Speaker, being a single mom is tough—it is really tough, and what we do here in Washington shouldn't make it tougher. Being a small business owner and a job creator is tough. Again, what we do here in Washington shouldn't make it tougher. The 40-hour workweek has been the bedrock of our economy for decades, and workers and families have come to depend on it—that is, of course, until ObamaCare changed the rules.

It is time for us to correct this mistake and repeal this terrible provision.

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Madam Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. MILLER), my good friend.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. I thank the gentleman very much for yielding.

Madam Speaker, I rise to oppose H.R. 2575. The majority's obsession with attacking the Affordable Care Act is unprecedented, and they have never let the truth stand in their way. Today's bill is no exception. Let's call this bill for what it really is. It is a big favor to millionaires and billionaires at the expense of working families.

This legislation is perfect for the owners and CEOs of big, low-wage companies like Walmart and McDonald's. It says that you can have your employees work 30, 35, 39 hours a week without providing one iota of health care coverage. That is a great deal for the Walton family, which already has a net worth of nearly $145 billion—one family, $145 billion. And that is a great deal for the CEO of McDonald's, who makes $9,200 an hour.

But it is a terrible deal for America's workers. It means that not a penny of the revenues from these hugely profitable companies will go toward supporting health insurance for the bulk of their workers. All the while those employees continue to make as little is $7.25 an hour, and it means that the American taxpayers will be stuck with picking up the tab.

The Republicans have decided to bring this bill to the floor even though they have no pay-for, which means that this is a very pure form of deficit spending. You are incurring $75 billion worth of expenses for the taxpayers, and you have no way to pay for it. But rather than have these companies provide health insurance to their workers, you are willing to add it to the deficit of the United States for the next 40 or 50 years.

I remember when that party stood for deficit reduction. Now it is deficit creation. It is deficit creation. So let's get it straight so everyone can understand: The American people will be paying $75 billion more so that the likes of Walmart don't have to provide their employees with health care. Walmart made $16 billion in profits last year. Target made $2 billion in profits. McDonald's made more than $5 billion in profits. And they can't afford to provide hourly employees with health care? Give me a break.

And all of this to solve a problem that doesn't exist. Because let's be clear: there is nothing in the Affordable Care Act that forces an employer to cut workers' hours. In fact, the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office stated:

> There is no compelling evidence that part-time employment has increased as a result of the Affordable Care Act.

So, to benefit the richest of the rich, the Republicans want to pass this bill. The very week that we learned that more than 10 million people have gained coverage under the Affordable Care Act, the Republicans want to strip a million people of their employer-based health coverage, tossing them into government programs and leaving the rest uninsured, and having the taxpayers pick up the bill.

And this is all while the Republicans continue to block a minimum-wage increase for these very same workers—a minimum-wage increase that Goldman Sachs says will give the economy ''a bigger than usual'' boost. But they are not going to vote for the minimum-wage increase, is what they tell us. So what are they going to do instead? They are going to continue to stand on the throat of the American economy because all over this country where we have raised the minimum wage in cities, States, and towns, small businesses are hiring. There are more customers on Main Street.

□ 1330

But they are not going to allow that to happen nationwide. Instead, they are going to provide $75 billion of new deficits for these businesses who pay their taxes, for these workers who pay their taxes.

Then they will continue to block unemployment insurance, another boost to the economy. People with unemployment insurance that has run out—and if we extend it—they will spend that money immediately because they have to take care of their families and they have to pay their rent, these are customers on Main Street; but Republicans are not going to do that.

Economists left and right tell us one of the biggest boosts to the American economy is immigration reform, but they are not going to do that. They are not going to give our economy that boost, but they are going to add $75 billion to the deficit, but they are not going to let somebody have food stamps for the deficit.

They are not going to let somebody have health care for the deficit, but

they are going to reward the big employers for throwing people off their health care rolls.

This is some plan you have for America. This is some plan you have for working families. Clearly, when the newspapers and the editorial boards accuse you of doing nothing in Washington, they misread you.

You are doing great harm to the budget, you are doing great harm to health care, and you are doing great harm to these low-income workers; but you are doing a great favor for the richest of the rich in this country.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to address their remarks to the Chair and not to others in the second person.

Ms. JENKINS. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO).

Mrs. CAPITO. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of this commonsense proposal to change the Affordable Care Act definition of full-time employment back to 40 hours per week, where it belongs.

The 40-hour workweek has been recognized for decades as the standard for full-time employment. Small business owners, union leaders, and individual workers have recognized that the ACA's definition of full-time employment risks damaging the traditional 40-hour workweek and the paychecks that those 40 hours bring.

As we have heard with the Hoover Institution study, the 30-hour rule puts 2.6 million workers at risk of losing their jobs or losing their work hours, harming those who can least afford to take a pay cut.

Those workers have a median income of $30,000. More than half of them have a high school diploma or less, and more than half of them are women. In practice, many of these workers will have to find two part-time jobs to equal what they were bringing home.

Balancing two jobs means less time with your family, not to mention the tremendous stress that folks who will have to go in this direction will feel.

Passing this bill will help create jobs. One-half of small businesses recently surveyed said they will either cut hours for full-time employees or replace them with part-time employees.

We need to make it easier for businesses to hire full-time employees, not harder, but the ACA's mandate and the administration's repeated delays have only created more uncertainty for businesses and moms throughout this country.

I urge my colleagues to join me in helping working families and working women and job-creating small businesses by voting for the Save American Workers Act.

Mr. McDERMOTT. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time; but could you give us an accounting of our time?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Washington has 19½ minutes remaining. The gentlewoman from Kansas has 30½ minutes remaining.

Ms. JENKINS. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN).

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam Speaker, I am so appreciative of the opportunity for us to be able to come to the floor and have this discussion today. I think our constituents are just shocked with what they see happening because of the President's health care law. They can't believe it.

They had heard the rhetoric from the minority leader that it was going to create 4 million jobs. What they have found out is that it is costing them their jobs. It is costing them wage increases. It is costing them certainty in the job market.

I have to tell you, it really is a war on jobs. It is a war on women, and we are seeing that because women—63 percent of those affected by the adverse impact of the President's health care law are women.

Let me give you one example of this. I was in the grocery store recently. I passed a lady with two children in her grocery cart, and we chatted, nodded at each other.

The next time around, the next aisle, she said: Are you MARSHA BLACKBURN? I said: Yes, I am. She asked: Can I tell you my story? I said: Absolutely.

This is her story: She worked in the office park where this grocery store was located. Her husband is self-employed. The family's benefit structure, insurance, was through her job, an employer with just over 50 people.

Her hours as an office manager and assistant were cut to 29 hours a week. Her time was cut. Every week impacts her, impacts her husband. In one day, she lost her insurance, she lost her wage increases, and she was forced to healthcare.gov.

Also, what she had to do—she is a survivor. She said: I went to the mall, and I went to a retailer and got a part-time job. She said: Thank goodness I have great in-laws. They are going to help watch the children.

Here is what is so sad: She now is working two jobs, and she is losing time to be with those children as they are playing soccer and baseball, as they are doing Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts, as they are trying to get to church to sing in the choir.

She has had to rely on her in-laws to handle those, so that she can work a second job to pay for a program that she doesn't want and pay her taxes to a government that refuses to live within its means. I support the SAW Act.

Mr. McDERMOTT. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE).

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague.

Madam Speaker, throughout this debate, Republicans have been claiming that they are champions of working people, but that is not the case here. This is not the Save American Workers Act; it is the Sabotaging American Workers Act.

The Affordable Care Act is based on the premise that the large businesses can afford to offer health coverage to their workers, and they should do the responsible thing and offer coverage. That is only fair.

Ninety-six percent of all businesses don't have to offer any of their workers coverage under the ACA, but for the 4 percent of businesses that have the means, the law says they need to do the right thing by their full-time workers and offer them health coverage.

Republicans don't think businesses owe their employees anything at all. The Family and Medical Leave Act, Republicans say: that is not important. Equal pay for equal work, Republicans say: women don't deserve that. A fair minimum wage, Republicans say: absolutely not. And quality, affordable health care, Republicans say: Who cares?

Well, I think bigger businesses should do the right thing by their workers, and that is what the ACA asks them to do.

So what does this bill that is before us today actually do? This bill says big businesses could deny health coverage to someone working 39 hours a week, 52 weeks a year. That is not a part-time worker. Their employer should provide them health coverage.

Five times more people work around 40 hours a week than work around 30 hours a week. That is why this bill will throw 1 million Americans off of their employer's health coverage. That is why it would result in millions and millions of workers seeing their hours cut below 40 hours a week.

What is it—why are Republicans claiming people are losing hours right and left because of the ACA? But the Congressional Budget Office told them flatly, ''There is no compelling evidence that part-time labor has increased as a result of the Affordable Care Act.''

But I doubt that means much to my Republican friends because they do not look at the facts. We have added 8.6 million private sector jobs since the law passed, but Republicans simply ignore that. There are fewer part-time workers than there were before the law passed, but that doesn't get in the way of the Republican talking points.

Madam Speaker, 7.1 million people have enrolled through the exchanges. Millions and millions more have signed up through Medicaid or directly with an insurer, but Republicans still claim people don't want health insurance coverage, or they claim the numbers are made up.

The ACA is working. Millions are getting coverage for the first time. We are adding jobs to the economy. Giving big business a green light to drop coverage for their workers is not the way to move this country forward.

Workers have the right to decent health care, and businesses should help them get it. That is the fair thing, that is the right thing, and this bill takes us in the total wrong direction.

So I urge my colleagues, vote ''no.'' This is a very bad bill for America's

workers. Don't let the Republicans kid you otherwise.

Ms. JENKINS. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Mrs. ELLMERS).

Mrs. ELLMERS. Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague who is working so hard on the Ways and Means Committee and also as vice chair of our conference.

I rise today in support of the Save American Workers Act, an important bill that I am proud to say I am a cosponsor of as well. Every day, we learn more and more of the dangers facing millions of Americans due to the Affordable Care Act, or ObamaCare.

Just last week, in North Carolina, we learned that substitute teachers will be getting their hours cut and their incomes cut because of this irresponsible mandate. North Carolina teachers are being notified of their cuts, and millions of hardworking Americans across this country will work less and suffer more in order to comply with this law.

In my own district, substitute teachers are facing the same problem. In Lee County, an official confirmed to my office:

> We are cutting the hours of our part-time people, our substitute teachers.

Nationwide, 76 percent of public school teachers are women. This is a direct assault on women. This so-called law is a complete and total assault on women. More than half of the workforce today, of the 72 million women in the workforce, are the primary wage earners for their family.

Across this country, women stand to lose the most. Sixty-three percent of them are women, those who are at risk of losing their hours. The facts speak for themselves. I encourage my colleagues to vote for this bill, another changing bill, changing this very bad law known as ObamaCare.

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. JENKINS. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Minnesota (Mrs. BACHMANN).

Mrs. BACHMANN. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Kansas for sponsoring this extremely important time we are taking today. It is so important because this is a law, the signature piece of the President's legislative agenda, the ObamaCare act that we are dealing with today has impacted people's lives in such a profound way.

I am reminded of the President of the United States who, five days before he assumed office, said he was planning to fundamentally transform the United States of America.

We didn't know if that was rhetorical flourish or exactly what it would mean. It has taken many forms since that time, but one thing I didn't think I would ever see in my district on the faces of beautiful, innocent people is a fundamental transformation.

But I can tell you very clearly, Madam Speaker, that I have seen a fundamental transformation in the face of a lot of women, women's faces in my district, and it is this: I am seeing them, for the first time, not be able to look me in the eye.

There is a loss of dignity. There is a sense of shame, and there is an embarrassment because there are women, Madam Speaker, who had full-time jobs who could support their families, and now, they don't have them.

They have been lost because their employer no longer can keep the full-time jobs. I have seen women who have lost their jobs altogether. I have seen women whose hours have been backed off to the extent that they can hardly afford to pay the gas to go in the car to get to work. Life has really changed for women in my district.

This isn't made up. This is real. That is the fundamental transformation, and I am sorry to say, Madam Speaker, it is not for the better. You see, we all hoped that, perhaps once this bill passed, that maybe we would be proven wrong. Maybe this bill actually would help a lot of women in our district.

□ 1345

I am not denying that there aren't a few people who have been helped—there are some—but what is remarkable is the number of men and women who I have met who lost health insurance, who said to me: Michele, what happened? The President promised me if I liked my plan, I could keep it. Why can't I keep it? They have said to me: Michele, I relied on my doctor.

One woman who called me was scheduled for cancer surgery. She was denied. She wasn't able to go through. The hospital canceled it. Then her doctor was changed out from under her and she was depressed. She didn't know where she could go. We spent hours on the phone to try and help find someone who could take care of her.

Then I got a call, Madam Speaker, from a female physician who said: I want you to know, in my practice, I spend 90 percent of my time speaking to my patients, diagnosing them, and giving them advice, and now I spend 50 percent of my time doing that because I have to spend 50 percent of my time filling out paperwork.

Madam Speaker, let's listen to the women of this country and fundamentally transform their lives for the better. That is why I support H.R. 2575, the Save American Workers Act.

Ms. JENKINS. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Washington State (Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS), our honorable chair of the Republican Conference.

Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS. Madam Speaker, I want to thank the gentlewoman from Kansas for her leadership on this important issue.

I rise to join in expressing strong support for H.R. 2575, the Save American Workers Act. This is to restore the 40-hour workweek and to save jobs. All across this country, people continue to struggle under this economy. They see it when they look at their paycheck and their take-home pay. They see it at the doctor's office, and they see it in the workforce.

Today, too many hardworking Americans are feeling the impact of higher premiums and higher deductibles. Too many people are having their hours cut, losing their jobs, and losing their health insurance—all because of ObamaCare. In fact, CBO recently reported that 2.5 million Americans are at risk of having their hours cut because of this law. These are the very people that are often struggling to make ends meet, whether it is the young people, recent college grads, or single moms trying to provide for their families.

The President likes to suggest that his policies are helping women, but actually what is happening is that his policies are setting women back. Women are being hurt by these policies. Hundreds of them have already lost their jobs in the home health care industry. Nearly 2 million people will see their hours cut or their jobs lost in the service industries.

You know, for the first time, earlier this year with the jobs report, we actually saw where the health care sector lost jobs where women disproportionately are actually employed. Women, single moms, young people who work late nights at a McDonald's drive-through, bag groceries at the local market, or serve as teachers' aides in the classroom will be impacted because of this law.

Women, and all across America, people succeed when our economy succeeds, when jobs are created and you can take home more pay. That is the definition of good policy. That is what this bill actually achieves, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Madam Speaker, I yield myself 30 seconds to point out to my colleagues that CBO did not say people would lose their jobs. They said because they have health care, they no longer have to stay in the job that they have, and they will be able to stay home or do something else, and that will reduce the number of hours of work. They did not say the bill cuts them out or knocks them out of work.

Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY).

Mr. CONNOLLY. Madam Speaker, I am listening to the stories here on the floor. I must say I am a little surprised at this newfound commitment on the other side of the aisle to women.

So how about raising the minimum wage for women? How about joining with us in extending unemployment insurance for women? How about the fact that 7.1 million Americans have enrolled in this program you don't like, that you want to call a failure? 7.1 million of our fellow Americans beg to differ, and a lot of them are women.

It is not true what you are selling today on the floor, I would say to my friends, Madam Speaker. In fact, women will be the biggest beneficiary

of ObamaCare, protecting their families, protecting their health care, protecting their reproductive rights, which you—I would say to my friends on the other side of the aisle, Madam Speaker—would deny. Other than that, yes, you are protecting women.

If we are going to be serious about this, Madam Speaker, let's recognize the truth. The truth is this ObamaCare protects the interests of women. This bill would undo it. In fact, the biggest victims of legislative action, if we pass this bill today, will in fact be the very women some of my colleagues have been talking about today.

I urge my colleagues who say they are committed to the interests of women to vote against this bad bill and to support the expansion of health care, especially for working women in America.

Ms. JENKINS. Madam Speaker, before I yield to the gentlewoman from Wyoming, I just want to highlight that, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, a substitute teacher earning $11.07 an hour, if that substitute teacher's hours were cut back from 39 to 29 hours, she would lose $125 per week, or $6,484 per year, or nearly a 26 percent pay cut. These are the folks we are here fighting for.

With that, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Wyoming (Mrs. LUMMIS).

Mrs. LUMMIS. Madam Speaker, I come from the wild West. I come from a place of wide open opportunity. And women in the West want freedom and liberty and the ability to create their own business. Women want to expand the businesses they already have and play a bigger role in the American entrepreneurial dream.

But ObamaCare makes it more affordable for women entrepreneurs to keep their employee numbers below 50 and their employee hours below 30. This makes no one's life better—not women entrepreneurs and not for their women employees. In fact, two-thirds of those most at risk of losing work hours because of ObamaCare are women.

Let's fix this. Let's save American workers. Let's pass the Save American Workers Act.

Mr. McDERMOTT. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LIPINSKI).

Mr. LIPINSKI. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for the courtesy of yielding, especially today as I rise in support of H.R. 2575.

I was first approached about the problem with the 30-hour full time definition by Steve Palmer, one of the owners of Palmer Place restaurant, an institution in LaGrange, Illinois. This is a family business committed to their community and their employees. They offer insurance coverage to their workers when possible. Because of the nature of the business, many of their employees are part-time and work flexible schedules. But the ACA's definition of full-time work has put the Palmer family's one restaurant on the cusp of being classified as a large business. The family, thus, finds itself facing a hefty new expense for health insurance or a fine.

This is the scenario being faced by many family-owned businesses struggling to plan for the future. The workers at some of these businesses are about to get a far different deal than they bargained for when they accepted their jobs. As a result of the 30-hour rule, some part-time employees are seeing their hours reduced.

The CBO has confirmed that shifting to a 40-hour full time definition would lead some workers to seeing an increase in their take-home pay. In addition to lost wages, many workers could lose scheduling flexibility so that they won't cycle in and out of full-time status from week to week. These are ways that workers will lose.

The administration has already acknowledged the difficulty in implementing the employer coverage rules of the ACA through two delays in substantial administrative changes. Clearly, the administration knows there are problems with the employer coverage rules as currently contained in the law. Today, it is reported that former White House Press Secretary Robert Gibbs said: ''I don't think the employer mandate will go into effect.''

Madam Speaker, let's do right by America's part-time workers and by family businesses. Let's pass this bill and fix this broken part of the ACA. That is what the American people are looking for. That is what we should do.

Ms. JENKINS. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Indiana (Mrs. WALORSKI).

Mrs. WALORSKI. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of the Save American Workers Act. ObamaCare redefines full-time employment as 30 hours per week, rather than the traditional 40 hours per week, and mandates that any business with more than 50 full-time equivalent employees must provide health insurance. If these businesses do not provide insurance, they face a tax penalty.

My district is ripe for job growth. Indiana's manufacturing industry is booming. Yet, as I travel throughout the district, I speak frequently with business owners afraid to expand due to this rule.

Other Hoosier businessowners will be forced to lay off employees if this 30 hour definition is not changed. Women are disproportionately affected. Sixty-three percent of those most at risk of lost hours in my district are female.

The Save American Workers Act will unleash job creation by repealing this 30 hour definition and replacing it with the traditional 40 hour definition.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this bill.

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, would you give us an accounting of the time?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. POE of Texas). The gentleman from Washington has 12 minutes remaining, and the gentlewoman from Kansas has 19 minutes remaining.

Mr. McDERMOTT. I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. JENKINS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. KELLY), a colleague on the House Ways and Means Committee.

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 2575. You know, sometimes you have to figure out, first of all, where did you come from to find out to where you got.

I was trying to understand the 40-hour workweek. Where could it possibly have started? How did we come to accept that, and for 70-some years that is full-time employment, 40 hours? I found out it was actually the product of the Depression. When they did the Fair Labor Standards Act, they said we need to have a measure, so it will be 44 hours—part of the New Deal, by the way. In 1940, they changed it to 40 hours a week was full-time employment. Then, all of a sudden, ObamaCare comes along and the New Deal has been replaced by a bad deal. We told people, no, no, no. It is not 40; it is 30 hours. That is what full-time employment is.

Now, when you go back to 1937 and 1940, what were they trying to do? They were trying to get America back to work. It was after the Great Depression, so it was about getting folks back to work. Now, you fast-forward to today, and it is not about getting people back to work. It is about getting ObamaCare to work.

This makes absolutely no sense. Who does it hurt the most? It has hurt low-income and middle-income people. 2.6 million folks have been affected by either losing a job or losing hours.

□ 1400

So you have got to scratch your head and say, Wait a minute. If we are really trying to get America back to work, why would we take their hours from them? Why would we slash their workweeks by 25 percent and think it is going to work? It has nothing to do with working people. It has to do with making ObamaCare work.

I have got to tell you that we have the New Deal that got replaced with a bad deal, and now we have H.R. 2575. Do you know what it is? It is a good deal. This is a good deal. With 435 Members, any one of us could say that this just doesn't make sense right now for the folks we represent. Why would we do this to them? Why would we take their work hours away? Why would we put in jeopardy 2.6 million people just in an effort to make ObamaCare work?

If it is about making it easier for Americans to work, then it is high time we start to turn the tide. It is time we look at what is going on and that we say to ourselves, If it worked before, why can't it work again? Why can't we go back to 40 hours? Why

can't we make it easier for American families to get through the hard times that they are going through right now?

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. JENKINS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to yield 2 minutes to the gentlelady from South Dakota (Mrs. NOEM).

Mrs. NOEM. I thank the gentlelady for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of this bill to change the definition of ''full time'' in the IRS code to 40 hours per week on average.

The 30-hour workweek instituted in ObamaCare is limiting economic opportunity across the country. It is especially harmful for women when 63 percent of those who are most at risk are women. South Dakota has one of the highest rates in the country of working women, and I have had them come up to me time and time again, talking about how this regulation has impacted them. They no longer are getting the hours that they need to pay their bills as their hours have been cut. Where they are working, they may be forced to take on another part-time job. If you want to talk about putting challenges in their way when they are trying to fulfill all the requirements of work, of paying their bills, of being with their children, of having successful family lives, this regulation is one of the worst.

ObamaCare pressures employers to restrict their full-time ranks in order to avoid the employer mandate, putting millions of workers at risk of having their hours cut. Now we have two definitions—the Department of Labor definition and then the new IRS definition defined by ObamaCare. Only here in Washington, D.C., do things like that happen. There are two different and exclusive definitions for the very same thing. Thus, many workers have had their workweeks cut down to a maximum of 29 hours. In many instances, the possibility of their being promoted to full time no longer rests on their dedication or on their achievements but now on their bosses' abilities to weed through the regulatory environment here in Washington, D.C.

Mr. Speaker, I used to run a small family business, so let me close by saying that women-owned businesses have surged over the past 20 years. We should not be putting obstacles in their way, making it more difficult for them to own those businesses, to undermine their growth and their ability to create jobs. I urge my colleagues to support this bill. Let's take a step towards restoring economic freedom in this country.

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I now yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Chicago, Illinois (Ms. SCHAKOWSKY).

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, there has actually been a debate on this floor by all of my colleagues, women, coming down from the Republican side, talking about how wonderful this bill is for women and how bad ObamaCare is for women.

I want to make this point, which is that, before the Affordable Care Act was passed, there was gender discrimination against women. The standard body was clearly the male body because women were paying about 48 percent more for health care before this law went into effect, a law that said there would be no more gender discrimination, that women could not be charged more because things like pregnancy might take place. Women became among the biggest winners under the new Affordable Care Act.

In talking about protecting women, it is interesting to me that the Republicans, including my women colleagues, oppose the raising of the minimum wage. Two-thirds of minimum wage workers are women. They oppose the Paycheck Fairness Act. Isn't it time in 2014 that women get paid equal pay for equal work? They oppose the funding of preschool. They support a budget that would cut Pell Grants for colleges. They oppose making sure that the Affordable Care Act will provide contraceptives as a preventative service to women.

I am also hearing about the economics of freedom. Under the Affordable Care Act, now you don't have to be locked into a job because you need the health insurance. That is what I call freedom. Suddenly, entrepreneurialism is unleashed because women, and men are able to say, I am going to take a risk, but I am going to still be able to find health insurance.

The other thing I hear is that it is a job killer. Actually, H.R. 2575 would force 1 million people to lose their employer-provided coverage, and it would increase the number of uninsured up to 500,000. This is not a number that has come out of some Democratic think tank. This is a number that comes from the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office.

Ask the workers themselves, and this is what they will tell you. The National Education Association says, We oppose this bill because we believe it would create a disincentive for employers to provide health coverage.

They act like we are changing what full-time employment is, from 30 to 40 hours.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. MCDERMOTT. I yield the gentlelady an additional 1 minute.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Here is what we are changing. We are saying, if you work 30 hours, your employer should provide you with health insurance.

What this bill says is, now, if you work 39 hours, your employer can deny you health care coverage. So it actually raises the bar and says that workers can no longer get coverage between the 30 and 39 hours that they work. This is not a good thing.

The American Federation of Labor represents millions of workers. This bill not only fails to address the problem it was intended to solve, but it makes the problem worse. Raising the threshold of how many hours will only move the cliff and will actually increase employers' incentives to reduce workers' hours. The Communications Workers of America say the threshold from 30 to 40 hours per week doesn't help. It would actually encourage employers to lower the number of hours.

There has been some implication, I think, that the Teamsters Union is supporting this bill. That is not true. The Teamsters are not supporting this legislation. I would urge my colleagues to oppose it as well, and I encourage my women colleagues to stand up for women.

Ms. JENKINS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. KELLY), my colleague on the Committee of Ways and Means, control the remainder of the time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Kansas?

There was no objection.

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, at this time, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. ROSKAM), my friend and colleague.

Mr. ROSKAM. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, the Obama administration has done a clever thing over these past years, and that is to redefine things.

They redefined the word ''balance,'' not to mean the traditional understanding of ''balance,'' but they said, No, no, no. That really means long-term fiscal sustainability. That is the new definition of ''balance.''

They did the same thing on tax reform. The common understanding of ''tax reform'' is that you lower rates; you use loopholes to bring rates down; and you simplify the Code. Instead, they said, No. ''Tax reform,'' for us, means, yes, let's close loopholes, but let's use those closures to fuel more spending.

The richest one I have heard so far is to hear a White House spokesman make the claim, basically, that a job is now a burden and that now, with ObamaCare, there are going to be over 2 million Americans who are shed from that burden, Mr. Speaker, and that they don't have to worry about working anymore because they have got this new health care plan.

It is now finding itself coming true in this bill as well, and what the Obama administration has said is, We are just going to create a new definition of ''full-time work.'' Full-time work has meant 9 to 5. Full-time work has meant 40 hours a week. Not with ObamaCare. ObamaCare has now redefined it. It is a long pattern of redefinitions, and these redefinitions have led to failure.

So here is the thing. We have got an opportunity to remedy this. We have got an opportunity to make it right. We have got an opportunity to recalibrate full-time work to what it has historically meant, and here is what the

bottom line is: if we recalibrate it, we will get more work to the very people whom our opponents on the other side claim to speak for, and the irony is that their remedies mean less work for the very groups that they speak to advocate for.

Mr. Speaker, we have got a chance today, and that is to support this bill, to do it quickly and to get us back to the normal definition of ''full-time work,'' which is 40 hours a week.

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, at this time, I would like to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. SCALISE), another colleague and good friend of mine.

Mr. SCALISE. I want to thank my friend from Pennsylvania for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this legislation.

Of course, President Obama's own health care law has now resulted in the direct loss of work for millions of people across this country. One of the perverse incentives in ObamaCare actually forces employers through incentives in the law to drop the number of hours that their employees work. This isn't something employees want, and it is not something employers want; yet it is directly there in the law where you get penalized—you actually get fined by the IRS—if you are not doing this. When you talk about these impacts of the law, it is having devastating impacts on families across this country. The President was talking about the minimum wage. The President has literally forced a 25 percent pay cut for millions of Americans through his incentive in the law that is encouraging employers to drop their workforce hours below 40 hours a week to 30 hours and 28 hours a week.

I represent parts of the city of New Orleans. Some of the best restaurants in the world are in the city of New Orleans. We love going to those restaurants, and so many people from all over the world love going to those restaurants, but many of those restaurant owners tell me that they love their workforces, that they love the employees who work for them. They are like family businesses. Yet they are being forced because of this law to drop the hours of those workers below 30 hours.

There is no reason for this, Mr. Speaker. This bill fixes this problem.

President Obama and the White House said, Hey, look. This is a burden for poor workers. This is freeing them up to do things that they really want to do—as if people don't want to be working. One of the things they said is that you could go sit in a park and write poetry. These people don't want to be sitting in a park, writing poetry, at 2 o'clock on a Thursday afternoon. They want to be at their jobs, working, and the law doesn't let them do that.

Let's fix this. We can get this economy moving again. These are crazy policies, like this component of ObamaCare that literally forces people to be dropped below 30 hours to address some new definition of ''part-time worker'' and ''full-time worker.''

These are the kinds of policies that are devastating American families. This is what we are here to fix. We need to pass this bill, fix this problem and get people back to work so they don't have to sit on a park bench on a Thursday afternoon, and they can actually be at their jobs, working.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Pennsylvania has 11 minutes remaining, and the gentleman from Washington has 8 minutes remaining.

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

My colleagues out here today have really had a good time telling personal stories, so I have got a few of them for them.

Last week, the distinguished Senator from Texas, Senator CRUZ, put a poll up on his Facebook, asking if people are better off under the law. The responses were not what he expected. The overwhelming number of responses—he got nearly 56,000 responses—were in support of the ACA. If you look at it online, of the most recent 100 comments, there are just two that appear more negative than positive, so that is 2 percent that are against it.

One of them said:

Not only am I better off now, but I have friends who are better off, too.

The second one said:

Yes. I have MS, and I lost my job, and I wasn't able to get any other insurance because of my preexisting condition. Thank you, President Obama.

Another one said:

This Nation is better off for helping people avoid the devastation that poor health can bring. Thank you, ACA.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Senator Ted Cruz

Quick poll: Obamacare was signed into law four years ago yesterday. Are you better off now than you were then?

Comment with YES or NO!

Like—Comment—March 24 at 5:45am—

Martha Hall Hansen, Pat White Garcia, Linda Hidy and Top Comments 10,204 others like this.

5,120 shares

Carol Rietz Gates: Not only am I better off, but I have friends that are better off. Furthermore, this nation is better off for helping folks avoid the devastation that poor health can bring. Thank you, ACA!

1,359—March 25 at 6:46pm

13 Replies—1 hr

Kris Williams: I and a few million other people are a lot better off. I hope you are enjoying your Cadillac plan given to you by your wife's employer, Goldman Sachs. Stop trying to deny the rest of us the peace of mind that quality, affordable health insurance provides us.

1,342—March 24 at 10:13pm

16 Replies—11 mins

Benjamin Corey Feinblum: Yes. Costs stopped climbing. I'm a small business guy and I don't have to worry because insurance companies can't drop us anymore.

2,901—March 24 at 3:14pm

52 Replies—10 mins

Lili Ann Fuller: YES, best law ever! And way overdue! I spent all my retirement savings on overpriced insurance in order to save my life when I got cancer in 2005. I had no income and now have no savings. If it had been in place back then, I wouldn't be looking at a poor retirement, but at least I am not worried about having care anymore.

2,300—March 24 at 2:04pm—Edited

25 Replies—7 hrs

Lashawn Bell: Yes I have MS and I lost my job I wouldn't be able to get any other insurance because of my pre existing condition thank you President Obama. If people get sick they will realize how this is good.

1,288—March 24 at 2:00pm

16 Replies—1 hr

Anne Wittig Pryor: I don't have Obamacare, but someone I know who had bad mouthed it for the past for years, recently had to get coverage after her husband recently passed away. The first words out of her mouth, ''Thank God for Obamacare.'' She is a staunch Republican and believes everything she hears on Fox News. And those who are saying they won't comply are cutting off their noses to spite their faces. Wake up!

2,798—March 24 at 1:49pm

52 Replies—2 hrs

Paige Brennan: Impeach Ted Cruz! He caused the shutdown that hurt this country badly!

3,188—March 24 at 1:18pm

73 Replies—1 hr

Joe Caparco: Isn't it funny that the govemment ''makes'' you buy car insurance and home owners insurance and no one says a word. For those of you who say you can't afford health insurance what will you do when you need your health insurance. No need to answer I alre . . . see more

1,984—March 24 at 1:11pm

68 Replies

Larry E White: Absolutely better off, now lets push for universal healthcare for everyone.

2,705—March 24 at 1:08pm

26 Replies—1 hr

Sherry Scott Stewart: Absolutely Yes! I have pre-existing condition that I was born with but didn't appear until later in life and could not get health insurance at all. I finally have decent affordable insurance.

What a huge relief!

1,134—March 24 at 1:05pm

4 Replies

Dave Ninehouser: Yes, my wife's little niece who is very sick would have hit her lifetime limit by now if not for the ACA. The nation is better off.

1,684—March 24 at 11:44am

10 Replies

Kris Williams: What is really sad is how the American people have been kept in the dark as to what the ACA really is. The whole purpose and driving force behind the ACA was to Improve care and lower costs. The majority of the law deals with Medicare. The medical cost . . . See More

1,047—March 25 at 1:08am—Edited

32 Replies

Robin Conrad: Yes, my son has Healthcare for the first time and I know many friends it is helping. The ACA is awesome.

1,101—March 24 at 7:16pm

18 Replies

Shelley Laysi Peterson: hummm something tells me this isn't quite the response Mr Cruz was hoping for ROFLMAO

1,828—March 24 at 5:58pm

36 Replies—4 hrs

Shelley Laysi Peterson: YES, YES & YES!! Hands Off My Obamacare!!

1,076—March 24 at 5:52pm

16 Replies—14 mins

Felicia Willems: Yes! Everyone in my family has a pre-existing condition that range from minor to serious. We were uninsurable on the individual market Now we've got

great coverage through healthcare.gov. We did NOT get a subsidy but it still fits our budget!
2,711—March 24 at 3:19pm
69 Replies
Meredith Stark: Oh Senator Cruz, four years ago we didn't have health insurance, and now we do. It's helping my husband and I.
914—March 24 at 2:26pm
11 Replies—1 hr
Laura Eakes: Only in America would people be cursing other people for finally being able to get health insurance, and calling them mooches and socialists. I'd rather be a socialist than a selfish psychopath like many right wingers on here
1,081—March 24 at 2:09pm
27 Replies—9 hrs
Jeffrey Albuna: Well Mr. Cruz, firstly I want to say, I think your actions putting our country hostage for your 21 hour publicity stunt were awful and despicable. You stood up there for 21 hours railing against Obamacare, to show the Tea Party you ''care'' about their v . . . See More
1,444—March 24 at 1:53pm
18 Replies
Brenda Myrick Yasulevicz: For those of you who think that anyone who answered yes ''is a part of the problem'', I have worked hard my entire life and done fairly well. I always had jobs with insurance. Then I became self employed and found out I couldn't get insured because of pre-existing conditions. (None are serious or life threatening, or even require much care) I am very grateful for this insurance!
997—March 24 at 1:26pm
16 Replies—2 hrs
David C. Brown: Yes Ted. In spite of your empty pandering rhetoric I am better off now that I was four years ago. I now have an insurance plan, purchased from a private company, that must insure me rather than suck profit from me. Before, I was dumped from insurance f . . . See More
2,071—March 24 at 11:47am
47 Replies—2 hrs
Art Zimmerman: Damn straight I am . . . we all are after the Bush/Cheney near destruction of our country and the bullshit trickle-down Republican garbage!!
576—March 24 at 6:34pm—Edited
Joy Williams: Of course we are better off. We will now have consistent care without it destroying our finances.
491—March 24 at 4:32pm
2 Replies
Chuck Provonchee: Yes, Cruz, you pitiful waste of space, we are all much better off under the ACA. The only ones who would not agree with that are the mindless people who blindly follow the GOP and vote against their own best interests. You should enjoy your time as senator because I don't think you will ever win another election.
548—March 24 at 2:45pm
11 Replies—2 hrs
Russ Campbell: Thank God for Obama Care. I now have health care and they discovered I have cancer. I'm going to have surgery in one week and I might live. Without Obamacare I would just die.
576—March 24 at 1:10pm
34 Replies—2 hrs
Terry Kelley-King: YES . . . I have insurance and am very happy to have it . . . of course it could be better by making it single payer . . . but this is a republican health plan so it can't be perfect
1,699—March 24 at 1:05pm—Edited
47 Replies
Dave Posmontier: Definitely YES!. We now have drug coverage and do pay a little bit more in co-pays but get this—My wife and I are saving $550 a month in premiums. Thanks you President Obama . . .
609—March 24 at 1:04pm
4 Replies
Kevin Lawton: Much better off. We'd be even better off if people like you weren't in the US Senate.
1,736—March 24 at 12:15pm
32 Replies
Barbara J Cobuzzi: Yes, much better off.
1,042—March 24 at 12:06pm
11 Replies—1 hr
LN Winchester: YES, It's great! Not only for myself and my kids, but for the other five million people who can now get the medical care they need! I'm actually paying a bit more, but I don't mind because so many families are getting the medical services they need, in some cases desperately. That makes it all worthwhile.
1,169—March 24 at 11:56am
28 Replies
Amanda Rosales: YES . . . I was denied heath insurance because of having MS as a pre-existing condition and would soon be going medically bankrupt or stop getting treatment. I now have excellent coverage and have a brighter future!
1,205—March 24 at 11:52am
33 Replies—6 hrs
Bruce Lindner: I just left my insurance agent's office. He walked me through my options with the ACA, and to put it mildly, I'm one happy customer! As a self-employed cancer survivor and a heart attack survivor—factoring in the outrageous prices they've been gougin . . . See More
397—March 28 at 3:56pm
11 Replies
Alisha Clark: Obamacare does not regulate health care, it regulates health insurance companies. Who in their right mind wouldn't want health insurance companies to be regulated?
472—March 26 at 12:26pm
15 Replies—1 hr
Alisha Clark: This morning I received a private message from one of my many fb friends This person would like me to share her story. I can only imagine what this person is going through and I want her to know that we are now in this fight together.
Hi Alisha: I am n . . . See More
434—March 26 at 5:48am
23 Replies—4 hrs
Cathy Paganelli Kaelin: YES! Saving $350 per month, preventative care plus dental & vision. And now my 2 adult children have health insurance which they went without for 2 years. Yes, this family is grateful for the ACA. Thank you, President Obama, for taking this country into the direction of health care for all!
434—March 25 at 5:17am
13 Replies
Bonnie Flournoy: Yes. Previously, I had your plan whereby the ER was my primary physician. Having a strategy alone to seek medical help has lifted a burden. The burden was making me just as sick as my condition. In fact, I think the stress caused the illness.
874—March 24 at 2:08pm
15 Replies
Kathe Mendelsohn-White: YES! Without the ACA, my 21 year old autistic son would not have any insurance. Thank you President Obama.
1,778—March 24 at 1:12pm
66 Replies
Paulina Trefault: At the same time, costs are coming down. The Congressional Budget Office found the health care law is making significant contributions to fiscal responsibility. The CBO's most recent estimates show that repealing the law would actually increase deficit . . . See More
435—March 24 at 12:15pm
8 Replies
Tricia Barsamian-Wise: Yes . . . I no longer work 2 jobs and have the security of not being denied, my insurance going up or being canceled. I clearly understand Ted Cruz's POV on this, his financial backers only hired him to do their dirty work. But what I find so hard to comprehend is average Americans being so cruel and hateful.
950—March 24 at 11:52am
28 Replies—6 hrs
Vik Verma: Yes
404—March 24 at 11:34am
Charles Reff: Yes, it allowed me to get better insurance then my job was offering and for less.
1,368—March 24 at 6:38am
28 Replies
Chuck Myers: What I'd REALLY like to know, Senator Cruz, is are you a big enough man to READ the tens of thousands of comments below and admit that just MAYBE, you were WRONG!!!!! If you were truly a representative OF THE PEOPLE you would instantly see how desperat . . . See More
351—March 29 at 10:51pm
13 Replies—4 hrs
Ilene Leftwing: Yes, but would be even better off if my Republican Governor, Nathan Deal, saw fit to help the citizens of Georgia by implementing the medicaid expansion. Anyone who stands against the ACA does not get MY vote.
316—March 25 at 9:26am
11 Replies—33 miss
Sandie Cohen: Please do not take away our health coverage.
357—March 24 at 3:43pm
11 Replies—32 mins
Scotty-Miguel Sandoe: YES! Access to Obamacare saves me money, and as former cancer patient, it means I can no longer be denied health insurance because of a pre-existing condition. This is the best government program since Medicare—thank heavens we have a President who cares about American citizens for a change!
1,404—March 24 at 11:38am
54 Replies
Jeanne Carver: Yes I am. I had a junky plan, which paid nothing until after 7500 per year. I now have affordable healthcare, which costs much less.
780—March 24 at 1:12pm
14 Replies
David Davis: No. I couldn't afford healthcare before and I still can't and now will also have to pay a fine. Wish I could fine the government for making my life hell everyday.
1,458—March 24 at 5:47am
322 Replies—4 hrs
Rick LaCrosse: The politicians that rule should live by their rules & laws!!!
253—March 24 at 5:52am
13 Replies—1 hr
Elizabeth Dubrulle: What an incredibly stupid and badly written question! Were you actually trying to start a discussion about healthcare, in which case your question should have been: is your health care better today than it was four years ago? (my answer would have been . . . See More
406—March 24 at 8:05am
23 Replies—2 hrs
Chris Marko: As a concerned Canadian, I apologize for both Ted Cruz and Justin Beiber, that being said, you can keep both of them, we have a no return policy for defective merchandise.
135—March 29 at 8:28pm
Breana Corea: LMAO!!! Nice!
14—March 29 at 9:40pm
Something Liberal: please take them back . . . you can imprison them or torture them . . . we don't care.
15—March 29 at 10:22pm
View more replies
Lamar Birdsey: In 1995 I had my first heart attack. At that point I was insured. However, my coverage was immediately terminated by my insurance company. Six months

later I had my second heart attack and had no insurance. Subsequently I have had two more attacks and was not covered. I have spent my life savings attempting to stay alive. In 2014, I purchased a wonderful Florida Blue policy. My premium is $88.73 per month. My deductible is $600.00 annually and any co-payments are extremely low. EVERYTHING IS COVERED! The most out of pocket expense I will have to pay in a given year is $2250.00. I am much better off now that the ACA has become law. Senator Cruz, I suggest you pack your bags and go back to where you came from, Canada. You are a scourge on this great nation. We do not need or want your ilk here. If you want to screw up a health care program, by all means return to Canada and mess with that one. DO NOT TREAD ON MY OBAMACARE!

129—March 24 at 8:26pm

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Smooth Stone: No I'm not better off—only because my Koch bought governor nikki haley refused to expand medicaid in my state. Otherwise I would have subsidies to help me live a longer, better life. As a woman who was able to work wonderful jobs with health insurance for 36 years until I had my son. Then I relied on my husband's job to supply me with benefits as I raised our child and only worked 'part time' as a school teacher substitute. But what happens when that husband is mutilated by a stoned driver and can no longer work. Goes on social security and medicaid and his family is left to flounder because the now 58 year old mother can no longer get a decent job, no matter her experience but the age matters. So go F**K YOURSELF Ted Cruz.

128—March 24 at 2:17pm

Deb Larsen: I am so sorry to hear about your situation.

11—March 30 at 3:42pm

Elizabeth Fisher Jeffery Wood: Red states that have chosen not to expand medicaid are not really better off, but that is not the fault of the ACA. (btw, I live in one of those states . . .) What we need to do is grassroots it here until all of the red states accept all of what the ACA has to offer.

24—March 30 at 6:57pm

View more replies

George Rivas: The ACA would've been better with a public option. It's a shame the GOP didn't try to make it more effective instead of grandstanding and wasting everyone's time and money on futile efforts to stop it.

123—March 24 at 1:30pm

Ambrosia Rose: Like the half billion dollars Obama spent on a website . . . that money could have gone for actual health care.

2—March 30 at 3:05am

Teresa Gottier: Yeah because nobody uses a website today except Obama . . . .

16—March 30 at 12:47pm

View more replies

Terri K Mattingly Puryear: YES, ABSOLUTELY!!! although I am really ashamed of being on your website.

122—March 24 at 3:18pm

Mary Duff Henry: It's for a good cause.

32—March 30 at 8:54am

View more replies

Bobby Joe Lyle: Yes! I have been unable to have health insurance for 2 decades because of a preexisting condition. Last week I was finally able to have a colonoscopy thanks to the Affordable Care Act. Today I was informed by the gastroenterologist that the polyps he removed were cancerous. The Affordable Care Act may well have saved me from dying of colon cancer.

118—March 24 at 1:10pm—Edited

Sarah A. McCloud:

11—March 26 at 10:39am

Lisa Brayer:

13—March 27 at 2:22am

View more replies

Malina Lobel-karimi: Yes, yes and HELL Yes. I had been without insurance for years when we were systematically rejected by ALL carriers due to . . . PREEXISTING CONDITIONS. My son had to have his gallbladder removed WITHOUT insurance. It cost us $80,000.00 Can you imagine eighty thousand dollars for a gallbladder and a weeks stay in a hospital? That's inhuman!

109—March 26 at 8:33pm

Wrenn Simms: I can. I was lucky. After i was laid off in 09, I ended up in the hospital with emergency gall bladder surgery that turned into an emergency on the operating table. They kept me a week, with two other procedures needing to be done.. I was lucky, that I was still covered by my former employers insurance (it was within the 60 day separation window). The bill was $101,000. I paid less than $200.

9—March 31 at 5:36pm

Laura Woller Bishin: Holy crap! 80k?!?

3—Yesterday at 12:59am

View more replies

Julie Pippert: YES! My pregnancy caused me to be excluded from health care—the VERY worst time!—because Texas allowed that. Then I caught an infection in the hospital that left me with a ''preexisting condition'' because I had no insurance at the time. I am SO GLAD I have protection now! THANK GOODNESS! Thanks for the ACA.

114—March 25 at 5:45am

Dani Golightly: Holy crap, that's HORRIBLE!!!

6—March 30 at 8:51am

Laura Harper: Women in Texas are an endangered species if Mr. Cruz and his merry band of misogynists have their way.

45—March 30 at 10:00am

View more replies

Caleb Caraway: My healthcare is better, but I live in Texas so lots of other things suck. If we could get Ted Cruz out of office it would be a whole lot better.

114—March 24 at 2:45pm

Cody Edge: THIS! But we have to all work to get people like him out of office! Lets get Wendy Davis INTO office too!

6—6 hrs

Samantha Scott: I'm an American expat living in Canada. We pay a monthly premium and all the basics are covered; no charge for low income folks. Drawbacks? Sometimes I wait over an hour to see a doctor during walk-in clinic peak hours.

waves tiny maple leaf flag

feels bad for anyone who thinks Obamacare is a step backward

109—March 24 at 2:06pm

Candace Marley: I think waiting and waiting at any doctor even in the US is becoming the norm.

15—March 25 at 12:42pm

Brilliant Chicky: My daughter waited 4 hours in a us er and was told at that point could be 4 more. She left untreated.

9—March 29 at 8:46pm

View more replies

Jeff Sanderson: YES! ''Obamacare'' saved my grandson's life. He was born with multiple birth defects, and their insurance specifically stated that a birth defect was considered a pre-existing condition. Obamacare eliminated pre-existing conditions, so the family insurance covered the multiple surgeries he needed to stay alive. Today he is a happy, bright little boy. In addition, when his mom had to quit work to take care of him, Obamacare made sure that they would still be insured. Thank you President Obama.

114—March 24 at 1:29pm

Jane Foster: Your story touched my heart Jeff. So happy your grandson got the care he needs.

19—March 29 at 11:37pm

Kevin Young: And all this happened in 6 months. Sounds like BS]

March 30 at 8:44am

View more replies

Chris Stout: Yes. Being self-employed with a pre-existing condition, the premiums always ended up being extremely high and wouldn't cover what I needed the most.

I now have a Gold plan with a premium I can afford and all my conditions are covered, so yes, yes, YES!

107—March 24 at 12:26pm

Alvin Bates: Yes. Business owner from Oklahoma!

108—March 24 at 10:03am

Brandy Mohar:

2—March 31 at 10:20am

Rhonda Savage: Oh yes! Saved me 4k out of my pocket in Premiums. AND, I have a better plan. And, I do not qualify for tax credits and am still saving!! Thank you Dems and Mr. President! Your willingness to assure our right to pursue happiness has been much appreciated by millions! As for you Mr. Cruz—I remain very, very ashamed that I used to belong to your party!

106—March 24 at 8:12pm

Drew Denega: You lie.

March 25 at 12:11am

Lisa Brayer: She doesn't lie. Same for me!

41—March 27 at 2:33am

View more replies

Pearson Klein: YES! I'm better off because those who previously couldn't get it now can. HOW YOU CAN SLEEP AT NIGHT WANTING TO SCREW OVER THE LESS FORTUNATE IS BEYOND ME.

106—March 24 at 4:13pm

Greg Zagel: I'm MUCH better-off with Obamacare. This is a fact! The U.S. Senate was better-off without Ted Cruz.

105—March 24 at 1:24pm

Barbara Dobriansky: The ACA is a LAW that requires you you to obtain insurance—it is not insurance itself. So all of you saying your doctor won't take Obamacare are inaccurate in that perception. You DO know the mandate is a conservative idea? To make EVERYONE pay into the system so that no one is subsidizing anyone else? The level of ignorance is striking.

This isn't a real poll, it's a Facebook comment screed to get us all to fight one another and look stupid to the world—most of which has universal health care. By a Communist-raised, now Fascistic, religious fanatic naturalized citizen who wants us to change our Constitution so he can run for president. You can't make this stuff up.

105—March 24 at 11:56am

Michael Jennings: The fact that this is a Republican (Newt Gingrich, Heritage Foundation) idea that is now being called Socialism just blows my mind! These people will believe anything that they are told.

56—March 29 at 8:06pm

Bobbie Scott: Thank you! Someone has some sense!

16—March 29 at 9:02pm

View more replies

Christina Zadorozny: Seeing you deleted my other comment, LET ME REPEAT, MR CRUZ! The ONLY people who would say NO would be your top 1% friends who because of the ridiculous tax cuts they got, can afford to buy any sort of medical care they want, and it's us in the LOWER AND MIDDLE CLASSES who are giving welfare for the RICH because they are UNAMERICAN, and who refuse to pay their fair share in taxes! Shame on you all, if Eisenhower was here, he would be taxing the rich at 91% like he did in the 50s, because after WWII, there was a huge deficit, and he knew he couldn't have a deficit like that hanging over America, so he did what he thought was RIGHT (A NOVEL IDEA, DOING WHAT'S RIGHT, AND NOT

JUST WHAT IS GOOD FOR YOUR BASE), and taxed the rich heavily, which guaranteed that there was enough money flowing throughout the economy, so average people were able to create jobs, and they then hired people; everyone had a job if they wanted one, and the 50s women were able to stay home and take care of the kids, and the men were the ones who went to work, and with only one salary, a whole family was supported, houses were bought, cars were bought, the economy boomed! I have NEVER heard anyone complain about the 50s, everyone remembers it as a wonderful time, it's the first time a middle class was invented! We sure do know NOW trickle down doesn't work, look at all the rich with the lowest taxes ever, what jobs were created by them? NONE! It's been proven that the people who create jobs are small business owners! NOT the rich, and NOT the big established companies! I wish Eisenhower could come back and tell you republicans off! I'm sure he would have a few choice words for you and your rich friends! Mr Cruz, you and your rich friends disgust me, and go ahead, delete my statement, since you hate the truth so much!

100—March 29 at 8:03pm

Lisa Carpenter: There are plenty of us who say NO, that are not in the 1%. But then it looks like this post was hijacked by obama ops.

4—March 31 at 4:23pm

Christina Zadorozny: Why no? I want to know why you would deprive people who need insurance this very necessary law! If you don't need it, great for you! How about the millions who now have it, and for the first time in years are getting the diagnosis and treatments they needed? I can give you plenty of stories of people i know personally who couldn't get insurance any other way, like specifically my brother, who was born with a congenital heart condition that didn't show up til he was an adult; the first attack almost killed him, the 2nd attack, recently, (a couple decades after the first) he just got the ACA, had the attack, they did what needed to be done, which was to laser the part in the heart that was causing the problem, and now he'll have a normal life span without having to worry about possibly dying from that condition! After his first attack, his insurance dropped him immediately, and no other insurance would cover him; about time Americans now have a way of getting treated and being able to work and contribute to society!

20—March 31 at 4:30pm

View more replies

Forrest Erickson: My company has 6 part time employees. Prior to Obama care and when we were 5 employees, the cost for health insurance for us as part time meant that two of us had to remain on our spouses coverage and one went uninsured as the cost was nearly twice what it would be if we were full time. My employees would have been working for insurance and had no take home pay at that rate. Now that employee has coverage on the individual market and so we are all covered one way or another. I will be watching for 2015 to see if it makes sense for us to do the coverage through the exchange with a cafeteria plan so that everyone can get a plan optimum for them. Yeaaa Obamacare! Yes I and my small company are better off.

100—March 28 at 6:03pm—Edited

Michael Jennings: Wonder why Fox has not reported your story?

25—March 29 at 8:13pm

Forrest Erickson: I have gotten some letters to the editor published locally prior to this year. Thanks for reading and caring enough to leave the comment.

24—March 29 at 9:52pm

View more replies

Alisha Clark: When you spend all your time telling me what you are against, rather than what your are FOR, that tells me more about you than your ideology.

100—March 26 at 5:45am

Jodell Bumatay: But what does it tell us about Ted Cruz when he spent all of time one a Congressional mike reading Doctor Seus? LOL

1—12 hours ago

Samuel Shropshire: Yes. My wonderful daughter who is disabled can now come back to America because her ''pre-existing'' condition is now covered!

95—March 24 at 9:23pm

Liz Huls: Beautiful!!

5—March 31 at 6:40pm

Jeffrey Albuna: Doesn't it make you shake your head at just how much of a heartless person these R can be?

6—Yesterday at 12:00am

Carl Birk: I suffer from Hemmochrormotosis, diabetes and two minor strokes. I could never get insurance due to pre conditions. This year my insurance coverage increased while my insurance cost was lower by 20%. Stop trying to fight this law. It is in the best interest of the American people. Set aside your beliefs and hatred for the commander in chief and help people better their lives.

95—March 24 at 8:20pm

Erma Couey: my daughter has diabetes and was not able to get insurance until the ACA now she payes 500.00 a month with real good insurance that is for husband and herself

40—March 25 at 4:48am

Candace Marley: the hatred will stay in the way for most of the pubs. most of them won't even take the time to apply for coverage with the ACA to see what they would get through it.

18—March 25 at 12:47pm

View more replies

Christopher Hausen: I am part of a self-insured group, by virtue of my membership in a Building Trades Union. As of this moment, my hourly contribution hasn't changed, my monthly premium cost hasn't changed, my co-pay, & deductible amounts haven't changed, my ''choice'' of in-network providers hasn't changed, and my coverage has improved. I would have to answer the Senator with a resounding ''Yes!''. More importantly, by any metric, more American citizens have access to health care than prior to 2008. Not only has the PPACA Improved my health care service, it has Improved health care accessibility for the Country, as well.

100—March 24 at 2:33pm

James Rowland: Same here. We are looking at a possible small increase next year but our contributions haven't gone up since 2011 and even that was only a small increase.

1—3 hrs

Patty Kennedy: Most definitely YES! America is the only Western Industrialized country without nationalized healthcare for all. America is the only industrialized country that allows corporations to earn a profit on the suffering and dying of it's people. Which is why until the ACA passed we were paying DOUBLE what Canadians pay for their better rated Healthcare system that covers everyone. Our ''for profit'' healthcare system was chewing up an incredible 17.6% of our entire GDP when Obama took office.

It is not ''free enterprise'' when a group of corporations set an artificially high price for something everyone needs, it is an Oligopoly; something Adam Smith warned against in ''The Wealth of Nations'' as always being bad for the consumer.

The insurance exchanges of the ACA mark the first time in American history the Health Insurance Oligopoly has ever competed one with another for business in a genuine Free Market.

99—March 24 at 12:00pm

Ellen Hunt: I'd like to add that we didn't try to force our jackedup system on the countries we invaded—even Iraqis have nationalized health care. Nobody's stupid enough to try to adopt our atrociously horrible health care insurance system.

32—March 30 at 6:28am

Deb Lindstrom: Good point. We support Israel by sending them the equivalent of about $8.5 Million Dollars per DAY. They have nationalized health care for all citizens, and just this past February created a new law (the most liberal on the planet) that allows their female citizens to get on demand abortions, fully paid for by the Israeli government So now, Republicans, how do you like knowing that your tax dollars are going to subsidize both health care coverage and free abortions in the nation of Israel?

36—March 30 at 2:03pm

View more replies

Eric Koenig: Yes: my Blue Cross/Blue Shield insurance lapsed in the Fall of 1985 because I was late in paying a quarterly premium and, as I have epilepsy, they were all too happy to cite ''pre-existing conditions'' as grounds for refusing to re-enroll me. The Affordable Care Act enabled me, in early 2010, to once again acquire Blue Cross/Blue Shield insurance and it has been of great benefit to me. Without the Affordable Care Act, I'd still be subsisting on County health care, meaning at taxpayer expense. Which do you think sounds better?

91—March 25 at 9:36pm

Sandie Cohen: Yes . . . much better off. Go ACA. Now we have coverage. !!

93—March 24 at 3:42pm

Pamela John: FANTASTIC!

29—March 24 at 4:51pm

Elvira Ramirez: Obamacare is working and yes we are better off today than then!

94—March 24 at 3:02pm

Deb Lindstrom: Economies in most all red states suck. Take it from me. I grew up and lived for three decades in a blue state where the quality of life was excellent. Then my post-graduate career took me first to one red state, then to two more. In all cases, the quality of life stunk, the wages for almost all people were much lower, the public schools systems far more inferior, everybody hated unions but didn't know why (unions help the common citizen enjoy the fruits of capitalism—which means the ability to acquire more capital just like corporations do), and to top it off . . . I had never heard of state sales taxes on food and clothing. Worse still, it is fact that the blue states give some of their state income tax revenue to the federal government who redistributes it to the red states to help prop them up. So there you have it. It is not the Democrats who are the welfare freeloaders . . .

45—March 30 at 1:57pm

Lorie DeBehnke: Yes I am better off. I was injured by a drunk driver while crossing the street. That injury gave me a pre existing condition.After I was laid off of my last corporate job I lost any coverage I had. Because of that pre existing condition I was quoted between 1000–1500 a month for coverage just for myself. More than my rent and utilities.

Thanks to Obamacare I now have insurance for the first time in 7 years . . .

Thanks obamacare.

21—March 31 at 10:09am—Edited

Dorothy Sasscer: I'm not impacted by this but so many of my friends are AND IT'S BEEN A MIRACLE FOR THEM! They have healthcare now—affordable healthcare—with better coverage. And they don't have to worry about GETTING healthcare because of a pre-existing condition!

ACA IS WORKING FOR WORKING AMERICANS!

92—March 24 at 1:56pm

Boutwell: YES! We were going t lose our insurance because my late spouse had MS, thanks to Obamacare they could not drop us, made his last months better knowing we couldkeep our home and not be totally broken by medical bills. Thank God every day for Obamcare. It made me a democrat

93—March 24 at 11:33am

LN Winchester: PETITION TO REPUBLICANS TO ALLOW MEDICAID EXPANSIONS! CLICK ON LINK: https://www.facebook.com/dailykos?v=app_335652843138116 . . .

22—March 30 at 7:20pm—Edited

View more replies

Kent Hill: . . . Yes, and with the obstructive anti-American stances of most republicans in congress, I will find it hard to vote with anyone with an (R) behind their name.

85—March 27 at 7:51pm

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, at this time, I would like to enter into the RECORD two letters—one from the Chamber of Commerce of the United States of America, which is in strong support of H.R. 2575, and then another letter from the National Federation of Independent Business—and I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. REICHERT), my good friend and a member of the Committee on Ways and Means.

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,
Washington, DC, April 2, 2014.

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES: The U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the world's largest business federation representing the interests of more than three million businesses of all sizes, sectors, and regions, as well as state and local chambers and industry associations, and dedicated to promoting, protecting, and defending America's free enterprise system, strongly supports H.R. 2575, the ''Save American Workers Act of 2014,'' which would redefine a ''full-time employee'' for purposes of the employer mandate provision in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA) to reflect the traditional 40-hour work week constituting full-time employment. This bill would be a critical step in helping protect employees and employers against what would amount to a significant redefinition of workforce status.

Under the employer mandate provision of the PPACA, businesses with 50 or more full-time equivalent employees (FTEs) are required to provide affordable, minimum value, health care coverage to all full-time employees as well as coverage to their dependents, or potentially pay significant penalties. For the first time in history, the PPACA defines a full-time employee as an individual working 30 hours per week or more averaged over the course of a month. In an attempt to mitigate the anticipated high costs of providing coverage to all employees now considered full time, businesses are restructuring their workforces. Despite the one-year delay of the employer mandate, a recent report by the Chamber and the International Franchise Association confirmed that businesses are already experiencing increased costs causing them to reduce employee hours, limit full-time jobs, and drop health coverage. While the Chamber welcomes and appreciates the administration's ''transition relief' announced in February, it fails to adequately mitigate the harmful impacts of the PPACA's 30 hour workweek definition.

Returning to the widely-accepted 40-hour definition of a full-time employee would allow businesses to focus on generating jobs, rather than making them choose between reducing growth and unfortunate personnel changes or going bankrupt from employer mandate penalties. By reverting back to the traditional definition, employees and employers would both be protected. Particularly during this time when our economic recovery remains fragile, it is crucial we provide an atmosphere where employers can focus on strengthening their businesses, employing workers in traditional full-time positions, and revitalizing the economy.

The Chamber continues to champion health care reform that builds on and reinforces the employer-sponsored system while improving access to affordable, quality coverage. The Chamber urges you and your colleagues to support H.R. 2575, and may consider including votes on, or in relation to, this bill in our annual How They Voted scorecard.

Sincerely,

R. BRUCE JOSTEN,
Executive Vice President, Government Affairs.

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF INDEPENDENT BUSINESS,
Washington, DC, April 3, 2014.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of the National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB), the nation's leading small business advocacy organization, I am writing in support of H.R. 2575, the Save American Workers Act of 2013. H.R. 2575 will be considered an NFIB Key Vote for the 113th Congress.

This legislation would replace the new 30-hour per week full-time or full-time equivalent (FTE) employee definition in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA) with a 40-hour per week definition. PPACA defines full-time employee for the purpose of the employer mandate as an employee who works an average of 30-hours per week (130-hours per month). The employer mandate is a requirement that businesses with 100 or more full-time or FTE employees offer qualified, ''affordable'' health insurance to 70 percent of full-time employees or pay costly penalties beginning in 2015. In 2016, businesses with 50 or more full-time or FTE employees must offer qualified, ''affordable'' health insurance to full-time employees and their dependents or pay costly penalties.

Last year, NFIB testified before the House Committee on Small Business that the new definition is ''one of the most dangerous parts in the law.'' PPACA marks the first time that ''full-time'' is expressly defined in law. Prior to PPACA's enactment, the determination was left up to the employer. Similarly, the Fair Labor Standards Act has long dictated that overtime pay starts after 40-hours per week. Thus, employers and employees have long understood ''full-time'' to be equivalent to 40-hours per week.

The 30-hour full-time definition is already resulting in less opportunities, fewer hours and lower incomes for employees. Small businesses are already being forced to shrink their workforce below and restricting workforce growth above the 50 employee threshold in preparation for the costly mandate.

H.R. 2575 would provide some immediate relief for small-business owners and employees. According to the Congressional Budget Office (CBO), H.R. 2575 would reduce taxes on employers by $63.4 billion over the next ten years. For employees, the bill would prevent decreases in take home pay.

NFIB supports H.R. 2575 and will consider it an NFIB Key Vote for the 113th Congress. We look forward to working with you to protect small business as the 113th Congress moves forward.

Sincerely,

DAN DANNER,
President and CEO, NFIB.

□ 1415

Mr. REICHERT. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, there are a few things going on here.

One, you have American families working hard every day to juggle their lives to provide for their children and their families. They are trying to make ends meet and put food on the table and clothes on their backs. What happens is this ObamaCare 30-hour rule could seriously jeopardize all of those efforts, 30 hours instead of 40 hours.

Secondly, under ObamaCare, employers are already cutting workers' hours just to avoid the employer mandate, so there is another burden that is placed on our employees and our employers.

Third, the law is changing the standard definition of a full-time employee to someone who works 30 or more hours rather than 40 or more hours. Workers are taking home less pay each month as a result of that. Instead of having 38 hours of pay, they might have only 15 or 28 hours of pay, or maybe they just lose their jobs, Mr. Speaker.

Much of that impacted workforce would be restaurants, retailers, and hospitality businesses. Eighty-nine percent of those who would be impacted do not have college degrees. Talk about helping those that need help. ObamaCare's reduction from 40 hours to 30 hours doesn't help those people.

People that don't have college degrees are going to be hurt the worst. Over 50 percent do not even have high school diplomas. If they lose their job, there may not be somewhere else for them to turn.

The Save American Workers Act would prevent this from happening. It would save jobs, and it would provide relief for everyday Americans from the enormous tax burden of ObamaCare, repealing $63.4 billion of tax increases.

I know this is right for my constituents in Washington State, and I urge my colleagues to support this legislation today.

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I will include letters from the Employers for Flexibility in Health Care Coalition and the NRF. We have a lot of these letters. I think I will read more of them as we go on.

I am fascinated by the results of Senator CRUZ's request online to hear from people. We will see if we can get some other accurate numbers.

At this time, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. REED), my good friend and another member of the Ways and Means Committee.

EMPLOYERS FOR FLEXIBILITY IN HEALTH CARE COALITION,
February 4, 2014.

Hon. DAVE CAMP,
Chairman, Committee on Ways and Means, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.
Hon. SANDER LEVIN,
Ranking Member, Committee on Ways and Means, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN CAMP AND RANKING MEMBER LEVIN, The Employers for Flexibility in Health Care (E-FLEX) is a coalition of leading trade associations and businesses in the retail, restaurant, hospitality, supermarket, construction, temporary staffing, agriculture, and other service-related industries, as well as employer-sponsored health plans insuring millions of American workers. The E-FLEX Coalition represents employers who create millions of jobs each year, employ a significant workforce in the U.S., offer flexible working environments for employees, and are a leading contributor to the nation's economic job recovery.

The common thread among Coalition members is that our workforces are of a variable nature, and not traditional 9–5

workforces. Maintaining the ability to offer affordable coverage options to our unique workforces under the new requirements of the law is of special concern to us. The Affordable Care Act's (ACA) definition of full-time employee is of particular importance to the E-FLEX Coalition because of our industries' unique reliance on large numbers of part-time, temporary, and seasonal workers with fluctuating and unpredictable work hours, as well as unpredictable lengths of service.

While transition relief for 2014 and flexibility in the proposed rules are greatly appreciated, the E-FLEX Coalition and many in the employer community remain concerned that the ACA employer requirements are fundamentally unworkable and require legislative changes, especially the 30 hours per week definition of full-time employee status. It is critically important to change the law's definition of full-time as 30 hours of service to a definition more in line with employment practices. The law's definition of full-time as 30 hours of service per week does not reflect employers' workforce needs or employees' desire for flexible hours. A change is needed to avoid disruptions in the workforce and maintain flexible work options for employees.

Better aligning the ACA's definition of full-time employee status with current employment practices would help avoid unnecessary disruptions to employees' wages and hours, and would provide critical relief to employers. Increasing the ACA's rigid 30-hour per week definition for full-time status would:

Make it easier for employers to provide more hours to all employees, thereby increasing their take-home pay;

Help employers offer more generous health coverage to full-time employees without making employers' share of premiums cost prohibitive;

Help ensure that lower-income employees have access to more affordable coverage options.

Using a definition of full-time that better reflects current employment practices would not cause employees to lose coverage. In fact, setting the definition of full-time employee status at a higher level would help eliminate a coverage gap for lower income employees in some states and make it easier for employees to increase their income by requesting work schedules according to their particular needs.

Although sharp differences in opinion about the ACA remain, well-intentioned people on both sides of the debate can agree that using a higher threshold for defining full-time would be better for American workers and businesses than the ACA's lower full-time definition. Committee consideration of H.R. 2575—Save American Workers Act of 2013—is a first step in the process of realigning this threshold.

The E-FLEX Coalition looks forward to continuing to work with the Committee and your colleagues in Congress on a bipartisan basis to strengthen and preserve employer-sponsored coverage.

Sincerely,

EMPLOYERS FOR FLEXIBILITY IN HEALTH CARE (E-FLEX) COALITION.

NATIONAL RETAIL FEDERATION,
Washington, DC, April 2, 2014.

Hon. JOHN BOEHNER,
Speaker, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Democratic Leader, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER BOEHNER AND DEMOCRATIC LEADER PELOSI: I write to share the strong support of the National Retail Federation (NRF) for H.R. 2575, the Save American Workers Act. Please note that NRF will consider votes on H.R. 2575 and related procedural motions as Key Retail Votes for our annual voting scorecard.

NRF is the world's largest retail trade association, representing discount and department stores, home goods and specialty stores, Main Street merchants, grocers, wholesalers, chain restaurants and Internet retailers from the United States and more than 45 countries. Retail is the nation's largest private sector employer, supporting one in four U.S. jobs—42 million working Americans. Contributing $2.5 trillion to annual GDP, retail is a daily barometer for the nation's economy. NRF's This is Retail campaign highlights the industry's opportunities for life-long careers, how retailers strengthen communities, and the critical role that retail plays in driving innovation. www.nrf.com

NRF greatly appreciates the bipartisan support for changes to the Affordable Care Act's definition of full-time work for benefit eligibility. It is, after all, a common sense approach: if asked, most Americans would identify full-time work to be 40 hours per week. Most employers have also long assumed the full-time mark to be 40 hours, consistent with federal overtime rules. In an effort to attract desired employees, many employers have set eligibility for benefits at lower points, but still higher than the ACA's arbitrary 30-hour definition.

The 30-hour definition will force retailers to manage to a new standard: whether or not an employee is above or below the 30-hour level on average. For part-time employees—who will now likely work 30 or fewer hours per week—it will mean lost income. The 40-hour full-time definition proposed in H.R. 2575 will return flexibility to employers to set benefit eligibility at lower levels. We strongly support this necessary and common sense change.

By any measure, the ACA is bringing profound changes to the labor market—both positive and negative. We hope to continue to work with you to help mitigate the negative effects on the retail industry and retail employees. NRF strongly urges you to vote in favor of H.R. 2575.

Sincerely,

DAVID FRENCH,
Senior Vice President, Government Relations.

Mr. REED. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge support for the bill, the Save American Workers Act, introduced by my good friend, Mr. YOUNG of Indiana.

Mr. Speaker, this is a fundamental question about what is fair, what is fair for the American worker.

We have had a long history in America of protecting the 40-hour workweek. This mandate—this requirement under the Affordable Care Act to go to 30 hours as the definition of full-time work is going to hurt. It is not fair to the American worker.

I would just offer comments that I just received from a constituent in the 23rd Congressional District, which I have the honor to represent.

Carol Tyler, the owner of Hager's Flowers and Gifts in Gowanda, New York, writes:

As a business owner, I encourage you to vote in favor of legislation that better reflects my business' workforce needs while maintaining wages and flexible health benefits options for my employees.

The ACA's definition of full-time employee status must align with a standard that better reflects current employment practices within our industry. Increasing the ACA's 30-hour per week definition would make it easier for employers to provide additional hours to all employees.

That means more money in hard-working taxpayers' pockets across America.

I urge my colleagues to join with Ms. Tyler's plea to support this legislation, to stand with the American worker, and protect the 40-hour workweek, which means more money in American workers' pockets as they go forward.

I have to say, Mr. Speaker, there is a contrast between our side and the other side. When I hear the other side argue that what this will allow people to do is to not have to work, what I hear is they are not championing the concept of work.

I believe in the American work ethic, Mr. Speaker. I believe in the strong work ethic that allows people to work a 40-hour workweek has made this Nation strong for generations.

I ask my colleagues on the other side of the aisle to please stand with us to protect that which has made America great, and this is the 40-hour workweek in the American workplace and environment.

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I also have a letter from the Small Business Coalition for Affordable Healthcare. There are 43 members signed onto this one.

I reserve the balance of my time.

SMALL BUSINESS COALITION FOR AFFORDABLE HEALTHCARE,
April 2, 2014.

Hon. JOHN BOEHNER,
Speaker, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Minority Leader, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER BOEHNER AND MINORITY LEADER PELOSI, Representing the country's largest, oldest and most respected small business associations, which have spent more than a decade working to improve access to and affordability of private health insurance, the Small Business Coalition for Affordable Healthcare (the Coalition) is writing in support of H.R. 2575, Save American Workers Act of 2013. This legislation would repeal the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act's (PPACA) 30–hour per week full-time employee definition and replace it with a 40–hour per week full-time employee definition.

Beginning in 2015, PPACA requires businesses with 100 or more full-time equivalent (FTE) employees to offer affordable health insurance to full-time employees or potentially pay significant penalties. Businesses with 50 or more FTEs must offer affordable health insurance to full-time employees and their dependents or potentially pay penalties beginning in 2016. PPACA defines a full-time employee as an employee who averages 30–hours of service per week, or 130–hours of service per month. PPACA's definition of full-time is counter to the traditional 40–hours of service threshold that most American businesses use to define full-time for benefits and other purposes. Implementing this new definition will require most businesses to change both their policies and their practices.

Despite the one year delay of the employer mandate requirement for 2014 and more recent transition relief for midsize businesses in 2015, employers have been preparing to closely track employee hours and make these complicated administrative calculations this year, as business size calculations are based on an employer's workforce during the preceding calendar year. Without H.R. 2575, employers will face higher employer mandate penalty taxes, and employees will see reduced hours and take home pay.

The Coalition urges all Members of the U.S. House of Representatives to support H.R. 2575.

Sincerely,

Aeronautical Repair Station Association; American Apparel & Footwear Association; American Bakers Association; American Farm Bureau Federation; American Foundry Society; American Hotel & Lodging Association; American Staffing Association; American Supply Association; Asian American Hotel Owners Association; Associated Builders and Contractors, Inc.; Associated Equipment Distributors; Associated General Contractors; Association for Manufacturing Technology; Automotive Aftermarket Industry Association; International Housewares Association; Metals Service Center Institute; National Association of Convenience Stores; National Association of Home Builders; National Association of RV Parks and Campgrounds; National Association of Theatre Owners; National Association of Wholesaler-Distributors; National Club Association.

National Federation of Independent Business; National Restaurant Association; National Retail Federation; National Roofing Contractors Association; National Small Business Association; National Systems Contractors Association; National Tooling and Machining Association; North American Die Casting Association; North American Equipment Dealers Association; Precision Machined Products Association; Precision Metalforming Association; Professional Golfers Association of America; Service Station Dealers of America and Allied Trades; Small Business and Entrepreneurship Council; Small Business Council of America; Society of American Florists; Specialty Equipment Market Association; Textile Rental Services Association; Tire Industry Association; U.S. Chamber of Commerce; WMDA Service Station and Automotive Repair Association.

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, can you tell us how much time remains?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Washington has 7 minutes remaining, and the gentleman from Pennsylvania has 7 minutes remaining.

Mr. McDERMOTT. Is the gentleman ready to close?

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. We are prepared to close.

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. CAPUANO).

Mr. CAPUANO. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I was sitting back in my office trying to get some desk work done and watching this debate. I had no intention of speaking, but I have just heard these arguments so many times, and they are tiring, to be perfectly honest.

So I did a little bit of work and came up with a couple of quotes I wanted to read.

This is relating to the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, which I have heard referenced on the other side, that talked about a 44-hour workweek and minimum wage at the time.

Here are a couple of quotes.

The act will destroy small industry . . . these ideas are the product of those whose thinking is rooted in an alien philosophy and who are bent upon the destruction of our whole constitutional system and the setting up of a red-labor communist despotism upon the ruins of our Christian civilization.

That is a quote from Representative Cox of Georgia.

The Fair Labor Standards Acts constitutes a step in the direction of communism, bolshevism, fascism, and nazism.

That is a quote from the National Association of Manufacturers.

The Fair Labor Standards Act would create chaos in business never yet known to us . . . no decent American citizen can take exception to this attitude. What I do take exception to is any approach to a solution of this problem which is utterly impractical and in operation would be much more destructive than constructive to the very purposes which it is designed to serve.

That was from Representative Lamneck of Ohio.

These arguments are not new. When are you going to get tired of being behind history? When are you going to get tired of holding the American people back?

Please find an opportunity at any case—health care, housing, education, minimum wage, anything—to move us forward. We have 80 years-plus of the same arguments against the typical legislation that simply tries to move America forward and take care of our people.

It is the same old argument, the same old rhetoric. It was wrong then, and it is wrong now.

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

It is an old political tactic to use confusion. We have watched for almost 4 years the Republican Party try to confuse the American people about the Affordable Care Act. It was the worst thing that was ever going to happen on the face of the Earth. We would have storms, hurricanes, unemployment, wars, and famines, all because of the Affordable Care Act.

Well, we are up here today with yet another attempt to confuse people about the 40-hour workweek and whether or not we are going to cause people to lose their jobs.

On page 125 of the CBO report on the budget outlook for 2004 to 2024, it says:

In CBO's judgment, there is no compelling evidence that part-time employment has increased as a result of the ACA.

Everything you have learned out here about losing jobs is not true. There is nothing in the law that says people have to shorten the workweek.

I don't know if anybody on the other side understands the free enterprise system. Businesses are run by entrepreneurs who decide what kind of product they are going to produce. They hire people to do that. They decide the hours. They decide the pay. They decide everything.

You keep saying that ObamaCare came in and it is forcing these entrepreneurs in America to cut their employees' wages and hours. There is no such thing in the law. That is not true.

In fact, my colleague from Washington State (Mr. REICHERT) just said, Mr. Speaker, that people's hours were already being cut before ObamaCare.

It is not ObamaCare that decides how much somebody works. It is the person who runs the company. If he doesn't care about his employees and doesn't want to give them health care, that is one thing. There are people like that, but there are a lot of people who would like to give health insurance to their people, and we are trying to help them do that with the subsidies in this bill.

Let me come to one other issue, and that is this whole question of women.

I have flown back and forth across the country every week, 35 flights a year, for 25 years, and I know most of the flight attendants on United Airlines between Seattle and Washington, D.C.

I can't tell you how many of those women are working because they get health care benefits. Their husband has a job, but has no benefits, and if they don't have their job, they simply won't have health care in their family.

United Airlines has been through two bankruptcies. They have lost pay increases. They have lost their pension rights. The only thing they have left is that health care benefit, and that is what is holding the family together.

I am sort of interested to watch what happens to the older flight attendants I know, to see whether they leave flying, because they would like to. Their husband has a job, but before, he couldn't get health insurance, and now, he can under the Affordable Care Act, and they can quit working.

When the CBO talks about people working less, it is because the job lock is gone. People are not locked into their jobs because of the fact that they can't get health insurance anyplace else. It makes it available for any American.

The fact is that the cuts you are seeing—if you see employers that are going to take people down from 40 hours a week to 39 so that they can avoid giving benefits, take a look at the morals. I wonder if that person goes to church and talks about how they take care of the poor and the weak and the sick and all the rest.

No, no. You can't have it both ways. You cannot cut your people down 1 hour just to get out of giving them benefits, and that is what you are suggesting is going to go on in this country.

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I don't think that badly of owners of businesses myself. Now, there may be some people out there looking for a

way to get around the law, but this law doesn't make anybody do anything, and this law is going to create more problems.

You hear 1 million people are going to lose their health care benefits, and that is not good. This whole idea of continuing to undermine this law by confusing the American people, and making them think it bad isn't working. 1.7 million joined.

LABOR MARKET EFFECTS OF THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT: UPDATED ESTIMATES

OVERVIEW

The baseline economic projections developed by the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) incorporate the agency's estimates of the future effects of federal policies under current law. The agency updates those projections regularly to account for new information and analysis regarding federal fiscal policies and many other influences on the economy. In preparing economic projections for the February 2014 baseline, CBO has updated its estimates of the effects of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) on labor markets.

The ACA includes a range of provisions that will take full effect over the next several years and that will influence the supply of and demand for labor through various channels. For example, some provisions will raise effective tax rates on earnings from labor and thus will reduce the amount of labor that some workers choose to supply. In particular, the health insurance subsidies that the act provides to some people will be phased out as their income rises—creating an implicit tax on additional earnings—whereas for other people, the act imposes higher taxes on labor income directly. The ACA also will exert conflicting pressures on the quantity of labor that employers demand, primarily during the next few years.

HOW MUCH WILL THE ACA REDUCE EMPLOYMENT IN THE LONGER TERM?

The ACA's largest impact on labor markets will probably occur after 2016, once its major provisions have taken full effect and overall economic output nears its maximum sustainable level. CBO estimates that the ACA will reduce the total number of hours worked, on net, by about 1.5 percent to 2.0 percent during the period from 2017 to 2024, almost entirely because workers will choose to supply less labor—given the new taxes and other incentives they will face and the financial benefits some will receive. Because the largest declines in labor supply will probably occur among lower-wage workers, the reduction in aggregate compensation (wages, salaries, and fringe benefits) and the impact on the overall economy will be proportionally smaller than the reduction in hours worked. Specifically, CBO estimates that the ACA will cause a reduction of roughly 1 percent in aggregate labor compensation over the 2017—2024 period, compared with what it would have been otherwise. Although such effects are likely to continue after 2024 (the end of the current 10-year budget window), CBO has not estimated their magnitude or duration over a longer period.

The reduction in CBO's projections of hours worked represents a decline in the number of full-time-equivalent workers of about 2.0 million in 2017, rising to about 2.5 million in 2024. Although CBO projects that total employment (and compensation) will increase over the coming decade, that increase will be smaller than it would have been in the absence of the ACA. The decline in full-time-equivalent employment stemming from the ACA will consist of some people not being employed at all and other people working fewer hours; however, CBO has not tried to quantify those two components of the overall effect. The estimated reduction stems almost entirely from a net decline in the amount of labor that workers choose to supply, rather than from a net drop in businesses' demand for labor, so it will appear almost entirely as a reduction in labor force participation and in hours worked relative to what would have occurred otherwise rather than as an increase in unemployment (that is, more workers seeking but not finding jobs) or underemployment (such as part-time workers who would prefer to work more hours per week).

CBO's estimate that the ACA will reduce employment reflects some of the inherent trade-offs involved in designing such legislation. Subsidies that help lower-income people purchase an expensive product like health insurance must be relatively large to encourage a significant proportion of eligible people to enroll. If those subsidies are phased out with rising income in order to limit their total costs, the phaseout effectively raises people's marginal tax rates (the tax rates applying to their last dollar of income), thus discouraging work. In addition, if the subsidies are financed at least in part by higher taxes, those taxes will further discourage work or create other economic distortions, depending on how the taxes are designed. Alternatively, if subsidies are not phased out or eliminated with rising income, then the increase in taxes required to finance the subsidies would be much larger.

CBO's estimate of the ACA's impact on labor markets is subject to substantial uncertainty, which arises in part because many of the ACA's provisions have never been implemented on such a broad scale and in part because available estimates of many key responses vary considerably. CBO seeks to provide estimates that lie in the middle of the distribution of potential outcomes, but the actual effects could differ notably from those estimates. For example, if fewer people obtain subsidized insurance coverage through exchanges than CBO expects, then the effects of the ACA on employment would be smaller than CBO estimates in this report. Alternatively, if more people obtain subsidized coverage through exchanges, then the impact on the labor market would be larger.

WHY WILL THOSE REDUCTIONS BE SMALLER IN THE SHORT TERM?

CBO estimates that the ACA will cause smaller declines in employment over the 2014—2016 period than in later years, for three reasons. First, fewer people will receive subsidies through health insurance exchanges in that period, so fewer people will face the implicit tax that results when higher earnings reduce those subsidies. Second, CBO expects the unemployment rate to remain higher than normal over the next few years, so more people will be applying for each available job—meaning that if some people seek to work less, other applicants will be readily available to fill those positions and the overall effect on employment will be muted. Third, the ACA's subsidies for health insurance will both stimulate demand for health care services and allow low-income households to redirect some of the funds that they would have spent on that care toward the purchase of other goods and services—thereby increasing overall demand. That increase in overall demand while the economy remains somewhat weak will induce some employers to hire more workers or to increase the hours of current employees during that period.

WHY DOES CBO ESTIMATE LARGER REDUCTIONS THAN IT DID IN 2010?

In 2010, CBO estimated that the ACA, on net, would reduce the amount of labor used in the economy by roughly half a percent—primarily by reducing the amount of labor that workers choose to supply. That measure of labor use was calculated in dollar terms, representing the approximate change in aggregate labor compensation that would result. Hence, that estimate can be compared with the roughly 1 percent reduction in aggregate compensation that CBO now estimates to result from the act. There are several reasons for that difference: CBO has now incorporated into its analysis additional channels through which the ACA will affect labor supply, reviewed new research about those effects, and revised upward its estimates of the responsiveness of labor supply to changes in tax rates.

EFFECTS ON RETIREMENT DECISIONS AND DISABLED WORKERS

Changes to the health insurance market under the ACA, including provisions that prohibit insurers from denying coverage to people with preexisting conditions and those that restrict variability in premiums on the basis of age or health status, will lower the cost of health insurance plans offered to older workers outside the workplace. As a result, some will choose to retire earlier than they otherwise would—another channel through which the ACA will reduce the supply of labor.

The new insurance rules and wider availability of subsidies also could affect the employment decisions of people with disabilities, but the net impact on their labor supply is not clear. In the absence of the ACA, some workers with disabilities would leave the workforce to enroll in such programs as Disability Insurance (DI) or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and receive subsidized health insurance. (SSI enrollees also receive Medicaid; DI enrollees become eligible for Medicare after a two-year waiting period.) Under the ACA, however, they could be eligible for subsidized health insurance offered through the exchanges, and they cannot be denied coverage or charged higher premiums because of health problems. As a result, some disabled workers who would otherwise have been out of the workforce might stay employed or seek employment. At the same time, those subsidies and new insurance rules might lead other disabled workers to leave the workforce earlier than they otherwise would. Unlike DI applicants who are ineligible for SSI, they would not have to wait two years before they received the ACA's Medicaid benefits or exchange subsidies—making it more attractive to leave the labor force and apply for DI.

POSSIBLE EFFECTS ON LABOR SUPPLY THROUGH PRODUCTIVITY

In addition to the effects discussed above, the ACA could shape the labor market or the operations of the health sector in ways that affect labor productivity. For example, to the extent that increases in insurance coverage lead to improved health among workers, labor productivity could be enhanced. In addition, the ACA could influence labor productivity indirectly by making it easier for some employees to obtain health insurance outside the workplace and thereby prompting those workers to take jobs that better match their skills, regardless of whether those jobs offered employment-based insurance.

Some employers, however, might invest less in their workers—by reducing training, for example—if the turnover of employees increased because their health insurance was no longer tied so closely to their jobs. Furthermore, productivity could be reduced if

businesses shifted toward hiring more part-time employees to avoid paying the employer penalty and if part-time workers operated less efficiently than full-time workers did. (If the dollar loss in productivity exceeded the cost of the employer penalty, however, businesses might not shift toward hiring more part-time employees.)

Whether any of those changes would have a noticeable influence on overall economic productivity, however, is not clear. Moreover, those changes are difficult to quantify and they influence labor productivity in opposing directions. As a result, their effects are not incorporated into CBO's estimates of the effects of the ACA on the labor market.

Some recent analyses also have suggested that the ACA will lead to higher productivity in the health care sector—in particular, by avoiding costs for low-value health care services—and thus to slower growth in health care costs under employment-based health plans. Slower growth in those costs would effectively increase workers' compensation, making work more attractive. Those effects could increase the supply of labor (and could increase the demand for labor in the near term, if some of the savings were not immediately passed on to workers).

Whether the ACA already has or will reduce health care costs in the private sector, however, is hard to determine. The ACA's reductions in payment rates to hospitals and other providers have slowed the growth of Medicare spending (compared with projections under prior law) and thus contributed to the slow rate of overall cost growth in health care since the law's enactment. Private health care costs (as well as national health expenditures) have grown more slowly in recent years as well, but analysts differ about the shares of that slowdown that can be attributed to the deep recession and weak recovery, to provisions of the ACA, and to other changes within the health sector. Moreover, the overall influence of the ACA on the cost of employment-based coverage is difficult to predict—in part because some provisions could either increase or decrease private-sector spending on health care and in part because many provisions have not yet been fully implemented or evaluated. Consequently, CBO has not attributed to the ACA any employment effects stemming from slower growth of premiums in the private sector.

EFFECTS OF THE ACA ON THE DEMAND FOR LABOR

The ACA also will affect employers' demand for workers, mostly over the next few years, both by increasing labor costs through the employer penalty (which will reduce labor demand) and by boosting overall demand for goods and services (which will increase labor demand).

EFFECTS OF THE EMPLOYER PENALTY ON THE DEMAND FOR LABOR

Beginning in 2015, employers of 50 or more full-time equivalent workers that do not offer health insurance (or that offer health insurance that does not meet certain criteria) will generally pay a penalty. That penalty will initially reduce employers' demand for labor and thereby tend to lower employment. Over time, CBO expects, the penalty will be borne primarily by workers in the form of reduced wages or other compensation, at which point the penalty will have little effect on labor demand but will reduce labor supply and will lower employment slightly through that channel.

Businesses face two constraints, however, in seeking to shift the costs of the penalty to workers. First, there is considerable evidence that employers refrain from cutting their employees' wages, even when unemployment is high (a phenomenon sometimes referred to as sticky wages). For that reason, some employers might leave wages unchanged and instead employ a smaller workforce. That effect will probably dissipate entirely over several years for most workers because companies that face the penalty can restrain wage growth until workers have absorbed the cost of the penalty—thus gradually eliminating the negative effect on labor demand that comes from sticky wages.

A second and more durable constraint is that businesses generally cannot reduce workers' wages below the statutory minimum wage. As a result, some employers will respond to the penalty by hiring fewer people at or just above the minimum wage—an effect that would be similar to the impact of raising the minimum wage for those companies' employees. Over time, as worker productivity rises and inflation erodes the value of the minimum wage, that effect is projected to decline because wages for fewer jobs will be constrained by the minimum wage. The effect will not disappear completely over the next 10 years, however, because some wages are still projected to be constrained (that is, wages for some jobs will be at or just above the minimum wage).

Businesses also may respond to the employer penalty by seeking to reduce or limit their full-time staffing and to hire more part-time employees. Those responses might occur because the employer penalty will apply only to businesses with 50 or more full-time-equivalent employees, and employers will be charged only for each full-time employee (not counting the first 30 employees). People are generally considered full time under the ACA if they work 30 hours or more per week, on average, so employers have an incentive, for example, to shift from hiring a single 40-hour, full-time employee to hiring two, 20-hour part-time employees to avoid bearing the costs of the penalty.

Such a change might or might not, on its own, reduce the total number of hours worked. In the example just offered, the total amount of work is unaffected by the changes. Moreover, adjustments of that sort can take time and be quite costly—in particular, because of the time and costs that arise in dismissing full-time workers (which may involve the loss of workers with valuable job-specific skills); the time and costs associated with hiring new part-time workers (including the effort spent on interviewing and training); and, perhaps most important, the time and costs of changing work processes to accommodate a larger number of employees working shorter and different schedules. The extent to which people would be willing to work at more than one part-time job instead of a single full-time job is unclear as well; although hourly wages for full-time jobs might be lower than those for part-time jobs (once wages adjust to the penalty), workers also would incur additional costs associated with holding more than one job at a time.

In CBO's judgment, there is no compelling evidence that part-time employment has increased as a result of the ACA. On the one hand, there have been anecdotal reports of firms responding to the employer penalty by limiting workers' hours, and the share of workers in part-time jobs has declined relatively slowly since the end of the recent recession. On the other hand, the share of workers in part-time jobs generally declines slowly after recessions, so whether that share would have declined more quickly during the past few years in the absence of the ACA is difficult to determine. In any event, because the employer penalty will not take effect until 2015, the current lack of direct evidence may not be very informative about the ultimate effects of the ACA.

More generally, some employers have expressed doubts about whether and how the provisions of the ACA will unfold. Uncertainty in several areas—including the timing and sequence of policy changes and implementation procedures and their effects on health insurance premiums and workers' demand for health insurance—probably has encouraged some employers to delay hiring. However, those effects are difficult to quantify separately from other developments in the labor market, and possible effects on the demand for labor through such channels have not been incorporated into CBO's estimates of the ACA's impact.

EFFECTS OF CHANGES IN THE DEMAND FOR GOODS AND SERVICES ON THE DEMAND FOR LABOR

CBO estimates that, over the next few years, the various provisions of the ACA that affect federal revenues and outlays will increase demand for goods and services, on net. Most important, the expansion of Medicaid coverage and the provision of exchange subsidies (and the resulting rise in health insurance coverage) will not only stimulate greater demand for health care services but also allow lower-income households that gain subsidized coverage to increase their spending on other goods and services—thereby raising overall demand in the economy. A partial offset will come from the increased taxes and reductions in Medicare's payments to health care providers that are included in the ACA to offset the costs of the coverage expansion.

On balance, CBO estimates that the ACA will boost overall demand for goods and services over the next few years because the people who will benefit from the expansion of Medicaid and from access to the exchange subsidies are predominantly in lower-income households and thus are likely to spend a considerable fraction of their additional resources on goods and services—whereas people who will pay the higher taxes are predominantly in higher-income households and are likely to change their spending to a lesser degree. Similarly, reduced payments under Medicare to hospitals and other providers will lessen their income or profits, but those changes are likely to decrease demand by a relatively small amount.

The net increase in demand for goods and services will in turn boost demand for labor over the next few years, CBO estimates. Those effects on labor demand tend to be especially strong under conditions such as those now prevailing in the United States, where output is so far below its maximum sustainable level that the Federal Reserve has kept short-term interest rates near zero for several years and probably would not adjust those rates to offset the effects of changes in federal spending and taxes. Over time, however, those effects are expected to dissipate as overall economic output moves back toward its maximum sustainable level.

WHY SHORT-TERM EFFECTS WILL BE SMALLER THAN LONGER-TERM EFFECTS

CBO estimates that the reduction in the use of labor that is attributable to the ACA will be smaller between 2014 and 2016 than it will be between 2017 and 2024. That difference is a result of three factors in particular—two that reflect smaller negative effects on the supply of labor and one that reflects a more positive effect on the demand for labor:

The number of people who will receive exchange subsidies—and who thus will face an implicit tax from the phaseout of those subsidies that discourages them from working—will be smaller initially than it will be in later years. The number of enrollees (workers and their dependents) purchasing their own coverage through the exchanges is projected to rise from about 6 million in 2014 to

about 25 million in 2017 and later years, and most of those enrollees will receive subsidies. Although the number of people who will be eligible for exchange subsidies is similar from year to year, workers who are eligible but do not enroll may either be unaware of their eligibility or be unaffected by it and thus are unlikely to change their supply of labor in response to the availability of those subsidies.

CBO anticipates that the unemployment rate will remain high for the next few years. If changes in incentives lead some workers to reduce the amount of hours they want to work or to leave the labor force altogether, many unemployed workers will be available to take those jobs—so the effect on overall employment of reductions in labor supply will be greatly dampened.

The expanded federal subsidies for health insurance will stimulate demand for goods and services, and that effect will mostly occur over the next few years. That increase in demand will induce some employers to hire more workers or to increase their employees' hours during that period.

CBO anticipates that output will return nearly to its maximum sustainable level in 2017 (see Chapter 2). Once that occurs, the net decline in the amount of labor that workers choose to supply because of the ACA will be fully reflected in a decline in total employment and hours worked relative to what would otherwise occur.

DIFFERENCES FROM CBO'S PREVIOUS ESTIMATES OF THE ACA'S EFFECTS ON LABOR MARKETS

CBO's estimate that the ACA will reduce aggregate labor compensation in the economy by about 1 percent over the 2017–2024 period—compared with what would have occurred in the absence of the act—is substantially larger than the estimate the agency issued in August 2010. At that time, CBO estimated that, once it was fully implemented, the ACA would reduce the use of labor by about one-half of a percent. That measure of labor use was calculated in dollar terms, representing the change in aggregate labor compensation that would result. Thus it can be compared with the reduction in aggregate compensation that CBO now estimates to result from the act (rather than with the projected decline in the number of hours worked).

The increase in that estimate primarily reflects three factors:

The revised estimate is based on a more detailed analysis of the ACA that incorporates additional channels through which that law will affect labor supply. In particular, CBO's 2010 estimate did not include an effect on labor supply from the employer penalty and the resulting reduction in wages (as the costs of that penalty are passed on to workers), and it did not include an effect from encouraging part-year workers to delay returning to work in order to retain their insurance subsidies.

CBO has analyzed the findings of several studies published since 2010 concerning the impact of provisions of the ACA (or similar policy initiatives) on labor markets. In particular, studies of past expansions or contractions in Medicaid eligibility for childless adults have pointed to a larger effect on labor supply than CBO had estimated previously.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, we have had an interesting conversation today. We have talked about the 40-hour workweek and what was established back in the 1930s under the New Deal, how it switched then under ObamaCare to a bad deal. Thirty hours is considered now full-time employment.

Now we talk about Mr. YOUNG's bill, H.R. 2575, that will be a good deal for American workers; actually gives them back those 25 percent of the hours that they were going to lose each week.

Now, we can play ring around the rosy with this and talk about who doesn't like whom and how these terrible, terrible businessowners don't go to church, they don't have a heart, they don't seem to worship anywhere, but they want to make sure that they take advantage of their very associates with whom they have a close relationship.

I can just tell you, after being in business my entire life—I am the son of a parts picker from a General Motors warehouse, a guy who worked his fingers to the bone to have something. I have got to tell you, it is really important, though, sometimes to step out of this room and go out into the marketplace and sit down with people who actually sit across the desk from somebody and hire them. There is no greater thrill for an employer than to be able to tell somebody: You know what? We are going to bring you on our team. You are going to be able to work with us. You are going to have wages that can support your family, plan for the future, do things that you never thought you were going to do, and you can do that because of a job.

Then, suddenly, because the numbers just weren't working for ObamaCare—and as the President says all too often, it is just the arithmetic—we are going to do something that makes it work for us, not for you, but for us. We are going to make full-time employment 30 hours. We are going to take 25 percent of your workweek away from you, and we are going to say it is 30 hours now. And now we say to these people who have a great association and a great relationship with the people they work with every day, because the success of the business is also the success of the employee, we are dividing these people and making them enemies in the marketplace. You don't need to do that.

But only in this great House and only in this great town and only in the place that is so out of touch with everyday America can we stand up and make these statements and think that they stick.

2.6 million people are affected by this in a very negative, negative way. They are going to lose jobs and they are going to lose hours. It is not the fault of the employer because he is trying to make his model work. It is the fault of the government who works at such great deficits that people can't even begin to understand what it is.

My little 9-year-old grandson says to me all the time when he looks at these things: Grandpa, it just doesn't make sense. A child can get it, but we can't get it. And in a time when we need to be more united than ever as a country, as we make our way back through a very tough time, we need to stand together on these things.

What I have heard since I got here is: You guys just don't like this Affordable Care Act. Help us make it work.

So we said: Why don't we give people full-time employment, 40 hours again?

That is not the kind of help we want. That doesn't fit our narrative. Don't you get it?

So we stand here today and we have this debate. I told you how the New Deal got replaced by the bad deal, and I also told you how this bad deal is going to get replaced by a good deal by Mr. YOUNG. H.R. 2575, that is going to help America get back to work.

Honestly, if that is not why we are here today, if that is not what our main purpose is, why are we here? What are we doing? Why do we continue to spin this so much?

Hardly any American can walk straight anymore because they get spun every day by a message from Washington. We continue to do it, and we continue to thump our chest and say we did good, we did really good.

The lowest labor rate participation in 35 years in a country that has been so blessed by our Creator that the rest of the world looks at us and says: What in the world are you doing? What is holding you back? You have every asset you could possibly want. You have great workers. You have great energy sources.

We have sources of energy that would last for several decades, several centuries. Great, great abundance and affordable and accessible energy, but we hold back on it. We have assets that make sense to everybody in the world but us. We have one-fifth of the world's freshwater sitting right in our Great Lakes, and our production per acre exceeds anybody's wildest dreams. We can have energy independence. We can feed ourselves, and we have drinking water. Everybody else in the world wants to have it.

Let me just ask the gentleman and the rest of the Congress—listen, there are 435 of us—if it is really about getting people back to work, let's do things that make sense. Let's not beat around the bush about some type of an ideological debate over what we are trying to do to each other.

Forty hours a week was always considered full-time employment. It is just that simple. It is not hard to figure out.

I can tell you, as an employer, having to let somebody go is the worst feeling you can ever have, and I do go to Mass every day, and I do pray about it every night, and I do pray about the future of this country. To suggest that anybody, any of the great employers we have and the job creators we have around this country are all somehow godless, heartless people who don't have feelings is absolutely absurd.

And it is what continues to make it hard to come to this House every day and say: You know what? We are going

to fix this for America. We are going to get America back to work. We are going to do the right thing every day, in every way.

No, that just doesn't fly here.

Well, we could go on with this for hours, Mr. Speaker. But I would just tell you this. Returning America to a 40-hour workweek just makes sense. This is not a hard thing to figure out. If a 9-year-old child can understand it, why can't the Congress of the United States? If we are truly going to turn this economy around, if we are truly going to get people back to work again, let's make sure that we renew that great sense of dependency that we have on each other, not divide ourselves between those who don't like you and those who do like you.

By the way, Senator CRUZ's poll, I know that the gentleman referred to several replies that had gone to that poll. There were 57,444 people that actually answered that poll, so I am sure there was probably some good stuff on there, too.

But that is not my point. My point is we have an opportunity here in this House like no other place in the world. When something is wrong, we can fix it.

I have heard from the time I came here the problem with a lot of these laws that are passed are the unintended consequences. Well, let me tell you there may be unintended consequences, but there are not uninsured people. There are not people out there that are not feeling the pain. There is a lot of pain out there right now. So the unintended consequences have certainly not been unpainful.

You know the other thing? They are also not unfixable. Do you know we can fix this today? Do you know we can fix this and send it over to the Senate? Do you know we can make people go back to work, make their futures look brighter? Do you know we can do that in this House of Representatives?

So forget about whether you are wearing a blue tie or a red tie. Forget about whether you have an R on your back or a D on your back, and start thinking about who you really represent, because each of us in our districts represent not just Republicans, not just Democrats, but every single American.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 530, the previous question is ordered on the bill, as amended.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

MOTION TO RECOMMIT

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I have a motion to recommit at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentleman opposed to the bill?

Mr. TAKANO. I am opposed in its current form.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion to recommit.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. Takano moves to recommit the bill, H.R. 2575, to the Committee on Ways and Means with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith with the following amendment:

At the end of the bill add the following:

SEC. 3. ADDITIONAL CONDITIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The amendments made by section 2 shall not take effect if it results in any of the following:

(1) PROHIBITION ON LOSS OF WORK HOURS OR WAGES.—A reduction in hours worked, and subsequent loss of wages, in order to skirt requirements to help pay for employee health care costs.

(2) ENSURING FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY AND A LOWER DEFICIT.—Any increase in the Federal deficit.

(b) PROTECTING HEALTH INSURANCE FOR VETERANS AND WOUNDED WARRIORS.—The amendments made by section 2 shall not apply to veterans or their families.

(c) BEING A WOMAN MUST NOT BE A PRE-EXISTING CONDITION.—Nothing in this Act shall be construed to authorize an employer to—

(1) eliminate, weaken, or reduce health coverage benefits for current employees;

(2) increase premiums or out-of-pocket costs;

(3) deny coverage based on pre-existing conditions; or

(4) discriminate against women in health insurance coverage, including by—

(A) charging women more for their health care than men;

(B) limiting coverage for pregnancy and post-natal care; or

(C) restricting coverage of preventive health services, such as mammograms and contraception.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes in support of his motion.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, the Republicans need to get with the program. It is over. Their sorry attempts to dismantle the Affordable Care Act must come to an end. My Republican colleagues have become so desperate to repeal the Affordable Care Act that they are willing to pass legislation that would increase the deficit by $74 billion.

I am not sure if they are aware, but this is a bill that violates their own budget rules and what they claim to be the foundation of their political philosophy. But it is okay. I realize they may be caught up in their obsession to repeal the ACA. I am here to help my friends on the other side of the aisle.

My final amendment prohibits their bill from taking effect if it results in an increase in the deficit or if employers begin to reduce hours or wages for workers. My final amendment would also protect veterans from the harmful impact of this legislation, and would prohibit employers from raising premiums or denying coverage to women.

No longer is being a woman a preexisting condition. Before the Affordable Care Act, women paid 48 percent more for health insurance than men. Those days are over and done with. We should not go back to them.

Earlier this week, it was announced that more than 7 million Americans have signed up for private health coverage. That is in addition to the 3 million who are able to stay on their parents' plans until they are age 26 and the millions more who are receiving Medicaid for the first time.

But according to the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office, the bill before us today would cause 1 million workers to lose their employer-sponsored health coverage. A great number of Americans finally have access to affordable coverage. Now is not the time to take a step back. Here is proof. A resident in my district named Karrie Brooks wrote to me, saying:

> The individual coverage that I could afford as a healthy 54-year-old woman has been $418 a month, with a $5,000 deductible. Yes, this would keep me from going under in an emergency, but I avoided going to the doctor, mostly for the fear that if I used the insurance my policy might be canceled. I found myself skipping annual physicals and mammograms, labs, et cetera, because of the $1,200 tab. I was on a continual quest for something better and more secure.

She goes on to say:

> Recently, Anthem let me know that I would have to change to a compliant plan. The plan they suggested to me is similar to what I had, but it will cost me $53 less a month. Yes, less. Most important, I know I cannot be canceled.

I might mention that the annual physical exams, mammograms and other preventative services that Ms. Brooks once avoided are now provided at no cost to patients under all health plans.

The Affordable Care Act is a law that millions of Americans like Ms. Brooks have embraced and benefited from. Why would anyone want to take that away? Do we really want to go back to the days when insurance companies had free rein to do as they pleased? Do we really want to go back to the days when one illness or one accident could completely bankrupt your family? Do we really want to go back to the days when premiums skyrocketed year after year with no end in sight?

My Republican friends, this addiction to repealing the ACA is not doing anyone any good. We need an intervention here. This is a safe place. Stop standing on the wrong side of history. Let's move on. Let's accept that the Affordable Care Act is the law of the land and get back to being a productive legislative body.

I urge my colleagues to support this motion to recommit, and I yield back the balance of my time.

□ 1445

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the motion.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Michigan is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, let me just make one thing really clear. The legislation before the House is really to address the problems of ObamaCare, which have reduced hours and reduced wages for workers in America.

If you really cared about the loss of work hours, which this motion purports to do, you vote for this bill because it is ObamaCare that is causing workers to go from 40 to 30 hours. If you really cared about the deficit—and we know what ObamaCare does in the long term; it increases the deficit hugely—you would support this bill so that you can get a job, a job that you can work 40 hours, so that you can increase your income. And then you can pay taxes on that income, and then our economy and our country will be better off, and the American Dream won't be in jeopardy. Vote ''no'' on this motion to recommit.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to recommit.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to recommit.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, the Chair will reduce to 5 minutes the minimum time for any electronic vote on the question of passage of the bill.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 191, nays 232, not voting 8, as follows:

[Roll No. 155]

YEAS—191

Barber
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera (CA)
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castro (TX)
Chu
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Enyart
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Garcia
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hanabusa
Hastings (FL)
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Holt
Honda
Horsford
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee (CA)
Levin
Lewis
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Maffei
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Michaud
Miller, George
Moore
Moran
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Negrete McLeod
Nolan
O'Rourke
Owens
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor (AZ)
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters (CA)
Peters (MI)
Pingree (ME)
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rahall
Rangel
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Schwartz
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Titus
Tonko
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NAYS—232

Aderholt
Amash
Amodei
Bachmann
Bachus
Barletta
Barr
Barrow (GA)
Barton
Benishek
Bentivolio
Bilirakis
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Broun (GA)
Buchanan
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Cantor
Capito
Carter
Cassidy
Chabot
Chaffetz
Coble
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Conaway
Cook
Cotton
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Daines
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gardner
Garrett
Gerlach
Gibbs
Gibson
Gingrey (GA)
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (MO)
Griffin (AR)
Griffith (VA)
Grimm
Guthrie
Hall
Hanna
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings (WA)
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurt
Issa
Jenkins
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latham
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
Marchant
Marino
Massie
Matheson
McAllister
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McIntyre
McKeon
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Mullin
Mulvaney
Neugebauer
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Nunnelee
Olson
Palazzo
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Peterson
Petri
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Pompeo
Posey
Price (GA)
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Royce
Runyan
Ryan (WI)
Sanford
Scalise
Schock
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Southerland
Stewart
Stivers
Stockman
Stutzman
Terry
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walorski
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (IN)

NOT VOTING—8

Castor (FL)
Lankford
Lynch
Murphy (PA)
Payne
Salmon
Waxman
Young (AK)

□ 1510

Messrs. BROOKS of Alabama, CHABOT, GINGREY of Georgia, and Mrs. HARTZLER changed their vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. MEEKS, Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. SMITH of Washington, and Ms. SCHAKOWSKY changed their vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

(By unanimous consent, Mr. CARTER was allowed to speak out of order.)

MOMENT OF SILENCE AND PRAYER FOR THE FORT HOOD SHOOTING VICTIMS, THEIR FAMILIES, AND THE COMMUNITY

Mr. CARTER. Mr. Speaker, yesterday afternoon, tragedy struck the heart of Texas at Fort Hood, which we know as ''The Great Place.'' A gunman whose motives we do not understand took the lives of three American soldiers and wounded 16 more before taking his own life.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, this is not the first time Fort Hood has had to endure a tragedy like this.

Our thoughts and prayers are with the victims, their families, and the Fort Hood community. We pray for a speedy recovery to the wounded and extend our deepest condolences to the friends and families of those soldiers who lost their lives.

We stand ready to provide any and all assistance we can to support Fort Hood, the soldiers serving there, and the surrounding community.

Now I yield to my good friend and colleague and ally in supporting this incredible community which we both have the honor to represent, Congressman WILLIAMS.

Mr. WILLIAMS. Mr. Speaker, it is said that all give some, and some give their all. Once again, we have seen tragedy at Fort Hood, ''The Great Place,'' and already we are witnessing the strength and resilience of a community of brave men and women who not only serve our country overseas in enemy territory, but right here at home on military posts around the Nation.

Our prayers are with the fallen troops, those who were injured and are still in recovery, and the families of all those involved. Our thoughts are with the entire Fort Hood community and great leadership team under General Milley as they stand together and push through this tough time. We will continue praying for the excellent medical team assisting the injured.

And perhaps most importantly, we will not forget the troops whose lives were lost yesterday. The best and the brightest is what we offer at Fort Hood. Their service and sacrifice are an

inspiration reminding us that America doesn't give because it is rich, America is rich because it gives, and it has given us all of those we honor today.

May God bless all of the Fort Hood community during this time, and may God bless America.

Mr. CARTER. Mr. Speaker, at this time, I would like to ask the House to join me in a moment of silence and hopefully prayer for the Fort Hood community and all those families of the injured and dead at Fort Hood today.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All present rise for a moment of silence.

Without objection, 5-minute voting will continue.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 248, noes 179, not voting 4, as follows:

[Roll No. 156]

AYES—248

Aderholt
Amash
Amodei
Bachmann
Bachus
Barber
Barletta
Barr
Barrow (GA)
Barton
Benishek
Bentivolio
Bera (CA)
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Broun (GA)
Buchanan
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Cantor
Capito
Carter
Cassidy
Chabot
Chaffetz
Coble
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Conaway
Cook
Costa
Cotton
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Cuellar
Culberson
Daines
Davis, Rodney
Delaney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallego
Gardner
Garrett
Gerlach
Gibbs
Gibson
Gingrey (GA)
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (MO)
Griffin (AR)
Griffith (VA)
Grimm
Guthrie
Hall
Hanna
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings (WA)
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurt
Issa
Jenkins
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latham
Latta
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Long
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
Marchant
Marino
Massie
Matheson
McAllister
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McIntyre
McKeon
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (FL)
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Nunnelee
Olson
Palazzo
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Peters (CA)
Peterson
Petri
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Pompeo
Posey
Price (GA)
Rahall
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Royce
Runyan
Ryan (WI)
Sanford
Scalise
Schneider
Schock
Schrader
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Southerland
Stewart
Stivers
Stockman
Stutzman
Terry
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walorski
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IN)

NOES—179

Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castro (TX)
Chu
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Courtney
Crowley
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
DeLauro
DelBene
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Enyart
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Garamendi
Garcia
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hanabusa
Hastings (FL)
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Holt
Honda
Horsford
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee (CA)
Levin
Lewis
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Maffei
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Michaud
Miller, George
Moore
Moran
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Negrete McLeod
Nolan
O'Rourke
Owens
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor (AZ)
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters (MI)
Pingree (ME)
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schwartz
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Titus
Tonko
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Waxman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—4

Castor (FL)
Lankford
Lynch
Salmon

□ 1521

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 217

Mr. REED. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to remove my name as a cosponsor of H.R. 217.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

RESIGNATION AS MEMBER OF COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following resignation as a member of the Committee on Homeland Security:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, April 1, 2014.

Speaker JOHN BOEHNER,
The Capitol,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER BOEHNER: I wanted to inform you that today I am resigning from the Homeland Security Committee. I appreciate your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

TULSI GABBARD,
Member of Congress.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the resignation is accepted.

There was no objection.

RESIGNATIONS AS MEMBER OF COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES AND COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following resignations as a member of the Committee on Natural Resources and the Committee on Homeland Security:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
4th District, Nevada, April 1, 2014.

JOHN BOEHNER,
Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives,
The Capitol, Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER BOEHNER, I am writing to step down from my current assignments on the House Natural Resources Committee and the House Homeland Security Committee, allowing me to fill the current vacancy on the House Financial Services Committee.

It has been an honor to serve on both of these committees, and I look forward to continuing my work on behalf of the people of Nevada's 4th Congressional District.

Sincerely,

STEVEN A. HORSFORD,
Member of Congress.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the resignations are accepted.

There was no objection.

ELECTING MEMBERS TO CERTAIN STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Democratic Caucus, I

offer a privileged resolution (H. Res. 537) and ask for its immediate consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the resolution.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 537

Resolved, That the following named Members be and are hereby elected to the following standing committees of the House of Representatives:

(1) COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES.—Ms. Gabbard.

(2) COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL SERVICES.—Mr. Horsford.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

IOWA'S NATIONAL GUARD

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

Mr. BRALEY of Iowa. Madam Speaker, last month, after proposed cuts to the Iowa National Guard, I asked Iowans for their comments and stories about the impact the Guard has had on their lives. Today, I will be turning those responses in to Secretary Hagel and the Pentagon to make sure that the Pentagon hears, not just from me, but from the Iowans who have seen the tremendous good done by the Iowa National Guard. I want to share several of the responses I will be turning in.

Donna from Ankeny, who has a nephew in the Guard, told me:

> The National Guard is an investment in our safety and security, but it is also an investment in many young people—a huge employer.

Nancy from Dubuque, Iowa, wrote:

> Not only do they fight for our country overseas, but they do so much for our country, such as helping with the floods in Iowa or with the aftermath of 9/11 in New York. The National Guard is an important part of our safety at home and abroad.

These are just some of the hundreds of responses I have received, and I am submitting many of these for the RECORD.

The Iowa National Guard served the longest deployment of any combat unit in Iraq. They came back and helped deal with the most powerful tornado in the United States that hit my district in 2008 and the worst flooding in our State's history, and that is why we shouldn't cut their funding.

The following individuals also indicated that they do not support the Pentagon making cuts to the National Guard to reduce spending:

Kevin Burke—Grimes, IA; John Moore—Grinnell, IA; Kathryn Bly—Grinnell, IA; Jacob Knott—Liscomb, IA; Chris Brodin—Marshalltown, IA; Bing McHone—Marshalltown, IA; Carolyn Peters—Montour, IA; Rachael Johnson—Rhodes, IA; Bonnie Coble—Rhodes, IA; Darlene Eckhart—State Center, IA; Nancy Croy—Des Moines, IA; Deborah Mikelson—Des Moines, IA.

Julia Taylor—Urbandale, IA; Rob Maser—Urbandale, IA; David Bryant—Mason City, IA; Stacy Baumgartner—Joice, IA; Hope Hartwig—Manly, IA; Sloane Morrow—Fort Dodge, IA; Londa Dawkins—Ackley, IA; Dawn Shepard—Aplington, IA; James Meehan—Cedar Falls, IA; Emilee Leonard—Cedar Falls, IA; Barb Hazen—Cedar Falls, IA; Kristine Grummitt—Cedar Falls, IA.

Janet Nieman—Cedar Falls, IA; Suman Kandula—Cedar Falls, IA; Lance Dewein—Denver, IA; Randy William's—Dike, IA; Patricia Ohrt—Fairbank, IA; Merle Wilson—Fairbank, IA; Raymond Rich—Fairbank, IA; Glen Hockemeyer—Grundy Center, IA; Ronald Crooks—LaPorte City, IA; Juanita Vanlaninghan—Independence, IA; Todd Marsh—Jesup, IA.

Dave Smith—Hudson, IA; Mary Brown—LaPorte City, IA; Eugene Knoploh—Sumner, IA; Steve Smothers—Oelwein, IA; RaeLynn Osmanski—Plainfield, IA; Maggie Monaghan—Masonville, IA; Myron Dinsdale—Traer, IA; Jeffry Traeger—Waverly, IA; James Campbell—Waverly, IA; Pam Hogan—Winthrop, IA; Rebecca Hurd—Westgate, IA; Verilyn Savage—Waverly, IA; Wesley Pilkington—Waterloo, IA; Suzanne Rigdon—Waterloo, IA.

Thomas Richter—Waterloo, IA; Duwayne Gray—Waterloo, IA; Lisa Goedken—Waterloo, IA; Sharon Holdiman—Waterloo, IA; Laverne Bovy—Waterloo, IA; Myles Douglass—Waterloo, IA; Tom Robinson—Waterloo, IA; Megan Troyer—Waterloo, IA; Nathan Heyerhoff—Waterloo, IA; Cindy Heyerhoff—Waterloo, IA; Debra Floyd—Waterloo, IA; Steve Lumsden—Waterloo, IA; Mary Klingaman—Waterloo, IA.

January Matney—Waterloo, IA; George DeBord—Evansdale, IA; Terrence Martin—Sioux City, IA; Vonda Maggert—George, IA; Janice Thompson—Council Bluffs, IA; Maureen Barry—Dubuque, IA; Jason Peterson—Dubuque, IA; Chad Streff—Dubuque, IA; Marie Therese Coleman—Dubuque, IA; Stacey Moore—Dubuque, IA; Galen Smith—Dubuque, IA; Rich Hatcher—Dubuque, IA; Betty Kilburg—Bellevue, IA; Joe Manternach—Cascade, IA.

Marji Franzen—Delmar, IA; Neal Franzen—Delmar, IA; Susan Konzen—Dyersville, IA; Sally Knepper—Farley, IA; Geralyn Torkelson—Elkader, IA; Jeanette Kremer—Epworth, IA; Paul Kremer—Epworth, IA; James Bergin—Epworth, IA; Jason Heisler—Dyersville, IA; Wayne Frantzen—Maquoketa, IA; Kathy Dolan—Manchester, IA; Kathryn Guilgot—Manchester, IA; Randy Smith—Manchester, IA.

Lois Eads—Maquoketa, IA; Hannah Davison—Maquoketa, IA; Michael Cahill—Farley, IA; Michael Cline—Decorah, IA; Doris Engen—Decorah, IA; John Meyer—Decorah, IA; Dean Beinborn—Decorah, IA; Rick Cameron—Calmar, IA; Lucille Severson—Clermont, IA; Galen Kelly—Fayette, IA; Jane Regan—Harpers Ferry, IA; Michael Froehlich—Marquette, IA; Lisa McDanel—Protivin, IA; Kay Carter—Waukon, IA.

Donna Oltmann—Anamosa, IA; Jason Schwendinger—Anamosa, IA; Sarah George—Center Point, IA; Katy Diltz—Coggon, IA; Mona Reilly—Coggon, IA; Terri Staner—Delhi, IA; Pat Cook—Fairfax, IA; Robert Arbuckle—Iowa City, IA; Dwight Felling—Marengo, IA; Deb Conner—Marion, IA; Kathryn Baclet—Marion, IA; Dennis Lewis—Monticello, IA; Jay Currie—Mount Vernon, IA.

Scott McKnight—North Liberty, IA; Shiloh Herr—Palo, IA; Lynn Kramer—Robins, IA; Diana Muchmore—Rowley, IA; Steve Cavanaugh—Cedar Rapids, IA; Annette Rink—Cedar Rapids, IA; Greg Sohl—Cedar Rapids, IA; Larry Freese—Cedar Rapids, IA; Bill Crosser—Cedar Rapids, IA; Justin Kratts—Cedar Rapids, IA; Tim Watson—Cedar Rapids, IA; Sheree Martinez—Cedar Rapids, IA; Larry Donaldson—Cedar Rapids, IA; Joseph Berry—Cedar Rapids, IA.

Michael Graves—Cedar Rapids, IA; Andrew Kidd—Cedar Rapids, IA; David Owens—Cedar Rapids, IA; Marcus Beebe—Cedar Rapids, IA; Kathy Tedesco—Cedar Rapids, IA; Tom Miller—Cedar Rapids, IA; Tony Schmidt—Cedar Rapids, IA; David Farland—Cedar Rapids, IA; Danielle Ellickson—Cedar Rapids, IA; Thomas High—Cedar Rapids, IA; Janette Benzing—Cedar Rapids, IA; Garnett Helming—Cedar Rapids, IA; Patti Sampson—Cedar Rapids, IA.

Jim Doerzman—Bettendorf, IA; James Stopulos—Bettendorf, IA; Jeanette White—Bettendorf, IA; Rick Seibel—Buffalo, IA; Renee Williams—Camanche, IA; Carla Edfors—Clinton, IA; Suzanne Reed—Eldridge, IA; Paul Fahrenkrug—McCausland, IA; Carolyn Kemper—Muscatine, IA; Edith Koehn—Davenport, IA; Sandra Davis—Davenport, IA; Roger Hutchison—Davenport, IA; Ron Huber—Davenport, IA.

Margaret Raibley—Davenport, IA; Kent Dexter—Davenport, IA; Sharon Carlson—Davenport, IA; Bekky Anderson—Davenport, IA; Jeanna Wonio—Davenport, IA; George Rasmussen—Davenport, IA; Jeffrey Arthur—Westgate, IA; Romaine Pickart—Dubuque, IA; Ann Schooley—Cedar Rapids, IA; Brenda Klenk—Hudson, IA; Sarah Croft—Pensacola, FL; Paul Olds—Gulf Port, MS.

CUBAN PEOPLE DESERVE FREEDOM

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, there has been a lot of misinformation today about the Cuban Twitter program. This is not a secret program. Cuba democracy programs are public.

Both USAID and State publicly put out requests for proposals from different NGOs or private businesses to administer and implement our Cuba democracy programs.

The objective of these programs is to provide greater access to information to those suffering under the repressive regime. The Cuban dictatorship controls, censors, and blocks information going into the island to deny Cubans the ability to hear about world events or about the human rights violations occurring throughout the island in their very own country.

The funds help provide technology-based training to get through—to cut through the censorship of the Castro brothers. Our goal is to stimulate new ideas to help the Cuban people tackle pressing issues such as human rights abuses.

These new technology programs are also aimed at reaching out to the Cuban youth to share experiences and provide them with the tools to build their capacity for grassroots organizing to promote democracy, liberty, and freedom. The Cuban people deserve freedom.

SAVE AMERICAN WORKERS ACT LESSENS BURDEN

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, businesses across the

country have stopped hiring, and millions of Americans are beginning to see less take-home pay as a result of the Affordable Care Act's 30-hour workweek requirement.

That is the crux of the problem with the Affordable Care Act, Madam Speaker. The law's burdensome employer requirements dissuade businesses from expanding and encourage shifting current workers from full to part-time work.

Congress should be advancing policies to expand employment opportunities, especially during tough economic times, rather than undercutting the ability of Americans to earn more.

This is the reason that the House today passed H.R. 2575, the Save American Workers Act, legislation that will allow businesses the opportunity to expand workers' hours by redefining full-time employees under the Affordable Care Act and reverting back to the traditional 40-hour workweek definition.

The Save American Workers Act will lessen the burden being imposed on employers and help to increase wages so that Americans, especially those with limited means, can better provide for their families.

□ 1530

GLOBAL BATTLE AGAINST ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

(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. Madam Speaker, I want to thank the British Embassy for including me in an exchange program with scientists, policy leaders, and members of the British Parliament who are on the front lines of our global battle against Alzheimer's disease.

Alzheimer's attacks our oldest population, stripping our grandparents of their memory and their dignity, and placing debilitating stress on devoted caretakers.

Forty-four million worldwide and 5 million right here in America are affected. In fact, an American develops Alzheimer's disease every 68 seconds, which means by the time I finish this speech someone in our country will have this heartbreaking disease.

Through the Affordable Care Act and the National Alzheimer's Project Act, Congress and President Obama have taken important steps to address this growing crisis. It is a moral and economic imperative that we continue to escalate our efforts.

THE PRESIDENT'S PEP RALLY SPEECH ON OBAMACARE

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Madam Speaker, the head cheerleader in charge held a pep rally this week. Standing in front of a boisterous pep squad of bureaucrats from HHS and Democrats who support ObamaCare, the President declared his mission accomplished.

However, not there and not invited were millions who had lost their plans and lost their doctors that the President promised that they could keep. Many citizens have seen their health insurance costs rise, their deductibles increase, and their coverage decrease, and they weren't there either.

One single mom in my district wrote me that she had to send her son off to live with her parents because she could no longer afford to support him due to the rise in her health care costs under ObamaCare. She wasn't there either.

But the President declared the debate over repealing ObamaCare is over. Not so fast, Mr. President. College pep rally campaigning in front of a handpicked audience won't change the fact that ObamaCare is bad medicine for America.

And that's just the way it is.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. WAGNER). The Chair would remind Members to direct their remarks to the Chair.

SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS MONTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from New York (Mr. REED) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. REED. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of my Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

Mr. REED. Madam Speaker, I thank my colleagues that have joined me this evening to talk about an issue that is very personal to me and I think something that we need to discuss across America in an open and honest fashion.

Madam Speaker, this month, April, is Sexual Assault Awareness Month. I am joined with many of my colleagues here today to discuss the issue of sexual assault, domestic violence and, in particular, a national effort that we have become familiar with in our office and in my household called the NO MORE campaign. NO MORE is a group that is represented by numerous entities across the country that are coming together to say ''no more'' to sexual assault and domestic violence.

Madam Speaker, you may recall I came to this floor of this Chamber back on March 14 and I discussed the issue of NO MORE Week at that point in time. I shared my family's personal story that moved us in our household—my wife, my brother, my sister, my 11 older brothers and sisters—to say ''no more.''

Madam Speaker, over the last year and a half, we dealt with a situation where my niece was raped. I will tell you, going through that experience, it is time to say ''no more.''

I just am humbled to see the outpouring of support that my colleagues are showing me this evening and coming together to say we need to talk about sexual assault, we need to talk about domestic violence across the country. We can't be shameful, we can't hide any longer. We need to stand with the victims and say this isn't something that is just going to be brushed aside and there are going to be excuses of, well, she wanted it or they deserved it or they were drinking, and therefore it is okay. ''No more,'' Madam Speaker, no more to sexual assault and domestic violence.

Earlier today, my colleague across the aisle, GWEN MOORE, and I introduced a resolution supporting the goals and ideas of April as Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month. I am glad to see that we are coming together in this Chamber on a bipartisan basis to identify this issue, speak about this issue, and coming together to solve this critical problem for Americans across the Nation.

Also, I just wanted to say, from this personal experience as a husband, as a father of a beautiful girl who is 15, the uncle of my beautiful niece who went through this horrific situation, that we just can't express enough how horrific and tragic sexual assault is when it comes to families, young men and women, just men and women across the country, and I stand here today to say ''no more.''

With that, I yield to the gentlewoman from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO), my good colleague, to speak on this important issue.

Mrs. CAPITO. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New York for bringing highlight to an issue that we all feel a certain sadness that has to be highlighted. I am sorry for his personal tragedy for his niece, and I wish her much healing and a bright future for her.

I rise today to, too, speak, as he did, about April as Sexual Assault Awareness Month.

As we know, sexual assault can happen to anyone, regardless of gender, age, race, or religion, and it is always heartbreaking. Those are the ones that we actually hear about. Many go unreported. So we must say ''no more,'' no more to sexual assault and the culture of silence and shame.

One in six women in this country have been sexually assaulted, most by someone they know. Hence, the area of deeply troubling behaviors in the realm of domestic violence.

College women have an even higher rate of sexual victimization than most women in the United States. Our colleges and universities can and must play an important role in stopping sexual assault and joining this campaign in April by saying ''no more'' to sexual

assault. This must be a priority in every college campus in America.

As a mother of a daughter and now a grandmother of a daughter and also two sons who were lucky enough to go to college, I want to make sure that when they are on those college campuses they are safe and that they know how to get help and that they know how to recognize the signals that they might be getting into trouble.

Many of those affected with sexual assault struggle with depression, drug and alcohol abuse, or even thoughts of suicide. We have to make sure that they know they are not to blame and that help is available.

So many people care. Local organizations, like the local Charleston YWCA, which runs the Resolve Family Abuse Program, with which I was an active board member for many years, they stand ready to help. They have counseling programs, they have residential programs, they have programs for batterers, programs to try to alleviate the scourge of domestic violence.

We in Congress have passed laws to provide Federal funding for programs and organizations to help women seeking help from domestic abuse, stalking, and sexual assault.

I will continue to work to help the men and women affected by these heinous crimes and am proud to stand here today and say ''no more'' to sexual assault.

Mr. REED. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlelady from West Virginia for her words and offer of support.

At this time, Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. COSTA), a good friend from the other side of the aisle, the cochair of the Victims' Rights Caucus.

Mr. COSTA. Madam Speaker, as a cochairman of the Crime Victims Caucus, along with our good friend and colleague Congressman TED POE, our caucus wants to join in this effort to say ''no more.'' The Crime Victims Caucus is active in a host of different areas, and this is one that deserves our attention.

As we mark the National Sexual Assault Awareness Month, we must remember that every day millions are struggling with the aftermath of sexual assault. We remember the survivors, and we honor the advocates who support them.

Awareness and action can help end the cycle of sexual assault and domestic violence. One in five women in this country, sadly, are raped over the course of their lifetime, and half of all women will experience some type of sexual assault. These are horrific, horrific numbers. These are our sisters, our mothers, and our wives.

We must act. Millions of victims are not receiving the assistance they need, and Congress must act. A national survey in 2013 showed that 75 percent of the rape crisis centers have lost funding, resulting in layoffs and reduced services and program closures when, in fact, we need 24/7 service for this very, very important matter. Those numbers mean communities with shuttered emergency shelters that could have helped women and men find safe haven are no longer available. We must do better.

That is why, I along with many of my colleagues here today, are fighting to raise the cap on the Crime Victims Fund that is one of the top priorities of the Victims' Rights Caucus. More than 80 Members of Congress signed our bipartisan legislation. Congressman TED POE and I carried a letter to the Appropriations Committee urging them to raise the cap to $1.5 billion from its current level of $745 million. This fund is oversubscribed.

The fact of the matter is this fund does not contain one ounce of taxpayer dollars. It is, in fact, ill-gotten gains by criminals of all kinds in which those ill-gotten gains are confiscated and placed in this restitution fund that President Reagan signed into law in 1981 with then a Democratic-controlled Congress. So we must raise these funds.

The Crime Victims Fund provides money for our domestic violence shelters that provide shelter for families and women and children who are victims of domestic violence. It funds rape crisis centers and child abuse treatment centers and programs.

We must fund the rape prevention and education fund that provides moneys to our States in order to support this very important issue of rape prevention and education programs conducted by these rape crisis centers, sexual assault coalitions, and other nonprofit organizations that are attempting to educate to help to assist and to be there when these victims are violated by this most horrific crime.

Awareness, education, and empowerment, we all have a role to play in combating the sexual assault. That is why we are honoring those this month. Until we eliminate sexual assault and domestic violence and rape, we must continue to educate people on where to seek help when tragedy strikes. Survivors must know that they are not alone, and it is not their fault, and that there is help and that we care so that they can come out of the shadows and live a productive life.

In closing, it is our job and solemn promise here in Congress to guarantee that there is help for every victim in our country. ''No more'' to sexual assault.

Mr. REED. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California for his kind words. What I will say is, it is awareness, education, and empowerment.

With that, I yield to the gentleman from Texas, Judge POE, a good friend and cochair of the Victims' Rights Caucus.

□ 1545

Mr. POE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding time, and I thank him for having this Special Order regarding the dastardly crime of sexual assault.

I also want to thank my friend Mr. COSTA from California for his work. We serve as cochairs on the Victims' Rights Caucus, and it is a caucus that does exactly what it says. We promote and advocate on behalf of crime victims throughout in the country here legislatively.

Mr. COSTA, as some of you may know his history from California and he was the author of the Three Strikes, You're Out law that many States now have adopted. It is good law, and I want to commend him for his work on the caucus and also his comments.

Madam Speaker, I spent all my career before I came to Congress at the criminal courts building in Houston, first as a prosecutor and then about 22 years as a criminal court judge. I heard about 25,000 cases as a judge. I heard a lot as a prosecutor. All of those cases dealt with people, not just the defendant, but the victims of crime as well.

I would like to talk about just one person. It happened a long time ago in a case I prosecuted. I am going to change the names to protect the privacy of the family of the victim. This young student went to one of our schools in Houston, Texas. She is working in the daytime, went to night school to get a second degree. She is driving home on one of our freeways at night. She had car trouble. She pulled over to a service station, looking for some help because all the lights had come on.

She gets out of the car and she talked to a person that she thought was a service station attendant. Billy Smith wasn't a service station attendant. He was just hanging around. He pulls out a gun. He kidnaps Lucy and takes her to a remote place of our county. He did a lot of bad things to her, including beating her up and abandoning her, left her for dead. In fact, when he was later arrested by the Houston Police Department, he was mad that he hadn't killed her.

A remarkable lady. She recovered those physical wounds. Her medical needs were met. The bad guy was caught. I prosecuted him in front of a jury of 12 right-thinking Americans in Houston, and he was convicted of sexual assault of Lucy and received the maximum sentence of 99 years in a Texas penitentiary.

We would hope, as a society, that all would be well, life would go on, and good things would happen. That is not reality. That is not the world we live in now or then. Because when you deal with a victim of a sexual assault, they are a special person. Everything about their identity, in many cases, has been destroyed. In fact, defendants, I think, try to destroy the soul of sexual assault victims.

Lucy testified at that trial, but her life fell apart. She dropped out of school. In fact, she never went on that campus again. She lost her job, her husband. The kind of guy he was, he divorced her and left her. She started using drugs, and she used drugs for a while.

Not too long after the trial was over with, I received a phone call from her mother telling me that Lucy had taken her life. And she left a note, and in that note she said: I am tired of running from Billy Smith in my nightmares. You see, she got the death penalty because she was a victim of crime, a real person. We would hope for the best. That is not reality.

So we, as a society, have to understand the plight of victims. When the crime is committed against them, it is not like a theft case. It is a personal crime. And some don't make it; they don't recover. And society needs to be there to help them, as Mr. COSTA says, to let them know they are not alone anymore, that we are on their side and we are going to do what we can to see that justice occurs in their case, because, Madam Speaker, justice is what we do in this country.

And that's just the way it is.

Mr. REED. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for the words. I am so pleased that this is a bipartisan Special Order, where Members from the other side of the aisle are joining us tonight to talk about the issue of sexual assault, domestic violence, and us saying ''no more.''

With that, I yield to my good friend from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT).

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. I thank the gentleman from New York for organizing this Special Order.

Madam Speaker, today I join my colleagues in recognizing the importance of Sexual Assault Awareness Month. Sexual assault is far too prevalent in modern society. It is estimated one in five girls and one in twenty boys will be a victim of child sexual assault. Nearly a quarter of all women attending college will also become victims during their academic career.

This issue has been a key issue for the Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security, and Investigations, which I have the privilege to serve as ranking member. The subcommittee is not only focused on investigating and prosecuting offenders, it also looks to provide law enforcement with the necessary funding and resources and training to immediately help survivors beginning the healing process.

Just yesterday, the full Judiciary Committee reported a bill that will reauthorize the Debbie Smith Act. This will provide funding to reduce the DNA analysis backlog in our Nation's laboratories and speed up justice to victims of sexual assault.

Debbie Smith is a constituent of mine, and the horror she endured while waiting 6½ years for the DNA to be tested is beyond unacceptable. What is even more unacceptable is that during the time of delay, her attacker abducted and robbed two other women. If the DNA sample had been tested in a timely manner, it is almost certain that those two women would not have been victims of crime. The Debbie Smith Act helps ensure that we can bring perpetrators to justice more quickly and helps survivors on the road to recovery.

Madam Speaker, during Sexual Assault Awareness Month, we need to focus on actions that we can take to reduce the incidence of sexual assault. For example, we have a profound responsibility to the children within our foster care system, and unfortunately we have found that those in foster care have experienced sexual assault at a much greater rate than average. Ensuring safety is a responsibility that we have.

Studies show that nearly 70 percent of children who fall victim to child sexual trade are runaways from the foster care system. By the time they run away, they have already been molested or assaulted by either a family member or somebody in the foster care system.

When we find children that are victims of sex trafficking, we must ensure that these children are treated as victims, not as criminals. A child cannot consent to sex. Sex with a child is rape and needs to be prosecuted as such. I urge my colleagues and my counterparts in the States to implement safe harbor laws so that victims of child sex trafficking are not victimized again when they encounter the law enforcement officials.

When rescued, efforts to support these children must be improved. These survivors require multidisciplinary care and resources that recognize the distinct and severe physical and psychological harms inflicted on them.

The potential for victimization does not end at childhood. The rates of campus sexual assault far exceed the rates during any time of a young person's life. Most of the victims know their attackers. Colleges need to ensure the safety of those entrusted in their care. A recently established campus safety center can go a long way in setting up the protocols to both reduce sexual assault for those on campuses and to properly respond when the assaults occur.

Last year we reauthorized the Violence Against Women Act to ensure stronger protections for female victims of crime. Since its passage in 2000, the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Prevention Act has significantly increased prosecutions of adult and child sex traffickers.

We just recently, in the last few months, the new regulations under the Prison Rape Elimination Act has also gone a long way in reducing sexual assault in our prisons.

As I said before, prosecution of offenders is a critical part of the equation, but it is not the only part. We need to ensure that we prevent such assaults from occurring in the first place and ensure that survivors are provided with the resources they need and support that they need. Strategies will evolve over time, but during Sexual Assault Awareness Month, we need to encourage actions to eliminate sexual assault.

Again, I thank the gentleman from New York for his support for this awareness month and for organizing this Special Order.

Mr. REED. I thank the gentleman from Virginia for joining us.

At this point in time, I would like to yield to a good friend of mine from the great State of North Carolina (Mrs. ELLMERS).

Mrs. ELLMERS. Madam Speaker, thank you to the gentleman. And I would like to say thank you for helping out with this Special Order, being here, holding this Special Order along with Mr. COSTA as part of the caucus in this bipartisan effort.

As you know and as we need to talk about with the American people, this is an issue that defies logic and it defies socioeconomic background. There are no barriers to sexual assault, human trafficking, violence, domestic violence.

I will say, I recently met a young lady who was the victim of human trafficking, not with sexual assault, but with labor, essentially. She was brought here to this country at the age of 3, and she was beaten every day by the woman that put herself forward as her mother, along with the two other young ladies that were brought here that she knew as her sisters. And until, I would say, 2007, she said every day that is what they endured, beatings by this woman that they referred to as Mom.

The reason that the woman said that they can't speak out and seek help was because they were brought here illegally and they were illegal. So, you see, this problem is pervasive and it is one we have to deal with, and we are doing exactly what needs to be done.

To my good friend from New York, thank you again for holding this, because we have to show the American people this is an issue we care about, this is an issue that we need to solve, and we need to work together for that effort. April being Sexual Assault Awareness Month is a perfect time for us to take part in this effort.

I was very distressed to find out recently that the county that I live in in North Carolina, Harnett County, as of 2013, is the fifth highest county level of domestic-related homicide. That is not a number that I want to associate myself with in the very county in which I live.

This month serves as an opportunity for all of us to unite on this issue, both Democrat, Republican, every American, to speak candidly about the prevalence of abuse and generate a much-needed change in our culture. Whether we are talking about our society, whether we are talking about those that are in the military, whether we are talking about those who come to this country for different purposes, we need to be a voice for all of those individuals.

Sexual assault is a persistent problem. It affects both women and men and, again, as I pointed out, regardless

of socioeconomic status. To bring an end to this problem, we must equip young people with the knowledge and the resources needed to feel empowered, ask questions, and seek support. Sexual Assault Awareness Month is about education and informing one another so that we can bring about an end.

It is time to speak up and raise awareness, and I hope all that are listening will help in this effort to support this effort.

Mr. REED. Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague from North Carolina for coming today. I am pleased to yield to a good friend from the other side of the aisle to talk about this important issue of Sexual Assault Awareness Month and the NO MORE campaign. I can't encourage people enough across America to go online, become aware of the NO MORE campaign, and the Sexual Assault Awareness Month.

With that, I yield to my good friend from Florida (Ms. FRANKEL).

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Madam Speaker, I am very honored to be here in a bipartisan manner to talk about a subject that we can all agree on, which is that freedom from sexual assault is a basic human right. It is not to be tolerated in any corner of society. And the issue is not talked about enough, so I am glad we are bringing it up today.

I want to focus today on sexual assault that is taking place at an alarming rate in a place that we would not expect, and that is it in our military.

□ 1600

The reports of sexual assault in the military are mind-boggling. The Defense Department estimated that there were 26,000 sexual assaults in 2012. Those numbers are shocking, but this isn't just about statistics. It is about real people.

I want to share a story about one of my constituents. Elisha Morrow joined the Coast Guard at age 22. She started boot camp with so much pride and hope. She joined the Coast Guard because she believed deeply in their mission to save lives, which they do every day.

Her hope turned to humiliation and sorrow as her company commander sexually harassed her with innuendos and advancements night after night. The commander became even more emboldened and eventually raped the female recruit.

Shockingly, the commander was convicted of lesser charges of cruelty and maltreatment and adultery and not rape because the victim could not prove that her life wasn't under physical threat and that she didn't fear for her life. She had committed to his sexual advances under command.

The law did not take into account situations in which a superior abuses his or her position to take advantage of victims. That is not full justice. That is why the victim felt even more humiliated.

As a mother of a marine war veteran, when I heard this story, I knew I had to do something about it, and I want to thank my colleagues because we joined together when we passed the National Defense Authorization Act to direct the military to examine the need for a new definition of rape and sexual assault in cases when someone abuses their position in command.

No military recruit or servicemember should endure sexual abuse. Our sons and daughters put on the uniform to protect us, and now, we must protect them.

So we have made some good progress, Madam Speaker, which I am proud of, but there is so much more to do. We have to be vigilant.

There still remains a debate, even within our Congress, whether to remove these type of cases from the chain of command. We have to be vigilant and make sure our laws are working and make sure our sons and daughters are protected and get the full support they need to heal when they are assaulted.

In this country, every citizen has the right to be safe and protected. There should be no exceptions.

Mr. REED, I want to thank you again for allowing me to share this moment with you.

Mr. REED. I thank the gentlelady for coming tonight and joining us and raising awareness on this critical issue facing men and women across the country. I appreciate the gentlelady's words.

From the gentlelady's words, I am reminded how pervasive this is across our country. It does remind me also why we have to remain diligent and continue to raise awareness and educate people on these issues and to empower victims and stand with victims such as my niece.

With that, I yield to my good friend from Pennsylvania (Mr. MEEHAN).

Mr. MEEHAN. Allow me to express my appreciation to the gentleman from New York (Mr. REED) for your leadership in putting together this very important opportunity for us to talk to not just our colleagues, but citizens all across this country, as we jointly focus on this issue of sexual assault and domestic violence.

I am moved by my colleagues who are telling stories from so many different perspectives. Many of them are personal. I think that is really the way we have to explain these kinds of circumstances, through the personal stories in which it is driven home, because you can understand how it affects real people on an everyday basis.

I was a former prosecutor before I came here to Washington, D.C., and while this story is about 20 years old, it defines a particular problem at a particular point in time.

I remember distinctly engaging with a young woman. She had been the victim of a sexual assault. She met a young man at a party. She returned to a dorm room, believing that everything was going to be safe. He sexually and violently violated her.

This was a very prestigious school in New England. She reported it later that week to the school authorities, but they took a position that, since she really hadn't reported it immediately and she didn't have any other kind of particular evidence, it was her word against his word, and they took no further action.

This young woman was completely abandoned on this campus, but worse yet, her perpetrator used that opportunity thereafter to jeer at her and to taunt her, and not only was she the one who was violated, but she was the one who was finally driven to a point where she was so uncomfortable, having to confront this guy each and every day, she is the one who had to leave her college. She had to go home and start to heal and try to start a life all over again and a whole new experience.

I ran into her because, 2 years later, she came to my district in Pennsylvania. She came there as a witness because, only weeks before she had arrived, there was another party on a college campus nearby me and this same perpetrator happened to come to that college, visiting a friend, where he met a woman. He went back to that woman's dorm, and another woman was violently raped.

Fortunately, this victim, for the first time, was able to testify against him. We used pattern evidence to give her her first chance to hold him accountable. Based on that rape that we were able to prosecute, I think he may still be in jail.

But her life didn't get put together immediately by virtue of that. In fact, she represents a story that is too infrequently understood, as has been demonstrated by some of my colleagues.

One in five women on college campuses today will report being victims of an attempted or actual sexual assault, yet only about 5 percent of those are being reported to law enforcement, so we have got this huge disconnect.

While it is 20 years after the incident that I experienced and a great deal more work has been done on college campuses, many of which have taken prudent steps to deal with this issue, we have to do a lot of more.

I am encouraged. Just recently, President Obama—and this demonstrates the bipartisan nature of this effort—has appointed a White House task force to protect students from sexual assault. I am pleased to be able to be participating with some local folks in my community to help advise that committee.

We are using the experiences that we have from experts at local colleges like Drexel, Villanova, and Penn State and campus experts who have worked in this area on the campuses. We are seeing some issues that need to be addressed.

We are looking at issues like reporting procedures that require victims of sexual assault, once they report the story, to sometimes have to retell it two and three different times, in order

for them to fulfill the requirements of reporting either at colleges, rape crisis centers, or with law enforcement. We are violating these victims again and again with procedures like that.

We are seeing women who are subjecting themselves to rape kits. It is appropriate and may be necessary for the collection of evidence, but we are finding, a year later, they haven't even taken the time to process the rape kit.

How many years do we have to continue to deal with dramatic backlogs in just the identification of straightforward evidence that would help us put some of these perpetrators in jail, where they belong?

We are examining the convoluted patchwork of Federal rules and regulations that, while well-intentioned, often work at cross-purposes. We are trying to strengthen the way partnerships can be generated between victims' services groups, college representatives, and among law enforcement.

The biggest challenge we face from the victims is the confusion about the process. They don't know who to turn to or who to report to. That is why we must continue to work together as colleagues to help clarify the rules and regulations that we are creating to send the kinds of signals so there is certainty and the ability of these victims to reach out for help.

I thank you, Mr. REED, for your leadership on this. I pledge my intention to continue to work with you and our colleagues on both sides of the aisle to assure that we are making not only good, sound law, but making the procedures work for the benefit of the victims.

Mr. REED. I so appreciate the work, leadership, and experience of the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MEEHAN) on this issue. I don't think I could have said it any better in the sense of the victims being victimized repeatedly not just by the perpetrator, but by the system.

Hearing the gentleman from Pennsylvania give a firsthand account as to what that means, I think, is very important as we deal with the NO MORE campaign and Sexual Assault Awareness Month.

At this time, Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield to a new Member, but a great Member of this great Chamber, Mrs. BROOKS from Indiana.

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I rise today to say ''no more.''

I want to thank my dear colleague, Representative REED from New York, for bringing the attention of this body and to the country to this campaign of no more to sexual violence. It is Sexual Assault Awareness Month, and we need to take this opportunity to speak harsh but true words.

Every 2 minutes, which is about how long my remarks are going to be, another American is sexually assaulted. That is 237,868 victims a year. This is a crime that touches people of all backgrounds and all walks of life.

Madam Speaker, we have a sexual assault crisis in this country. It is time to do something about it. It is time to say ''no more.''

Perhaps nowhere is the pain and suffering caused by this crisis more apparent than on our great college campuses. Nineteen percent of women on campus—almost one in five—will be the victim of an attempted or a completed sexual assault during their college experience.

Madam Speaker, we have a sexual assault crisis on our college campuses. It is time to do something about it. It is time we say ''no more.''

As a mom who has sent two kids off to college in recent years, these numbers scare me. I know the truth of these numbers, having counseled one of my daughter's friends in college about 4 years ago and having recently counseled the mother of another person who had been assaulted on a college campus.

This makes me angry. There is no excuse in this country for this problem. There is no valid reason for anyone to look in the other direction or to pretend this problem doesn't exist. Let's once and for all say ''no more'' to this problem.

We have to work together. I am very pleased that the Democrats and the Republicans in this body are working together.

We have to offer victims more support. We have to bring offenders to justice. We have to analyze these daunting statistics and find real solutions.

Eighty-four percent of women who experience sexually coercive behavior while in college are victimized during their first four semesters on campus. Forty-three percent of sexual victimization incidents on campuses do involve alcohol by the victim and about 69 percent by the perpetrator.

Let's have a real conversation with our freshmen and with our young people in college about those risky decisions that they make.

More than half of the raped college women tell no one about the horrendous crime that can change their lives forever. We have to support the organizations, coalitions, and families that are helping these women—and yes, some men—and empower them to come forward and seek justice. That is only a part of the healing process, but it is a critical part.

No one should get away with sexual assault. We have to say ''no more'' to free passes. We have the greatest university system in the world. We educate the best and the brightest. We graduate 21st century innovators with the talent and the dedication necessary to make our Nation and world a better place.

Surely, this is a sad challenge that we can work together on to address. This is an opportunity for us to say ''no more'' and mean it. Let's take this opportunity. We have a sexual assault crisis on our college campuses, but it is also in our Nation, so let's do something.

I want to thank my colleague from New York for leading. Let's say ''no more.''

□ 1615

Mr. REED. I thank the gentlelady for her comments and joining us in this effort to say ''no more.'' The gentlelady's comments about the use of alcohol and other intoxicants being a part of, sometimes, these situations, I can't express enough how many times I hear that story and how we need to make sure that we are talking to our kids, we are talking to folks as they are going off to college or in our high schools about the danger associated with the use of alcohol and being put into this situation.

Just be honest, just be honest and just say with that decision comes risk, and with those risks are often horrific events such as what we are talking about tonight, young men and women being sexually assaulted, domestically abused by partners, people that they know. It is time we raise this in a way that we speak openly and honestly about this issue.

Madam Speaker, I am so pleased to be joined by a new Member of the House, my good friend from Illinois (Mr. RODNEY DAVIS), and I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Thank you to my great colleague from the great State of New York.

It is humbling for me to stand here with you and the others who have spoken before me, those of you who have a family member who has experienced such a traumatic, traumatic event.

I have been here with prosecutors who have convicted those criminals who deserve to go to jail and to stand here with somebody like Mrs. BROOKS, who worked in the college arena and saw devastation, now, for me to come up here, I have got to tell you, I am here as a dad. I am here as a father to a 17-year-old daughter who, in a year and a half, will go to college.

In my district in central Illinois, we have nine universities and colleges, over 45,000 female students. With the CDC estimating that 19 percent of women have experienced sexual assault since entering college, let me do the math for you. That is 8,500 women in my district that, if the statistics remain true, will experience sexual assault.

I represent a district of 14 counties. This is unacceptable. That is why I rise with you, Mr. REED, to say ''no more'' today.

I am alarmed by the fact that my daughter is going to go off to school, get in her car, and my wife and I are going to be very, very sad when we drop her off at school. And I hope and pray that these statistics don't come right to my mind, but, you know, as a dad, they will. We have to do something in this institution about it.

I am proud to be a part of the Victims' Rights Caucus with you and Mr.

COSTA and my other colleagues, and I am committed to being a champion for the rights of victims.

There are numerous events. I want to remind people, it is not enough to stand and be silent. It is not enough to recognize we have a problem. Go participate in your local events that are going to be happening in your communities throughout the month of April—as we know, it is Sexual Assault Awareness Month—including tomorrow's Paint the Town Teal, where hundreds of people will wear this color to raise awareness and support survivors of sexual assault. I encourage everyone to get involved in these local events.

I want to make sure that everyone here knows, this is an issue that I and my colleagues will not forget about after the month of April. I look forward to the day when sexual assault is no longer a chronic problem that deserves national attention. However, until that day, the responsibility is on all of us to do what we can to stop sexual assault in this country and to say ''no more.''

Mr. REED. I thank the gentleman from Illinois for those very good and eloquent remarks on this important issue of ''no more.''

Madam Speaker, I am pleased to be joined by a Member from the great State of Indiana (Mrs. WALORSKI), and I yield to her.

Mrs. WALORSKI. I thank the gentleman from New York for organizing tonight's discussion on this important topic.

April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month, and I rise today to say ''no more'' to sexual assault. This tragic epidemic impacts every community. Most of us know at least one sexual assault survivor.

In my area, a report released by Saint Mary's College, found an alarming number of Hoosier girls affected by acts of sexual violence. Indiana ranks second out of 46 States for the highest number of rapes among female high school students, and this is unacceptable. 14.5 percent of Indiana's female high school students and 5.2 percent of Indiana's male high school students have reported being raped. This shocking number only accounts for those attacks that are reported. As we all know, most assaults go unreported.

Since joining Congress, I have worked to put an end to sexual violence. Working with the House Armed Services and the House Veterans' Affairs Committees, I have authored and supported a number of provisions aimed at combating the growing number and the epidemic of military sexual assault trauma.

Today I call on my colleagues to raise awareness of about sexual assault and how we can all work together to prevent it, to respond to it, and to say ''no'' to sexual assault together.

I thank the gentleman from New York for this opportunity to join you in saying ''no more'' to sexual assault.

Mr. REED. I can't agree any more with my colleague from Indiana. ''No more.'' It is time. No more excuses. No more across America.

Madam Speaker, I am honored to be joined by a great friend from our State of New York (Mr. GIBSON), one of the leaders down here in the House, and I yield to him.

Mr. GIBSON. I thank my friend and neighbor from New York.

Madam Speaker, I am honored to be here today with my colleagues as we jointly pursue the effort to prevent sexual assault. I think this is something that really goes to the core of who we are as a people.

I am reminded at this moment of some of our ideas at the very founding, inalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. These inalienable rights come from God, but governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed to secure these rights.

We have taken action here in this Chamber. We have worked together to do that. The Violence Against Women Act we passed a little over a year ago, and then the budget agreement that we enacted at the end of last year increased by $10 million. Certainly we need to do more than that, but we are taking some action.

I want to highlight how that can make a difference right at the local level. These resources go towards education for law enforcement professionals and for conduit with the judicial system. It is also for shelters and for supporting infrastructure and health care networks.

I am reminded of one of the visits my wife and I made recently to the Washbourne House in Kingston. That is the largest city in my district, the 19th district in New York, where I met with Michael Berg, who heads the Family of Woodstock shelters, and Cathy Moriarty, who actually runs the Washbourne House.

Madam Speaker, this is really hard work. These victims of sexual assault and domestic violence, when they first show up at the doorstep of the Washbourne House, security, the most basic of human needs, that is their biggest concern, and for these leaders, providing that security and helping the family to be able to trust again; then, for basic needs, some of these victims come with children, and providing for them to get back into a sense of normalcy, to get them back into school, all the while, to help our victims to get back up on their feet and to be self-reliant going forward, these resources are just critical to support these programs.

I am very proud of the work that is done there. I think it is illustrative of the kind of work that is done by very special people in our country all across our land. But there is more to be done, and there is an opportunity for us to do more. I am talking about, now, H.R. 3571. This is the International Violence Against Women Act, and this provides resources to help coordinate USAID and Department of State efforts about our funding programs to make them more effective as we work with our friends and allies across the world.

I will tell you, this will not only help, I think, prevent sexual assault and bring more security, but it will also make us a stronger country. It will make us a stronger country, and it will bring us truer and in line with our founding principles. I argue that when we do that, on our best day, other countries want to be like us; and in that regard, it actually makes us safer as well.

So I just want to thank the organizations that work with us on this effort. I am talking about a number of organizations, but I would like to point out Amnesty International, CARE USA, and Futures Against Violence. I thank them for their leadership on this issue.

I thank everyone for being here today, and I thank my friend from New York.

Mr. REED. I thank the gentleman from New York for joining us tonight, and I appreciate the friendship and the support for the NO MORE campaign tonight.

Madam Speaker, one of my best friends here in this great Chamber, my fellow member of the Ways and Means Committee, the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACK) is joining us this evening, and I yield to her.

Mrs. BLACK. Madam Speaker, I am proud to stand here with my good friend from New York and to say ''no more'' to sexual assault. This April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month, and I commend Mr. REED for leading this effort to raise awareness and bring attention to this crucial issue.

Every 2 minutes, an American is assaulted in this country, and one in five women is a survivor of rape. This is sad and deplorable, and we must do more to share the daunting facts about sexual assault in this country as well as let people know where they can go to get help.

We must act to protect our Nation's women, but it goes further than this. You see, in this country, one in six men have been victims of sexual abuse before they reach the age of 18. This kind of child abuse must be brought to light, and perpetrators must be severely punished.

During my time of working in the Tennessee State Legislature, I was proud to support numerous measures to help protect women and children—and, in particular, children—from sexual assault. I sponsored legislation strengthening the penalties for the crime of rape of a child.

But in order to root out perpetrators of sexual violence, victims need to know where they can turn. I am grateful for the work of nomore.org for raising the awareness on this issue and for offering resources where victims can get the help that they so greatly need.

These heinous crimes are unacceptable, and it is why it is so important to say ''no more'' this Sexual Assault Awareness Month.

I thank my friend for bringing this issue to the floor tonight. It is so important.

Mr. REED. I thank the gentlelady for her remarks and comments.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Washington State (Mr. REICHERT), our great sheriff and co-chair of the Law Enforcement Caucus.

Mr. REICHERT. Thank you, Mr. REED, for inviting me to speak this evening on this important topic.

I don't come here tonight with statistics. I come here with 33 years of experience in law enforcement. I was a cop for a long time before I came to Congress. I have been to the homes. I have seen the faces of the mothers and the fathers. I have seen the faces of the victims of sexual assault. I have held them in my arms while they cried and fell to the floor in a puddle of tears. These are real people. These are our children.

When I was on patrol back in the early seventies, I had a case where I was driving around all night. It was 2 in the morning. I found this young man wandering the streets. I pulled up and asked him what was wrong. He was sobbing and crying and asking for help. It took him at least an hour, Madam Speaker—an hour—before he could really finally tell me what happened to him. He had been abducted and taken to a remote home and raped and assaulted, humiliated and beaten for 2 days.

Imagine being in that position. Imagine being a victim of such a horrendous crime.

My own family has been touched by this, as I know some folks may be listening and some speaking tonight may have mentioned that. One of my own family members was raped.

But I know this from a deeper experience. When I was a homicide detective for the King County Sheriff's Office in the early eighties, I was assigned a case called the Green River serial murder case, where 50-plus women were killed.

Now, how did those young girls and women get on the streets? They were abused. They were sexually assaulted at home. They were physically assaulted. They were emotionally assaulted, and they left home. They were raped at home. They were raped by their neighbors. They were raped by their family members, and they ended up on the street.

□ 1630

And whose arms did they fall into, Madam Speaker, but the arms of a pimp, again to be victimized and raped over and over and over, sometimes for money, sometimes not. Lives destroyed. Some survived physically but were mentally and emotionally drained. Their lives and spirit ripped from their hearts.

This is a crime that until you see, until you look into the eyes of the person who has been victimized in such a horrendous way, you never really truly understand the pain and the suffering that they have been through.

If they survive, they have a long, long road of recovery. And we call these people survivors. We call them survivors. If they don't, like in the Green River case, they die; their lives are taken.

Madam Speaker, we cannot allow this to continue in this country. I know that every day, there is a cop on the street, there is a social worker out there that is dealing with this crime. We have got to stop this. We have got to save the lives of our children.

Thank you, Mr. REED for holding this hour tonight. Thank you for the opportunity to share some of my story.

Mr. REED. I thank the gentleman from Washington State, the sheriff, for the words and the experience and sharing tonight in our efforts to say ''no more'' to sexual assault.

Madam Speaker, I know we are coming to the end of the Special Order this evening. So I will just close with a few words.

Madam Speaker, I stand in this Chamber today joined by my niece, who is with us this evening. I can't tell you how impressed, how proud I am of that young lady who has now turned one of the most negative experiences, horrific experiences in her life and is doing something positive about it.

It is her voice that has moved me to stand with my colleagues, to work across the country, to work with organizations like NO MORE and Sexual Assault Awareness Month to say, I am going to do my part, Madam Speaker. I am going to do my part to make sure that we scream from the mountains, across this land, that sexual assault—be it man, woman, child, adult—we have heard the stories all night tonight. But in the great land of the United States of America, we are going to say ''no more'' because it tears lives apart.

Victims are not only victimized by the perpetrators who do these horrific acts, but they are revictimized over and over again. And it is time we, as a Nation, come together and say, you know what, we are going to stand with the victims. We are going to educate and make people aware of this issue so that we can empower people—our law enforcement agencies, our prosecutors, the people that do God's work and tending to the people when they need the services that rape victims and sexual assault and domestic violence victims need and turn to in their time of need.

So we are going to continue this battle. We are going to continue this fight. And I just have to applaud the efforts of the men and women across the country that are coming together to say in one voice, ''no more.''

All 300-plus million people in America need to come together to highlight this issue. And I can tell you, if we unite as a Nation, we can bring to an end sexual assault and domestic violence.

And to my niece, I just say, I will always have your back. I will always stand with you shoulder to shoulder. And to anyone who wants to say she deserved it or she wanted it or that she was drinking and it was the alcohol that caused it, ''no more.'' She is not the person that is responsible for this. As I said on March 14, when I asked her what I should tell the American Nation on her behalf, say ''no more'' because there are no excuses.

I appreciate my colleagues, my friends and the folks from the other side of the aisle coming together tonight to talk about this, which is such an important issue that we need to talk about and to, for once and for all, say ''no more.''

I ask every American, have a conversation with your daughter, your spouse, your son, your mother, your father, your aunt, your uncle. Speak about this issue. Empower each of us, as individuals, to say, we are not going to accept this in our midst any longer. I am confident, Madam Speaker, if we do that, that we won't have to say in the last 60 minutes that we have joined here together, that 30 more of our fellow American citizens have just suffered from one of the most horrific crimes on the face of the Earth, and that is sexual assault.

It is time to say ''no more,'' and I ask everyone to join us in that campaign.

I yield back the balance of my time.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Mr. Brian Pate, one of his secretaries.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1874, PRO-GROWTH BUDGETING ACT OF 2013; PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1871, BASELINE REFORM ACT OF 2013; AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1872, BUDGET AND ACCOUNTING TRANSPARENCY ACT OF 2014

Mr. WOODALL, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 113–400) on the resolution (H. Res. 539) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1874) to amend the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 to provide for macroeconomic analysis of the impact of legislation, providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1871) to amend the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 to reform the budget baseline, and providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1872) to amend the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 to increase transparency in Federal budgeting, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

PROTECTING MEDICARE ADVANTAGE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MURPHY) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MURPHY of Florida. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of my Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Mr. MURPHY of Florida. Madam Speaker, there are currently many concerns regarding health insurance in our country, especially among our Nation's seniors. At this time of major transition in our Nation's health care industry, it is critical that seniors enrolled in traditional Medicare and Medicare Advantage can keep the coverage on which they depend.

Unfortunately, proposed cuts to Medicare Advantage are putting these important benefits at risk. This is a very serious situation across the country, and it is of great concern to me, with Florida being home to over 4 million seniors. My district alone has over 160,000 seniors, with more than one-third of them choosing a Medicare Advantage plan whose coverage would be severely impacted by the proposed cuts released in the draft rule that CMS put out in February.

We are already seeing what last year's cuts to Medicare Advantage have meant: smaller networks of doctors, cuts to add-on benefits, and higher out-of-pocket limits. The additional proposed cuts to the program released in February have raised great concerns from my constituents about their coverage and about the potential of having to pay more and having fewer benefits. That is why we are here today, urging the administration to reverse course and keep rates flat for 2015.

At this point, I would like to yield to my good friend Ms. SINEMA from Arizona, who has been fighting tirelessly to protect the seniors in her area as well.

Ms. SINEMA. Thank you, Congressman MURPHY, for hosting this Special Order so that we can stand up and speak out for seniors in our districts. We are here today because CMS, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, has proposed cuts to Medicare Advantage.

Next week, CMS will publish its final rule. I urge CMS to not cut Medicare Advantage. These cuts will decrease choice, create uncertainty, and undermine access to care for our seniors.

I oppose these cuts. Like Mr. MURPHY and many of our colleagues participating in this Special Order, I have repeatedly called on the Federal Government to reconsider its proposal and make no further cuts to Medicare Advantage.

Medicare Advantage is a popular and effective alternative to traditional fee-for-service Medicare, especially in Arizona, where statewide, 38 percent of Medicare-eligible beneficiaries choose a Medicare Advantage plan. In my district, nearly 43 percent of Medicare-eligible beneficiaries choose a Medicare Advantage plan.

Medicare Advantage plans consistently receive high customer satisfaction ratings and are helping to control cost, drive innovation, and improve health outcomes for beneficiaries. I keep saying ''beneficiaries.'' But what I should say is, our parents, our grandparents, and our loved ones. These plans provide affordable, high-quality care for our loved ones.

Bonnie Grant, a proud Arizonan in my district, is in her sixties and lives in Phoenix. Through her Medicare Advantage plan, she has access to a transportation system called Van Go. Bonnie uses the service to go shopping and to go other places ''instead of being stuck at home.'' She said that it helps because ''instead of being holed up in your home,'' she can be engaged in the community and enjoy her life. The Van Go benefit is the type of creative service offered by Medicare Advantage plans that improves the well-being of enrollees.

Joseph Ford, another constituent, lives in suburban Phoenix. He was disabled in a car accident. The hands-on managed care he receives through his Medicare Advantage plan, including in-home visits, allows Mr. Ford to stay in his home and live a fuller life. Keeping individuals like Mr. Ford in his home instead of in institutional care facilities is better for the beneficiary and presents a significant cost savings to the Medicaid and Medicare programs.

I am concerned that the proposed payment reductions for 2015 will undermine the choices made by my fellow Arizonans, by Ms. Grant, by Mr. Ford, and by others in my congressional district by causing our loved ones to lose needed services and to experience increases in premiums. These cuts could also have the unintended and costly consequence of putting our seniors at risk of being placed in institutions, rather than staying in their homes.

Instead of cutting funding for these popular plans, we should work together to find reasonable solutions that drive down cost, increase choice, address waste, fraud, and abuse, spur innovation, and ultimately improve the quality of life provided to our seniors.

Again, I urge CMS to maintain payment levels for Medicare Advantage so that our loved ones do not experience increased out-of-pocket costs, negative disruptions, or confusion in 2015.

Thank you, Congressman MURPHY, for working with me on this important issue and for hosting this Special Order today.

Mr. MURPHY of Florida. I thank the gentlelady from Arizona for her comments and for reminding us that these aren't simply numbers on a ledger, that all of these beneficiaries are folks we know. These are our parents. These are our grandparents. They are more than just numbers.

And like Ms. SINEMA, I am constantly hearing from residents in my district about the negative impact these cuts would have on the well-being of their spouses, their parents, or personally, including Cheryl from Palm Beach Gardens, in my district.

After doing everything right to plan for her retirement, like many seniors do, Cheryl and her husband saw their savings cut in half during difficult economic times. Now they are seeing their health care options limited and their out-of-pocket costs going up. These are changes they simply cannot afford.

I agree with Cheryl that it is unfair to shift the burden onto those on fixed incomes, those who have little resources to make up the difference. Seniors cannot afford further cuts and the negative consequences if these misguided proposals move forward.

At this point, I would like to take a moment to yield to the general, Mr. ENYART from Illinois, and thank him for his leadership in fighting for seniors on behalf of Illinois and the rest of our country.

Mr. ENYART. I thank the gentleman from Florida.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to show support for the 50 million Americans enrolled in Medicare. Medicare is vital not only to my district, like Mr. MURPHY's district in Florida, but our entire Nation, which is why my fellow colleagues and I should support its promise to all our citizens who have earned it, who have paid for it through their taxes, and who now rely on it for a stable health care system and for their medical care.

Medicare has a long and valued history since its inception in 1965. Social Security recipients have consistently benefited from the opportunity to access quality, affordable health care, a right now guaranteed to those who worked hard for that privilege.

There are 122,380 constituents from the 12th District of Illinois who participate in the Medicare program. That is one out of every seven citizens in my district.

□ 1645

Many of these constituents are disabled, and almost all are on a fixed or limited income. Medicare gives these citizens the opportunity to receive essential medical care and to take part in preventive care programs designed to maintain good health, which lowers the cost of health care—lowers the cost of health care.

Of those 122,000 southern Illinoisans, over 28,000 also participate in Medicare Advantage. That is one in four of those Medicare participants taking part in a program specifically designed for those seniors who have high rates of chronic disease. Medicare Advantage focuses on

prevention and on disease management, which reduces the need for unnecessary hospitalizations—keeping our most vulnerable populations healthier and out of the hospital waiting room.

Medicare and Medicare Advantage serve our seniors, low-income families, and those susceptible to disease. I ask, are these the populations we want to cast aside? Are these the citizens that we need not care for? I say no. Yet, the proposed budget unveiled this week virtually eliminates Medicare for future enrollees. It includes plans to shift health care costs to seniors. It removes the guarantees provided by our current Medicare system to make quality, affordable health coverage available for those who need it most. It undermines the promise our Nation made to its citizens—that if you work hard and you pay your taxes, some day, should you need it, your health care needs will be met.

The recently proposed budget also implements what they label a premium support system. That is a plan to move Medicare to a voucher program. I vehemently oppose this proposition. Our seniors don't need a health care coupon—they need health care.

They need the ability to choose their own doctor. They need the ability to access billions in savings for prescription drugs. They need access to wellness visits—all of which are in jeopardy under this Republican budget plan.

I am tired of hearing proposals to eliminate vital government services simply because of party ideology. Let us not govern blindly through rhetoric and sound bites, but rather, let us work for our constituents to better serve those who have paid into the Medicare system their entire working life and now need it most.

Medicare serves those who have earned it, who have paid for it, and who deserve it. Should we take away that service, I fear what the future may hold for our seniors—seniors like Carolyn Morgan from Du Quoin, Illinois. Carolyn needed Medicare's help in March of 2013, when she became ill and hospitalized, put on oxygen, and given a daily regimen of prescription drugs.

I hold her letter to my office in my hand.

Carolyn states:

I cannot afford out-of-pocket health care. My supplemental insurance is useless without Medicare, so it would have been wasted money every month.

I know I will be spending the remainder of this congressional term fighting for Carolyn and fighting for our seniors and disabled to make sure that the health care promises we made so many years ago are not in danger from partisan budget cuts.

My fellow colleagues, I urge you to join me. Let's avoid a grim future for the elderly, for the disabled, and the fixed-income citizens of this great Nation. Let's help Carolyn and the many more American citizens just like her. Let's fight to keep Medicare.

Mr. MURPHY of Florida. I want to thank the gentleman from Illinois for his generous words and reminding us of the importance of Medicare and Medicare Advantage and what it means to so many folks across our great country.

At this point, I would like to take a minute to let the gentleman from Georgia talk about what is happening in his district. Mr. BARROW has been fighting for years up here in D.C. for Medicare and seniors across the country.

Mr. BARROW of Georgia. I thank the gentleman.

Madam Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague, Mr. MURPHY, for gathering us all here to talk about this important issue. This is an issue that affects folks in every part of this country, and in my view, is one of the most important issues facing seniors in our communities today.

I applaud all of my colleagues gathered here for taking a leadership role in our efforts to fight proposed reductions to the Medicare Advantage program.

Nearly 15 million seniors across the country are enrolled in Medicare Advantage, including more than 300,000 in my home State of Georgia. This program serves our seniors well, particularly those with high rates of chronic disease. Nearly 30 percent of all Medicare beneficiaries turn to Medicare Advantage to cover their health care costs.

By focusing on prevention and disease management, Medicare Advantage plans reduce the need for hospitalization, and that, in turn, reduces health care costs. It is a proven program that folks in my district have come to rely on.

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services recently proposed a 5.9 percent cut to this program, which could result in a reduction of benefits and increased premiums on Medicare beneficiaries by $35 to $75 a month. That is an added cost that many seniors simply cannot afford to pay every single month.

My colleague from the other side of the aisle, Dr. BILL CASSIDY, and I have been leading the charge to urge the Federal Government to take any and all steps necessary to preserve this program. Just last month, more than 200 Members of Congress from this House joined us in our effort to urge the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to preserve the standard of care that seniors are currently getting. I, for one, do not want to put our seniors, men and women who have worked their entire lives, in the financial trouble these reductions would cause.

I have urged the administration to take a long, hard look at how these cuts would affect everyday lives of our seniors. If the goal here is to save money, there are better, more suitable ways to do it than on the backs of our seniors.

Again, I would like to thank my colleague for getting folks together to talk about how we can work together to make sure Medicare Advantage isn't jeopardized. It is an issue that isn't for Democrats or Republicans, but one that we all need to address. I have been proud to work on this issue in a bipartisan fashion with Dr. CASSIDY, and it is my hope that all of our colleagues will get on board and help us preserve Medicare Advantage.

Mr. MURPHY of Florida. I thank the gentleman from Georgia for sharing your thoughts and stories and reminding us that this isn't a partisan issue. It shouldn't be a Republican, Democratic, or Independent issue. These are seniors. These are folks that built this great country, many of whom are veterans who fought for our country and laid the foundation which we have today.

So thank you for reminding us of that and being here today and taking a moment out of your busy schedule to share your thoughts.

I would now like the gentleman from Arizona, who has been championing this issue back home, to talk about what he is doing with Medicare Advantage and why he is here today. Mr. BARBER, thank you.

Mr. BARBER. I want to thank the gentleman for bringing us together tonight to talk about the importance of preserving and protecting Medicare Advantage.

I rise today, Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the citizens that I represent all across southern Arizona—thousands and thousands of seniors who have come to rely on Medicare Advantage to keep them in their homes, to keep them well, and to provide them with the support that they so dearly need as they age in place.

They live in communities all across my district, from Tucson to Sierra Vista, to Douglas, to Benson, to Bisbee, to Willcox, and to ''the town too tough to die,'' Tombstone. And I am determined to fight on their behalf to make sure that Medicare Advantage continues to serve them and does not disappoint the delivery of services by losing funding, as is proposed by the President this month.

Medicare Advantage offers seniors and individuals with disabilities quality and affordable health care that they can depend on. And they depend on us—those of us who represent them—to fight for their right to continue this program.

Medicare Advantage focuses on prevention and innovation. It is a proven fact that this program improves health outcomes and contains costs. Isn't that what we should be doing for our seniors and for everyone in America? But now, as I said, the President is proposing harmful cuts to Medicare Advantage.

So let's examine what these cuts would mean if they go into effect. They will mean fewer benefits, fewer doctors, and less choice. This is wrong, and we cannot let it happen. I oppose these cuts, and I have called upon the President to reverse course and protect this critical program.

For the people in my Second District of Arizona and for seniors all across this great Nation, there are over 390,000 Medicare Advantage enrollees or recipients in the State of Arizona alone, and it is working for them. They will attest to that, and they have to me. They have contacted my office in person and by phone, they have met with me in community gatherings all across the district over the last several weeks, and they have expressed their deep concerns that they will lose this valuable program that they have come to rely upon that keeps them well and keeps them in their homes.

Before I came to the Congress and before I worked for Congresswoman Giffords, I administered a regional and then a State program for people with disabilities that focused on the same kinds of services that are provided to seniors and individuals with disabilities under the Medicare Advantage program—cost effective, in-home support, keeping people well, and preventing more illness. This makes sense. It makes sense for them, it makes sense for our country, and it makes sense for the appropriations that we are trying to protect in this Congress.

I certainly urge the President to reverse course and stop these cuts. We cannot stand for it. I will not stand for it, and I will not back down until we are successful in reversing this impossible and irresponsible decision.

Mr. MURPHY of Florida. I want to thank the gentleman from Arizona for his leadership and for continuing to fight for seniors back home and continuing to be a champion here in Washington, D.C., for those folks. Thank you, also, for reminding us that this is a successful Medicare program that has already had a solid success record at reducing hospital readmissions and improving health outcomes, and continues to be a popular option for seniors, reducing annual out-of-pocket expenses from traditional Medicare and offering expanded benefit packages that include important dental, hearing, vision, and chiropractic care.

Medicare Advantage plans also normally include the successful and cost-saving part D prescription drug plan and come without an annual deductible. By offering great coordinated care and innovative health care approaches, this program is highly effective at keeping seniors out of the hospital. But, if they do end up in the hospital, Medicare Advantage helps them recover more quickly and with less chance of returning. We should be building on this success, not stifling it.

At this time, I would like to take a moment to yield to the gentleman from Florida who, similar to myself, has many seniors in the great State of Florida and will continue to be a champion for the seniors and is going to share with us some stories.

Mr. GARCIA. I would like to thank my colleague from Florida and my good friend, Mr. MURPHY, for his fight for seniors.

I rise today to express my strong support for Medicare and my opposition to any cuts to Medicare. Medicare is one of our Nation's greatest achievements. For half a century, this program has lifted millions of seniors out of poverty and provided seniors with the health care they need, they have earned and they deserve.

In Congress, we have a responsibility to strengthen and modernize Medicare to ensure that it continues to provide seniors who have worked all their lives to receive those Medicare benefits they have earned and they depend on.

Medicare Advantage serves over 1 million seniors in Florida, and it provides innovative treatments and care. In my district, I hear firsthand from so many seniors how well Medicare is serving them.

This is not a political issue. This is not a partisan issue. While outside groups have been misleading my constituents and others on my record on Medicare, I have been working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to oppose cuts to Medicare.

My colleagues and I are strongly advocating against changes to Medicare that would disrupt the lives of seniors.

□ 1700

I have spoken to the President about this. I have spoken to the Secretary and CMS about this issue. We have written letters to the administration, and we stand here today. I am committed to continuing to do everything I can to protect Medicare for our Nation's seniors.

With that, I want to again thank Mr. MURPHY for all of his efforts. He has been a leader in our caucus, he has been a leader in this Congress in fighting for seniors, and I am proud to stand by his side, just as I am sure that Mr. MURPHY will fight against cuts like the ones proposed in the Ryan budget, which cuts over $800 billion from seniors and Medicare, which puts the hole back in the doughnut, and I just want to thank him again for his leadership.

Mr. MURPHY of Florida. I want to thank the gentleman from Florida for continuing to fight for seniors and reminding us of what proposals on the other side might entail.

The political games being played are not necessary in today's environment. These are real people. These are seniors. They are not just numbers on a spreadsheet. These are our grandparents and parents. These are folks who fought for our country and fought for our freedoms.

Thank you for reminding us not to make this a political puck. This is serious, and we must work together as a Congress and the United States Government to ensure seniors are protected.

I want to take a second to look at another scenario, gym memberships. A common add-on benefit for Medicare Advantage plans is free or discounted gym memberships. Cut Medicare Advantage too deeply, too quickly, and gym memberships are gone. Some think that is a good thing. I disagree.

A recent study found that regular balance exercise for seniors reduces falls that cause injuries by 37 percent and broken bones by 61 percent. Most elderly Americans survive a broken hip, but it often undercuts confidence and diminishes quality of life.

If a fall robs an elderly woman of her independence, it is a financial and emotional hardship. Whether it is the cost of Medicare of a hospitalization or 2 months of therapy, the cost to Medicare and Medicaid for a nursing facility, or most importantly, the cost to the senior of her quality of life and independence, Silver Sneakers doesn't seem like much of a cost at all in comparison.

That is why, even during a time of great partisanship and gridlock in Congress, there is a growing bipartisan coalition calling on the administration to keep the rates flat for this year, putting the well-being of our Nation's seniors before party lines.

Together, we are making several recommendations for changes to CMS' proposals that we believe could contribute to stabilizing the program while preventing devastating impacts on the program and the beneficiaries it serves.

For example, providing more care at home, CMS could narrow the proposals on in-home health risk assessments and protect the benefit of medication management and continuity of care. If the visits are an important component of the disease management and provide value to seniors and taxpayers, they should be maintained. This is exactly the type of innovation we need.

At this point, I would like to take a moment to yield to the gentleman from California who has been a champion for seniors in his great State. He will share with us his leadership and what he has heard back home.

Mr. PETERS of California. I thank you, Mr. MURPHY. I appreciate you and your work on behalf of seniors in Florida and around the country on this important issue.

I just want to recognize you and the bipartisan group we have here standing up for our seniors and Medicare Advantage. I was honored to be part of a group of freshmen in our party who met with Secretary Sebelius yesterday, and we were able to, with the help of our leadership, express to the Secretary our concern about the proposed cuts.

Part of what we told her was that Medicare Advantage continues to offer seniors and individuals with disabilities additional choices for high-quality, coordinated care in their communities.

With a focus on innovative services, prevention, and disease management, these plans have consistently delivered improved health outcomes while containing costs and requiring copayments or deductibles from beneficiaries.

Further, consistent with the goals of HHS, these plans reduce hospitalizations and readmissions, decrease the

length of stay in nursing facilities, and manage high-risk, high-need patients more effectively.

I thank the gentleman for letting me add my voice to folks who don't want to see us do something that is penny-wise and pound foolish. We have a system that is incentivizing well-being and focusing on prevention.

It can really add a lot for the benefit of our seniors, and we all want to see it preserved as it is. Thank you very much for the time.

Mr. MURPHY of Florida. I thank the gentleman from California for taking a minute out of his busy schedule to come and talk about how important Medicare and Medicare Advantage plans are to you and your constituents back home.

Finding ways to collect better and more thorough health information allows for better coordinated care with convenience to our seniors. We should also continue to reward programs that are performing the highest and providing the best care to seniors.

To do that, CMS should also increase the percentage of rebates to reward and promote higher quality while averting negative consequences for beneficiaries.

Other recommendations include keeping beneficiary stability and continuous plan improvement paramount when Medicare Advantage's benchmark calculations and bidding rules.

By rewarding performance, while taking into account the challenges faced in low-income populations, Medicare would accelerate delivery system innovation and keep Medicare Advantage as a viable option.

These are just a few of the smart changes that we should be making to build off the success of this program, instead of cutting these beneficial plans to the detriment of our Nation's seniors.

I am proud to stand with my colleagues today to once again call on the administration to preserve the Medicare Advantage choice for beneficiaries after a lifetime of hard work.

Madam Speaker, we could be facing a serious situation throughout the country. Both sides of the aisle are concerned about the proposed cuts to Medicare Advantage.

Further cuts not only risk new health care efficiencies and innovation, but the health and well-being of seniors who depend on these plans. Simply put, these cuts are counterproductive if it means more hospital readmissions and worse health outcomes.

Cuts already happening this year have resulted in a 10 percent increase in overall out-of-pocket costs for seniors relying on Medicare Advantage, with the annual maximum for these expenses increased by $560.

For seniors on fixed incomes, that can mean the difference between being able to fill a needed prescription, making a mortgage payment, or putting food on the table.

If further cuts are made to this important program, it would be even worse, costing seniors an estimated $50 more a month in out-of-pocket expenses. It is wrong to shift this burden onto seniors.

From Cheryl and her husband from Palm Beach Gardens to Walter from Tequesta to Robert from Palm City to Gary from Port St. Lucie to Lorraine from Fort Pierce, this touches the lives of seniors across my district and across this country.

They deserve better after a lifetime of hard work than having to worry about losing their doctor or the affordable health coverage that works for them.

This doesn't just impact my constituents across the Treasure Coast and palm beaches, but seniors and families across this great Nation.

I thank my colleagues who stood with me today to urge the administration to protect seniors from further cuts, keeping rates flat for this year.

I am committed to fighting for the well-being for seniors on the Treasure Coast and palm beaches, the great State of Florida, and across our Nation, protecting their earned benefits.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

THE WORLD OF NATIONS HOLDS A MORAL OBLIGATION TO UKRAINE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. WALORSKI). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) will control the remainder of the hour.

Ms. KAPTUR. Madam Speaker, I thank Congressman MURPHY for yielding. You are such a refreshing, brilliant, positive Member of this House, and I thank the people of your State for sending you here.

I thank you for all the citizens you are fighting for to bring new energy and to bring new vision to our country. Thank you so very much.

Madam Speaker, I entitle my remarks this evening ''The World of Nations Holds a Moral Obligation''—and underline ''moral obligation''—''to Ukraine.''

Seventy years after World War II, let us provide some historical context in which to view Russia's illegal invasion of Crimea and potentially other nations.

Scholars, historians, and diplomats still are piecing together the annals of the horrific slaughter and political oppression of the past century that has plagued the region we call Central and Eastern Europe. The full truth of what happened remains to be told as far too much was locked behind the Iron Curtain.

Masterful books like ''Bloodlands: Europe Between Hitler and Stalin'' by Dr. Timothy Snyder of Yale begin to present the unfathomable dimension of the horror.

If there is any place on the Earth the world community of nations owes a moral obligation and should seek to pull forward, it is Ukraine.

The suffering and death endured by millions of innocent people inside Ukraine and nations in her immediate environs had no equal any place on Earth. There, the crushing of human life and human spirit were so diabolical and of such gigantic proportion, it is hard for us as human beings to wrap our minds around it.

With clarity, let us recall that American soldiers who liberated Europe during World War II never ventured far enough eastward into Soviet-held territory to witness the grip of that tyranny; thus, the West still holds some naivete about the depths of depravity to which millions of innocent civilian people—mothers, fathers, children, grandparents—fell victim.

George Will quotes Dr. Snyder in a recent piece titled, ''Russia's brutality with Ukraine is nothing new.'' During the 1933 Stalinist-forced famine—here is a quote from the book ''Bloodlands.''

> Boys from another school pulled out the severed head of a classmate while fishing in a pond. His whole family had died. Had they eaten him first? Or had he survived the deaths of his parents only to be killed by a cannibal? No one knew; but such questions were commonplace for the children of Ukraine in 1933. Yet cannibalism was sometimes a victimless crime. Some mothers and fathers killed their children and ate them. But other parents asked their children to make use of their own bodies if they passed away. More than one Ukrainian child had to tell a brother or sister: ''Mother says we should eat her if she dies.''

Additionally:

> In January 1933, Stalin, writes Snyder, sealed Ukraine's borders so peasants could not escape and sealed the cities so peasants could not go there to beg. By spring, more than 10,000 Ukrainians were dying each day, more than the 6,000 Jews who perished daily in Auschwitz at the peak of extermination in the spring of 1944.
>
> Snyder is judicious about estimates of Ukrainian deaths from hunger and related diseases, settling on an educated guess of approximately 3.3 million from 1932 to 1933. He says that when ''the Soviet census of 1937 found 8 million fewer people than projected,'' many of the missing being victims of starvation in Ukraine and elsewhere, and the children that those adults did not have, Stalin ''had the responsible demographers executed.''

Ukraine was hell on Earth.

With the able assistance of Ukrainian Museum and Archives in Cleveland, Ohio, and its incredible resident scholar Andrew Fedynsky, let us take a look back before we look forward.

Beginning with the year 1933, as millions of Ukrainians were dying of starvation at the hands of their own government in its forced famine genocide, that terror has gone down in history as the Holodomor, murder by famine; yet few in America or anywhere noted them, even fewer spoke out, to condemn the extinction as American and other western companies were working with the Soviet Government to realize its 20th century industrialization campaign glorified recently at the Sochi Olympics.

Soviet industrialization was paid for by the sale of grain brutally seized

from peasants—or Kulaks—who paid dearly for Soviet progress—so-called progress—with their lives by the millions.

Much of the U.S. media at the time either ignored the catastrophe or actually collaborated with Stalin to cover up that genocide. For this contortion of truth, The New York Times reporter Walter Duranty was awarded the Pulitzer Prize, one of the worst instances of the denial of truth in the history of journalism.

□ 1715

During this fateful period, the United States chose to recognize the Soviet Bolshevik Government. It was not until 50 years later, through legislation I introduced as a first-term Member of Congress in 1983 in this House, that Congress authored the creation of the Commission on the Ukraine Famine to finally acknowledge and recognize the extinction of millions of innocent lives in Ukraine. That ink remains wet on the pages of history.

But to return to the World War II years, by 1938, when Nazi Germany forcibly annexed Austria, in what was termed the Anschluss, too many in the West took at face value Adolph Hitler's assurances that he was merely reuniting German-speaking people.

That same year, Nazi Germany proceeded to annex Czechoslovakia's Sudetenland, as the West negotiated what was called ''Peace in Our Time,'' accepting Hitler's assurances that this was the extent of his ambitions. When his militarized Wehrmacht took over the rest of Czechoslovakia, there was no security response from the West, only petulant words.

Then came 1939, when Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union jointly invaded neighboring Poland in September of that year. Verbally, France and Britain condemned the aggression, but then did nothing. It was only after Hitler turned against his Soviet ally in 1941 and invaded France that the West took the threat seriously. By that time, hundreds of thousands had already been killed. Millions more would die as Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia divided Poland, killing 20 percent of its people, a higher percentage than any other nation engaged in World War II, and began the outsized carnage that carved up Europe between their dictatorships.

By 1944, in a valiant fight to the death struggle, the Polish Home Army, the Armia Krajowa, rose up in a 63-day heroic battle to liberate Warsaw from Nazi occupation. Across the Vistula River, the nearby Red Army refused to join the struggle and instead stood by as Poland's hopelessly outnumbered warriors died. This June in Poland will mark the 70th anniversary of the Warsaw Uprising.

Then, in 1945, immediately after the end of World War II, the United States, France, and Germany withdrew their recognition of the long-suffering Polish Government in exile, which had been established after the Nazi-Soviet invasion in September 1939. The West opted in favor of recognizing the Soviet-imposed government that would forcibly rule half of Europe until the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, after which began a disassembly of that brutal system of Soviet human domination. And I might add, it was Poland and her spies that broke the Nazi code, and yet this is what the governments of the West did to Poland.

At the end of World War II, in 1945, at the Yalta Conference, ironically held in Crimea, the heads of governments of the United States, the United Kingdom, and the Soviet Union, headed by Franklin Roosevelt, Winston Churchill, and Joseph Stalin, met for the purpose of determining Europe's postwar configuration. Their fateful agreement cordoned off and consigned Central Europe to the yoke of oppression for half a century more, subjugating millions. How many tens of thousands more died within the confines of the Soviet Union? Only God knows.

In furtherance of repressive rule, between 1945 and 1948, the Soviets forcibly imposed puppet regimes across their captive nations like Poland, absorbed them into their empire, and repeated this pattern in nearly a dozen other Central and Eastern European countries through military occupation, government censorship, mass arrests, and rigged elections as an Iron Curtain separated the free world and the subjugated. That was the world that I and millions of liberty-loving people grew up in.

In 1956, the Hungarian people became the first to bravely rise up to cast off the boot of communism and assert their human rights. The Soviet Union dispatched armed tanks, brutally invaded, and imposed mass arrests and executions. You can still see the shots in the buildings inside of Budapest when you travel there. You can see the marks of what those tanks did.

Roman Catholic Cardinal Jozsef Mindszenty was forced to take protective refuge in the U.S. Embassy, where he remained for 15 years in Budapest as a global symbol of noble defiance against Soviet repression and a distant hope that life could change for the better.

The ugly pattern of national theft repeated in 1968 when the Czechs and Slovaks moved to restore freedom in their country. The Soviets invaded again with mass arrests and reimposed their brutal rule.

Starting in 1959, throughout this era of forced nationhood, U.S. and Western support for shortwave Radio Free Europe broadcasts across these captured nations gave hope to the people of Central and Eastern Europe, held as prisoners in their own lands.

When, a decade later, in 1978, Roman Catholic Cardinal Karl Wojtyla of Poland was elected Pope, he became the first non-Italian Pontiff from Central Europe, taking the name John Paul II. His incredible life story in building a religious alternative to the communist dictatorship in his homeland reawakened the worldwide effort to defeat Soviet communism.

An enlivened Solidarity movement that had begun during the 1950s in Poland through courageous labor activists spread to Lithuania's Sajudis and Ukraine's Helsinki Monitoring Group. America's AFL–CIO, along with united bipartisan support of our government, our Atlantic allies in NATO, and the American public who understood liberty's struggle hung in the balance, remained firm as the cold war tested our resolve.

In 1986, the nuclear disaster at Chernobyl, Ukraine, exposed the incompetence and bankruptcy of the Soviet system as the Soviet Government ordered hundreds of unprotected workers into that radioactive zone, consigning them to certain death. The work of a few brave activists from that horror evolved into a citizen's movement that matured into a forum for popular expression.

By 1989, as the Soviet economy finally collapsed, propelled by its ill-fated decision to wage war in Afghanistan, the Berlin Wall dividing East and West came crashing down as students from Europe danced on the wall, and we could see Central and East European nations one at a time begin to regain their independent, sovereignty, and chance—chance—for freedom.

Then in 1991, 46 years after the end of World War II, the Soviet Union itself collapsed. And in its Ukrainian Republic, more than 90 percent of Ukrainians voted to become an independent nation, including over half of the people in Crimea.

In an act of complete demilitarization in 1994, independent Ukraine gave up the third largest nuclear arsenal in the world. Inasmuch as these weapons were intended to be used against the United States and other Western countries, this gesture immeasurably enhanced American security and world peace. In return, the United States, the United Kingdom, and Russia provided assurances for Ukraine's independence, its territorial integrity, its freedom and economic viability contained in the operative document known as the Budapest Memorandum.

For two decades, the people of Ukraine, digging out of deep repression, have fought to build forward a nation that can govern, feed, and educate its people. They surely dream of becoming the great nation of which they are fully capable, a borderland nation reaching in all directions, west and east and south and north. Ukraine's potential is unlimited. She is already the third largest exporter of grain on the face of the Earth.

But in this new century, the same country of Ukraine found itself in a timeless struggle to elect honorable public officials that would treat people with dignity. Those who assumed power too often stole from the people. Others like President Victor Yushchenko were poisoned as he tried

to transition Ukraine to a modern state. Other leaders were imprisoned. And the latest kleptocratic government, just deposed, stole billions from its own nation, threatening economic growth and democratic progress.

As negotiations to include Ukraine in an economic trade union with Europe were nearly complete last year, the now-deposed, disgraced President Viktor Yanukovych rejected the agreement, triggering mass demonstrations across the nation. The only power the people there have is to stand up and speak out for themselves.

So, in 2013 and this year, we saw hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians begin demonstrating when their government, reacting to Russian economic and political coercion, reneged on its commitment to sign the Association Agreement with Europe. I say to the American people, if you had lived the lives of their great-grandparents, their grandparents, their parents, would you have had the courage to stand in the Euromaidan, would you have had the courage to stand there against the Berkut, against the police that had weapons and you had nothing, nothing but your voice?

The peaceful Euromaidan movement was shattered by government-led violence, scores of deaths and injuries, the ultimate impeachment of a corrupt President who fled his post and his country when mass killings made it impossible for him to stay. His kleptocratic thievery from his own people disgraced him and his administration for all the world to see.

Under Ukraine's constitution, Ukraine's legislative branch, their Rada, their congress, passed succession legislation to elect a new President, a new Prime Minister, and a speaker on an interim basis until free elections can be held this May 25, not long from now.

With Ukraine's eastern region of Crimea now invaded illegally by Russian aggressors, with its sovereignty and territorial integrity violated, and with Crimea forcibly annexed by Russia through a phony election, one must ask why the Atlantic Alliance and NATO, for two decades, left Ukraine largely undefended without a military security umbrella.

What is liberty worth? Have too many people become too middle class to understand the principle of liberty? She stands atop the dome of this Capitol, the Statue of Freedom. It is more than a statue. It is how we live. It is what we stand for. It is why the world respects us.

Is Ukraine to be a nation perpetually stuck in a time warp of history repeating itself? How many more have to die? Do the Budapest Accords mean nothing? Do the words mean nothing on the pages on which they are written?

This past week, this House distinguished itself by passing two measures relating to Ukraine that place our Nation squarely in liberty's corner at this time of testing. Make no mistake; this is a time of testing. Yet the United Nations, our world's institution charged with assigning peacekeeping forces to troubled hotspots, seems frozen due to the power of Russia's veto inside the Security Council.

Can our world community of nations muster the will to meet this latest threat to liberty? The question is: Can a dictatorship acting unilaterally overrule the aspirations for liberty?

American and international commitments have to mean what they say. History shows us that ignoring the word and substance of those precious documents leads to ever greater challenges ending with potential catastrophe. But international agreements aside, it is a moral obligation of our world community of nations to stand with Ukraine based alone on her tragically brutal history to which her people were subjected over the last century. No people on Earth, no place on Earth suffered more.

So I say to the world community of nations and liberty lovers everywhere: Where do you stand? Where do you stand diplomatically, economically, politicly, and militarily? I say to the world community of nations and liberty lovers everywhere: Where do you stand?

A new diplomatic and security architecture is needed to strengthen Ukraine's precarious situation. Her people long for liberty. They have sung to the world, yet they remain undefended against the worst aggression since the fall of the communist empire.

□ 1730

Ukraine—her people—have earned her right for a better day. It is not only in Ukraine's interest, it is in our interest. It is in the interest of what we stand for as the oldest democratic republic on the face of the Earth, yet one of her youngest nations.

William Faulkner's writings remind us:

The past is never dead. It is not even past.

So I say to those who are listening this evening that Russia's brutality with Ukraine is nothing new. The question for us is: What do we stand for? What does this country stand for? What can our leadership provide to the world community of nations to give this great country of Ukraine, whose potential is unlimited, the chance for liberty in this new millennium?

May God bless America, and may God bless those who understand the price of liberty.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

[From the Washington Post, Mar. 17, 2014]

RUSSIA'S BRUTALITY WITH UKRAINE IS NOTHING NEW

(By George F. Will)

''Boys from another school pulled out the severed head of a classmate while fishing in a pond. His whole family had died. Had they eaten him first? Or had he survived the deaths of his parents only to be killed by a cannibal? No one knew; but such questions were commonplace for the children of Ukraine in 1933. . . . Yet cannibalism was, sometimes, a victimless crime. Some mothers and fathers killed their children and ate them. . . . But other parents asked their children to make use of their own bodies if they passed away. More than one Ukrainian child had to tell a brother or sister: 'Mother says that we should eat her if she dies.' ''

—Timothy Snyder, ''Bloodlands: Europe Between Hitler and Stalin'' (2010)

While Vladimir Putin, Stalin's spawn, ponders what to do with what remains of Ukraine, remember: Nine years before the January 1942 Wannsee Conference, at which the Nazis embarked on industrialized genocide, Stalin deliberately inflicted genocidal starvation on Ukraine.

To fathom the tangled forces, including powerful ones of memory, at work in that singularly tormented place, begin with Timothy Snyder's stunning book. Secretary of State John Kerry has called Russia's invasion of Ukraine ''a 19th-century act in the 21st century.'' Snyder reminds us that ''Europeans deliberately starved Europeans in horrific numbers in the middle of the 20th century.'' Here is Snyder's distillation of a Welsh journalist's description of a Ukrainian city: ''People appeared at 2 o'clock in the morning to queue in front of shops that did not open until 7. On an average day 40,000 people would wait for bread. Those in line were so desperate to keep their places that they would cling to the belts of those immediately in front of them . . . . The waiting lasted all day, and sometimes for two. . . . Somewhere in line a woman would wail, and the moaning would echo up and down the line, so that the whole group of thousands sounded like a single animal with an elemental fear.''

This, which occurred about as close to Paris as Washington is to Denver, was an engineered famine, the intended result of Stalin's decision that agriculture should be collectivized and the ''kulaks''—prosperous farmers—should be ''liquidated as a class.'' In January 1933, Stalin, writes Snyder, sealed Ukraine's borders so peasants could not escape and sealed the cities so peasants could not go there to beg. By spring, more than 10,000 Ukrainians were dying each day, more than the 6,000 Jews who perished daily in Auschwitz at the peak of extermination in the spring of 1944.

Soon many Ukrainian children resembled ''embryos out of alcohol bottles'' (Arthur Koestler's description) and there were, in Snyder's words, ''roving bands of cannibals'': ''In the villages smoke coming from a cottage chimney was a suspicious sign, since it tended to mean that cannibals were eating a kill or that families were roasting one of their members.''

Snyder, a Yale historian, is judicious about estimates of Ukrainian deaths from hunger and related diseases, settling on an educated guess of approximately 3.3 million, in 1932–33. He says that when ''the Soviet census of 1937 found 8 million fewer people than projected,'' many of the missing being victims of starvation in Ukraine and elsewhere (and the children they did not have), Stalin ''had the responsible demographers executed.''

Putin, who was socialized in the Soviet-era KGB apparatus of oppression, aspires to reverse the Soviet Union's collapse, which he considers ''the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the [20th] century.'' Herewith a final description from Snyder of the consequences of the Soviet system, the passing of which Putin so regrets:

''One spring morning, amidst the piles of dead peasants at the Kharkiv market, an infant suckled the breast of its mother, whose face was a lifeless gray. Passersby had seen this before . . . that precise scene, the tiny

mouth, the last drops of milk, the cold nipple. The Ukrainians had a term for this. They said to themselves, quietly, as they passed: 'These are the buds of the socialist spring.' ''

U.S. policymakers, having allowed their wishes to father their thoughts, find Putin incomprehensible. He is a barbarian but not a monster, and hence no Stalin. But he has been coarsened, in ways difficult for civilized people to understand, by certain continuities, institutional and emotional, with an almost unimaginably vicious past. And as Ukraine, a bubbling stew of tensions and hatreds, struggles with its identity and aspirations, Americans should warily remember William Faulkner's aphorism: ''The past is never dead. It's not even past.''

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed a bill of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 404. An act to preserve the Green Mountain Lookout in the Glacier Peak Wilderness of the Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest.

TIME FOR A PARADIGM SHIFT IN AMERICA'S FOREIGN POLICY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. YOHO) for 30 minutes.

Mr. YOHO. Madam Speaker, I want to thank my colleagues for joining me tonight to talk about foreign aid and saving hard-earned American taxpayers' dollars.

With April 15 fast approaching, Americans will be filling out their tax returns and sending a portion of their hard-earned tax money to the Federal Treasury. It is up to us as Members of Congress to be good stewards of these funds, making sure that they are used to the best ability that we can to get the results desired. Time and again, we hear of wasteful spending in Washington, D.C., and it is long overdue that we commit ourselves to giving proper oversight to how we spend the people's money.

I have made it a priority of mine since having the honor of joining the people's House to commit myself to doing the proper oversight of government. There are numerous examples of domestic programs that are a questionable use of taxpayers' dollars, and many of them should be eliminated. However, there is a United States foreign aid program that caught my eye and the eyes of my colleagues on the Foreign Affairs Committee.

On March 5, 2014, the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade held a hearing: ''Threats to Israel: Terrorist Funding and Trade Boycotts.'' Through that hearing, it was brought to our attention that United States' foreign aid given to the Palestinian Authority has the potential to be funneled into a fund that pays monthly salaries to Israeli-convicted Palestinian terrorists.

Back in April 2011, the Palestinian Authority Registry published the PA Government Resolution of 2010, resolution Nos. 21 and 23, which formalized the long-held practice of the PA's paying a monthly salary to all Palestinians imprisoned in Israel for security- and terror-related offenses. The salaries are paid from the PA's general budget to the prisoners on a sliding scale based on quality, which in this world means, the more vicious the act of terrorism, the more that is paid out. The payments can range from 2,400 to 12,000 shekels per month, roughly $680 to $3,400 per month.

It doesn't take a genius to know that money is interchangeable and that, once out of the hands of the American foreign aid, the dollars can easily be used to pay these salaries. It is reported, as of December 2012, salaries have gone to more than 4,500 prisoners who have committed acts of terror, acts of terror that have killed at least 54 U.S. citizens since 1993 and have injured another 83 Americans.

This is totally unacceptable. It is absurd that the United States remains one of the largest donors to the Palestinian Authority while these heinous practices remain on the books.

It is for this reason that my colleagues and I introduced a resolution in Congress that simply says that, until the Palestinian Authority repeals the resolution supporting convicted terrorists, all U.S. foreign aid to the PA should be halted. Representatives WEBER, PERRY, POE, WESTMORELAND, COLLINS, JOHNSON, KING, and FRANKS all feel the same way I do—cut off the funding. I believe this is only fair and should have been done a long time ago. The American taxpayers should not be funding anyone who wishes death upon them or conspires to inflict harm on us or our allies.

According to Palestinian definition, again, more than 4,500 Palestinian prisoners who are serving time for terror-related offenses are recipients of the PA salaries. This means that Palestinians convicted of crimes, such as theft, do not receive a salary, but Hamas and Fatah prisoners receive hefty payments for acts of terrorism.

Madam Speaker, take a moment to think about this. Steal a loaf of bread, and you don't get a check. Blow up a building and commit murder, and you receive a nice stipend from the Palestinian Authority which is funded by the hardworking American taxpayers. The thought of this angers me, and I know it angers the American taxpayers.

Since 2011, Palestinian Media Watch has been documenting international donors' aid money to the Palestinian Authority that is given for salaries and the general budget but that ends up paying the salaries of Palestinian terrorists imprisoned in Israel. These monthly payments to prisoners are paid from the Palestinian general budget fund. According to the language of the Palestinian regulation as well as Palestinian economic reports on government salaries, the monthly salaries to prisoners range, again, from 2,400 shekels to 12,000 shekels a month. That is $680 to $3,400 a month. The average income in that region is between $4,000 and $5,000 a year. The Palestinian Authority economic report listed the prisoners' salaries as part of the Palestinian general salary budget, which includes civil servants, military personnel, and others. It was not listed as a social service payment.

Two national bodies exist to process those salaries and other benefits. The Palestinian Ministry of Prisoners' Affairs, established in 1998, is an official bureaucracy of the Palestinian Authority that commands as much priority as the Ministries of Health or Education but with far more gravitas. The Palestinian Ministry of Prisoners' Affairs works in tandem with the semi-official Prisoners' Club, established in 1994. The ministry dispenses the salary. The club functions as an advocate for the prisoners, and it is quite willing to publicly needle Palestinian leadership generally and the Ministry of Prisoners' Affairs specifically into providing ever-greater payments and benefits. The ministry channels certain payments and benefits through the Prisoners' Club.

In May 2009, our own GAO issued a report on this very subject, entitled, ''Measures to Prevent Inadvertent Payments to Terrorists under Palestinian Aid Programs have been Strengthened but Some Weaknesses Remain.'' The report explained:

> The U.S. Government is one of the largest donors to the Palestinians. It provided nearly $575 million in assistance in fiscal year 2008.

At least 54 U.S. citizens have been killed in Palestinian terror attacks since 1993, and another 83 have been wounded. The attacks have targeted American tourists, students, and expatriates living in Israel or in areas under Palestinian control.

Ahlam Tamimi helped to mastermind the deadly 2001 bombing of the Sbarro pizzeria in Jerusalem, which killed 15 people. Among those murdered was New Jersey schoolteacher Shoshana Greenbaum. Tamimi, who was released in the Shalit deal, now lives in Jordan, and is unrepentant about her actions. It is terrorists like these who receive monthly salaries from the Palestinian Authority.

Madam Speaker, at a time in the world that is becoming more dangerous, when there are individuals and organizations that wish the United States harm, when the administration is proposing cutting our military to pre-World War II levels, and when we as Americans are $17.6 trillion in debt, is it smart to be giving money to people in the name of peace who wish to do Americans and Israeli citizens harm?

Our national security is paramount, and as a Member of Congress, I swore

an oath to support and defend the Constitution of the United States of America against all enemies, foreign and domestic. I intend to stay true to that oath and defend the country I love and all who call it home. It is time that we as Americans in government have a paradigm shift in our foreign policy.

At this time, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. WEBER).

Mr. WEBER of Texas. I thank my friend, the gentleman from Florida.

Madam Speaker, I will tell you what the gentleman from Florida is describing is American and Israeli blood on the hands of terrorists who now have American cash in their back pockets. It is unbelievable.

The history is that, since 2003, the Palestinian Authority has provided government salaries to Palestinians imprisoned in Israeli jails—let me again say—with Israeli blood on their hands. These are prisoners who have actively participated in terrorist activities. According to the Palestinians' language of their own law, ''Anyone imprisoned in the occupation's, or Israel's, prisons as a result of his participation in the struggle against the occupation'' is eligible for a monthly salary.

Let me be clear.

Prisoners may qualify for a government salary if—and only if—they have killed an Israeli and/or participated in terrorist activities. As an extra, dare I call it, ''bonus,'' if their crimes are so extensive as to warrant imprisonment for 5 years or more, the government salaries will continue until 3 years following their release from jail. Salaries are also given to the families of suicide bombers or to those who die ''while participating in the struggle.''

Originally, these salaries were set at a minimum of $250 per month, American dollars. The payments were increased by 300 percent in January of 2011. At present, the PA is paying up to $15 million in government salaries to those convicted of crimes each month. It seems like a pretty good deal to me. Commit a terrorist attack and get yourself caught and imprisoned by the Israelis, and you can win free food, shelter, education, medical care, and a salary that is significantly higher than what you can collect on your own in the outside world.

How are we to believe the sincerity of a government that incentivizes violent acts of terror against the very nation with which they are supposedly negotiating a treaty for peace?

In a meeting with the Palestinian chief negotiator, Saeb Erekat, while in Ramallah, I told him that actions speak louder than words—that they need to stop glorifying terrorists and, instead, glorify peace and renounce terrorism, that they need to admit that Israel has the right to exist as a Jewish state. He was not a happy camper.

Meanwhile, the Palestinian Authority doled out $100 million in salaries to 4,762 prisoners last year. An additional $46 million has already been allocated this year, and we are only 4 months into the year. Let me tell you that that averages out to $2,400 per prisoner per month—all for participating in terrorism. What is worse is that we are helping the Palestinian Government in their efforts. Did I mention they have got Israeli and American blood on their hands and American cash in their back pockets? Approximately 85 percent of all international aid money sent to the West Bank and Gaza goes to government salaries.

In spite of multiple congressional freezes on government aid, President Obama has continued to use his waiver authority to release millions in American taxpayer dollars to that same Palestinian Authority. In fact, since 2008, we have averaged $500 million a year in bilateral assistance. How does that protect our Nation or our very best ally, Israel? Where is the sense in that?

In the words of the Texas revolutionary, Lieutenant William Barret Travis:

> I call on you, members, in the name of liberty, patriotism and everything dear to the American character, to come to our aid. We have got to stop this foolishness.

□ 1745

We require foreign contractors, vendors, and employees to be properly vetted prior to receiving government grant funds to ensure that we are not unintentionally contributing to terror around the world. Why are we allowing it to happen here, for heaven's sake?

You are right, Congressman YOHO, at a time when our constituents are pulling out their receipts, drafting their tax returns, planning their annual budgets, we should be ever more diligent on spending their tax dollars.

The Appropriations Committee must ensure that the language they craft and the authority they give safeguards against us ever contributing to the financial well-being of those who seek the destruction of our allies or our great Nation.

Foreign aid is not a right; it is a gift from the American people. Terrorists with blood on their hands, we don't want to support terrorists with American and Israeli blood on their hands and with American cash in their back pockets. We must not let that happen.

I am RANDY WEBER, and you know I am right.

Mr. YOHO. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas for your passion. I think it is so true, that we see this so many times. You said that foreign aid is not—it's a gift from the American taxpayers.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. It is not a right.

Mr. YOHO. It is a gift, and it is also not constitutional, and it doesn't say in there that we need to do that. So we need to look at all these things that we are doing, and that is why I say this is a time for a paradigm shift in foreign aid.

What we are actually doing—we are doing this in the name of peace, trying to promote peace, but then we turn around with the other hand, and they are giving money to our enemies, so it makes no sense.

At this moment, I yield to the great gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PERRY).

Mr. PERRY. Madam Speaker, many people that each of us meet as Representatives in our home district say that things are wrong with Washington, and they give us a list.

Of course, one of the big things is the misspending of their money, and they are right. They say: Why aren't you doing something about it?

Oftentimes, the answer is: look, it is complicated, we have a House of Representatives, we have a Senate, and we don't always agree, and then we have to get the President to sign something.

On this occasion, something can be done; it is just not being done. In April 2011, the Palestinian Authority registry published a government resolution granting all Palestinian prisoners imprisoned in Israel for security and terror-related offenses a monthly salary from the authority—a monthly salary, like a job.

Imagine if your job was to blow up people, tear their limbs off, and send hot pieces of metal through their bodies and watch their bloody corpses being dragged through the street.

If that was your job, you would get a salary for that. Who in America pays—we put people in prison for that, we put people to death for that; yet American taxpayers are paying people overseas to do just that. Words mean things. They pay a salary.

The Authority defined eligible beneficiaries as anyone imprisoned in Israel's prison as a result of his participation in the struggle against the occupation, as is already stated, the occupation; again, words mean things.

I wonder, people complain, and they call it an occupation of the Palestinian lands. Let's remember who attacked Israel. I wonder if the war had ended inside of Israel's borders, if the attackers would have given Israel's borders back. I wonder, but I doubt they would have. Words mean things. So if you are involved at all in this struggle, in this fight, in this killing, you get a salary.

Now, according to the Palestinian Authority's definition, as was already stated, more than 4,500 Palestinian prisoners, as of December 2012, serving time for terror-related offenses are recipients of these salaries.

This means that Palestinians convicted of crimes such as theft do not receive a salary. However, Hamas and Fatah prisoners receive hefty payments—hefty.

According to the regulation and economic reports on government salaries, the monthly salaries to these prisoners range from $680 to $3,400 a month. Who couldn't use $3,400, especially at tax time? Yet we are sending it to people to kill people, literally.

Like many salaries, payments to prisoners follow a sliding scale based

on quality—quality of work. If your work is murdering other people, as Mr. WEBER from Texas already stated, the more murder, the more mayhem, the higher the salary. It is unfathomable to us as Americans.

This is happening, and there is a few of us on the floor, but where is the rest of the Federal Government, Madam Speaker? Where is the Senate? Where is our President? Where is the Secretary of State? He knows this is happening, but it is us folks on the floor that are talking about it. He is not saying a word.

In this world, the more heinous the act of terrorism, the greater the salary; the more violent the terrorist act, the longer the Israeli prison sentence and, in turn, the higher the monthly compensation—compensation for killing, so we are hiring hit men. American tax dollars are hiring hit men and hit women, and the policy literally incentivizes terrorism.

In May of 2009, GAO issued a report on this very subject, the Government Accountability Office. This is not Perry's rules; it is not Yoho's statistics. It is the GAO.

The report explained:

> The U.S. Government is one of the largest donors to the Palestinians.

One of the largest donors. Yet the GAO found incomplete compliance with even the minimal paperwork requirements for vetting procedures.

So we are giving them a pile of money, and as usual with the Federal Government, we are not checking up on them. We have no idea what they are spending it on. Well, we just found out, right? We just found out.

In many cases, it seems Federal agencies and offices merely went through the motions without proper vetting—so surprising. It is shocking to me that U.S. taxpayer dollars have been indirectly used to pay Palestinian terrorists' salaries.

Let me explain the indirectly part of it because it amounts to this year—this fiscal year—$440 million. $17 trillion in debt. Annual deficits for the last 5–6 years averaging about a trillion dollars; yet we are happy to hand away $440 million and some of which—a great deal of which is used to kill people.

So the Congress allocates that money to the Department of State. The Department of State then allocates a portion of that money to USAID, who then gives it to the Palestinian Authority general budget, which is extremely fungible, which means the first dollar or the last dollar—the dollars don't care—of the $440 million, we are spending about $60 million—well, someone is—the Palestinian Authority's paying $60 million to these terrorists in salaries. $60 million of that $440 million is going to terrorists' salaries.

Now, I wonder how much we spent tracking down Nidal Hassan and convicting him. How much time did we spend? What about those victims? How much time, energy, and resources did we spend on the Tsarnaev brothers?

Terrorism, people that kill other people, yet while we spend American tax dollars to track them down, imprison them—in the case of Nidal Hassan, his rightful punishment, which is the death sentence—on this occasion, we actually pay people to kill our allies and even other Americans.

State and Federal Government sanction other nations for this kind of behavior. We sanction them. We say we are not going to give you things, we are going restrict you; yet on this occasion, the Palestinian Authority, we actually pay them.

I don't get it. As an American, I don't get it. I wonder too, in this time of executive orders, this is wholly within the purview of the executive branch.

There have been many times when people in this House have objected to the executive orders moved on by this administration, but on this occasion, I can't think of one person in this room that would say: oh, no, Mr. President, please don't stop the State Department from giving $440 million to the Palestinian Authority, so they can spend $60 million of hard-earned taxpayer money to pay for criminals that kill people.

Yet crickets, Madam Speaker, crickets.

Mr. YOHO. I appreciate the gentleman form Pennsylvania and your passion on that also.

This is the time, like you brought up and we have talked about, $17.5 trillion roughly in debt, if we go back to when we first got here, all being freshman, one of the first things that we had to deal with—it was right before we came in, it was the fiscal cliff, then it was sequester, then it was the furloughing, and then the government shut down.

Why? From a lack of money, right? It wasn't an excess of money; yet we have given over $5 billion since 1988 to the Palestinian Authority, which is not a country. It is a loosely-knit organization.

We have to go back to our taxpayers and to our constituents back home and say: we need more money, we have got to do this. And they look at us, like they say to you: When are you guys going to start fixing it?

This is the time.

At this moment, I yield to the gentleman from the State of Iowa (Mr. KING), my friend.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Florida for yielding and for pulling this Special Order together here and bringing out this case as something that all the American people aren't going to realize what is taking place here, if we don't have this discussion here. It takes leadership in this Congress to do this. I appreciate the strong voice of Mr. PERRY and Mr. WEBER.

I look back at it this way. On my first trip to Israel some time more than 10 years ago, I looked across at what was taking place from Israel proper and West Bank, the Palestinian area.

I went through the briefings and saw the data of a culture of people that raise their little girls to put on these fake suicide vests in order to make sure that they entrench deeply in them a multigenerational hatred towards Israelis and Jewish people. Now, why?

It is not a rational thing for a culture and a civilization to be so full of hate; yet all they really need to do is accept the existence of Israel, and a lot of us, this resistance we have within us would start to dissipate.

It wouldn't be gone because you don't just accept somebody's word who has such a history of doing what they have done. The hatred goes deep.

I think of Congressman GOHMERT of Texas, if he were standing here tonight, he would say: you don't have to pay people to hate you, they'll hate you for free.

So all these billions of dollars—$5 billion since 1988, as Mr. YOHO just said, the idea of trying to trade off land for peace, and what you get back is a poke in the eye with a sharp stick, in a more violent and a bloody and a brutal way.

You see that there is a fundraising mechanism worldwide that pours dollars into the Palestinian Authority, and they then use it to pay the payroll of people that are sitting in a prison for crimes against—let me say it this way, crimes against humanity, not necessarily the technical definition of the convictions that they have—who get a payroll check for demonstrating hatred, acting on it, in a kinetic fashion, being locked up to protect the rest of society, and then being paid in reward for that.

This is an appalling circumstance, tapping into the United States of America where—we have to think about this—if we want to pay people that hate Israel, who are prisoners for committing crimes, and we grant that over to the Palestinian Authority in our foreign aid package or whatever particular line item it might be, so we have to go to China: Will you loan us some money, so that we can run it through our Treasury, so we can funnel it in to go in to pay people that have been—in any measure of decency, what they are committing is wrong?

They need to have their hearts softened. They need to raise their children to love their neighbor as they love themselves. They need to understand that there is a good functional government going on in Israel proper and still likely the only place in the Middle East where an Arab can get a fair trial is in Israel, where Arabs serve in the Knesset, where they serve in the supreme court, where they have the rights of land ownership.

That is the way you run a country that has a multidimensional ethnicity and religion in it.

Mr. PERRY. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. KING of Iowa. I would yield.

Mr. PERRY. So based on this, how should our great ally Israel—how should the people of Israel view us, knowing that this is happening and knowing that no one outside these four

walls right now is talking about this? How should they view us?

Mr. KING of Iowa. Well, I think they will view us as a foolish country that doesn't understand our priorities and doesn't understand where the money is coming from or where it goes.

I would say this call out: Mr. Netanyahu, why don't you just ask us to take that money and give it to Israel instead? Give it to the people that are promoting peace, the people that are surrounded by enemies throughout, the people that had to stand there and face the all-out attacks over and over again.

They are a democracy in the Middle East, a stabilizing force in the Middle East; and if we allow them to be weakened—sometimes by the willful actions of this administration—if we allow them to be weakened, if they collapse, so does a lot of freedom in the Middle Eastern part of world.

It threatens Europe, and in the end, it threatens us. So our safety and our security is tied together. We need to protect our brethren who believe in freedom, who believe in a form of democracy, and we need to encourage that everywhere in the world.

□ 1800

There are good people in the Palestinian lands. They need to have good leadership, and if we give them the right incentive, they are going to perhaps produce good leadership.

But if we pay them to hate people, there are going to be more people hating people. I think we should turn that money back around and reward the people that don't, those who need to be defended.

Mr. YOHO. I appreciate your participation in this and your leadership on so many other things that you have done. Thank you for being here.

I yield back the balance of my time.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. YOHO. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the Special Order of Ms. KAPTUR.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

BLOCKING PROPERTY OF CERTAIN PERSONS WITH RESPECT TO SOUTH SUDAN—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 113–102)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

Pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 *et seq.*) (IEEPA), I hereby report that I have issued an Executive Order (the ''order'') declaring a national emergency with respect to the unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States posed by the situation in and in relation to South Sudan.

The order does not target the country of South Sudan, but rather is aimed at persons who threaten the peace, stability, or security of South Sudan; commit human rights abuses against persons in South Sudan; or undermine democratic processes or institutions in South Sudan. The order provides authority for blocking the property and interests in property of any person determined by the Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Secretary of State:

To be responsible for or complicit in, or to have engaged in, directly or indirectly, any of the following in or in relation to South Sudan:

actions or policies that threaten the peace, security, or stability of South Sudan;

actions or policies that threaten transitional agreements or undermine democratic processes or institutions in South Sudan;

actions or policies that have the purpose or effect of expanding or extending the conflict in South Sudan or obstructing reconciliation or peace talks or processes;

the commission of human rights abuses against persons in South Sudan;

the targeting of women, children, or any civilians through the commission of acts of violence (including killing, maiming, torture, or rape or other sexual violence), abduction, forced displacement, or attacks on schools, hospitals, religious sites, or locations where civilians are seeking refuge, or through conduct that would constitute a serious abuse or violation of human rights or a violation of international humanitarian law;

the use or recruitment of children by armed groups or armed forces in the context of the conflict in South Sudan;

the obstruction of the activities of international peacekeeping, diplomatic, or humanitarian missions in South Sudan, or of the delivery or distribution of, or access to, humanitarian assistance; or

attacks against United Nations missions, international security presences, or other peacekeeping operations;

To be a leader of (i) an entity, including any government, rebel militia, or other group, that has, or whose members have, engaged in any of the activities described above or (ii) an entity whose property and interests in property are blocked pursuant to the order;

To have materially assisted, sponsored, or provided financial, material, logistical, or technological support for, or goods or services in support of, any activity described above or any person whose property and interests in property are blocked pursuant to the order;

To be owned or controlled by, or to have acted or purported to act for or on behalf of, directly or indirectly, any person whose property and interests in property are blocked pursuant to the order.

I have delegated to the Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Secretary of State, the authority to take such actions, including the promulgation of rules and regulations, and to employ all powers granted to the President by IEEPA as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of the order. All agencies of the United States Government are directed to take all appropriate measures within their authority to carry out the provisions of the order.

I am enclosing a copy of the Executive Order I have issued.

BARACK OBAMA.

THE WHITE HOUSE, *April 3, 2014.*

MONEY DOESN'T BUY RESPECT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) for 30 minutes.

Mr. GOHMERT. Madam Speaker, I so much appreciate my friends, the Honorable Mr. YOHO, Mr. PERRY, and Mr. KING, discussing the issue that is very dear to my heart. And I appreciate my very dear friend, Mr. KING, quoting me accurately, because you don't have to pay people to hate you. They will do it for free.

We have spent billions and billions of dollars over the years paying people that have contempt for us. They don't like us. And from anybody that has ever tried to pay a bully their lunch money, they find they don't buy respect. They buy more contempt and more evil actions coming your way.

So it just makes no sense, especially when money is fungible, and we continue to send money to the Palestinians. We continue to see outrageous examples in the Palestinian textbooks of just raw, unbridled hatred and demeaning of the Jewish people.

And why should the textbooks among the Palestinians for their children be any different than what the adults are doing, when you find that Palestinian leaders are naming streets and holidays for people who have walked in and murdered groups of people with a bomb, children, innocent women, men, out with their families. They come in and kill them when they have done no harm, no wrong.

We still hear people talking about Samaria and Judea, written in the Bible hundreds, maybe 1,600 years before the birth of Mohammed, about the areas that were the promised land for the children of Israel.

So it becomes difficult for a people that didn't exist in 1000 B.C. to claim that someone who lived in that land, cultivated that land, had the prior claim to that land, somehow have a lesser right than people that came along hundreds and hundreds of years later.

But America has a financial problem, and we shouldn't be just squandering money, paying people that hate us to educate their children to hate us, to educate the population to hate us, to teach songs that glorify hatred against Israel.

As our dear friend Prime Minister Netanyahu has pointed out, Iran itself is developing intercontinental ballistic missiles, and they certainly don't need those to deliver a nuclear weapon to Israel. Those are coming for the Great Satan. That would be us.

So people wonder, well, what are we doing to protect ourselves?

Back after the fall of the Soviet Union, the United States of America's leaders pressured Ukraine to deliver nuclear weapons in their possession to Russia. Now, the Ukrainians have never really trusted the Russians. And, yes, the Russians have put people out of their homes in some areas, filled them with Russian people. There are areas that today feel like they are loyal to Russia because they are Russians. They sent them there. They displaced the Ukrainians.

But the Ukrainians went ahead and turned over possession of nuclear weapons to Russians whom they distrusted because they trusted America. And the United States' leaders made sure they understood: we have got you covered. We will protect you. You don't have to worry. Go ahead and give nuclear weapons to Russia.

Now the trust that the Ukrainian people put in the United States' leaders is coming back, potentially, to haunt them. That should never be the case. If we want to be taken seriously in the world, we can't be breaking promises to countries who rely on our integrity. We can't be doing that.

So as people ask when we travel around the world in the past 6 months or so, they ask: What are you doing to prevent more terrorism when you won't even acknowledge the source of the terrorism? As one of the Egyptian leaders asked: Why are you not helping us in the war on terror? Now you are helping the people that supported the terror.

They don't understand, and neither do I.

I was asked today, Madam Speaker: What has the military done to avoid another Fort Hood incident since 2009? Madam Speaker, it appears the answer is quite embarrassing.

What have we done to protect the country when this President has made our military so much smaller?

What are we doing to protect the country when this President canceled agreements that had been made, promised, relied upon to other countries' detriment, missile defense? What are we doing to protect our country?

This policy that this administration has had internationally to think that evil, hateful people will love us and want to be very good friends if we just downsize our military, we tie our own hands, we don't let our military really protect themselves adequately, that surely they will come to appreciate and like us and they won't consider us divisive, derisive, dismissive, well, that is not what they are thinking. This Nation has lost respect around the world, and it is heartbreaking.

So they wonder, what are we doing to protect ourselves, because if we can't protect ourselves, how can we help stop evil people around the world?

Some say, and I think there are people in this administration that think we need to follow the European example where we don't have to have much of a military at all and we just show, look, we want to get along and go along. The trouble with that idea is the Europeans have had the benefit of downsizing their military and having smaller militaries because they knew the United States existed and that we would not let an evil power take over Europe, Britain, that we would stop it because we would not want another Hitler to get as far as he did last time.

We want to stop them before that happens because, assuredly, if Europe falls, England falls, they are coming for the United States. And now we know, because of radical Islam, they are more concerned about destroying America than they are even taking on Europe and England.

So these are serious issues. So what have we done to protect the men and women in our military who are protecting us?

It is heartbreaking. This administration, after 2009's horrendous accident—not accident—incident where a radical Islamist Muslim killed 13 fellow military members. They were not allowed to have weapons on post. And we start digging and we find out, well, gee, when the Democrats controlled the House and the Senate, apparently, back in 1992, there was a bill passed back around that time that prevented military members from carrying weapons on military installations.

Mr. PERRY. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. GOHMERT. I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

Mr. PERRY. First I want to say thank you for your service as a Member of this body who has also served his Nation in uniform. Thank you, and how well you know and what you just spoke of.

□ 1815

I found it fascinating, on my most recent deployment to Iraq—it has been years now—we were mobilized to Fort Sill, Oklahoma. I am sure you know it well. So you carry your weapon around with you 24 hours a day in your training because you must always be prepared, except—this is the fascinating part—except when you go to the PX, except when you go to the chow hall. Then you must find a place for your weapon. You must leave a soldier out in the parking lot to guard all the weapons, or what have you. And I am thinking to myself: Here I am, a commander of this task force. I have got men and women of all ages and all different backgrounds, and we are training and refining ourselves to go to war, to fight the enemy, to defend our Nation in arms, wearing your ballistic vest and all your gear, wearing a ballistic helmet so that if you do get shot, you are protected from that fire. But yet I am not trusted to carry my firearm on a military base.

So what we have seen during this administration is this horrific incident, the previous one with Nidal Hasan, and nothing has really changed. And now we see a repeat of it. Meanwhile, soldiers—men and women who are willing and ready to serve their country—are left defenseless and can't even turn to their own Constitution, which they take an oath to uphold and defend to protect them.

I find it the height of the dereliction of duty of this body and of this administration.

Mr. GOHMERT. During the time that my friend was in the military, what weapons were you required to qualify using?

Mr. PERRY. Well, as an officer, I qualified with a .9 millimeter, but of course everybody qualifies at some point M16, or an M4 now.

Mr. GOHMERT. And that really is amazing about the military in a military installation because, like the gentleman said, when I was at Fort Benning, we had to qualify every year. And here at Fort Hood, one of the largest military installations anywhere, it adjoins Killeen, Texas. And many people—most people, I think, in Texas recall that there was a terrible shooting incident in a cafeteria in Killeen that adjoins Fort Hood where a man went in and started killing people in the cafeteria.

And there was a woman there who had to put her gun in the glove compartment because we didn't have laws that allowed you to carry weapons around Texas. And she realized that she could have saved her parents from being murdered if she had been able to carry her concealed weapon. So she got elected to the State legislature. She is a hero. She got the concealed-carry bill through and signed into law. And that had been used in other States to get concealed-carry bills passed.

So when people say, well, how horrible, there had been a prior mass shooting before. Actually, there had been two right there, just right so close together. Killeen, though, civilians, who are not required to qualify with weapons every year, like you and I have been in the military.

Yet if, as someone trained with weapons, qualifying every year, you step one foot off that military installation, now you can start carrying a concealed weapon if you just got the permit. But if you step back on the military installation, where everyone is required to be qualified to use weapons, you can't have one.

We are working on a bill which will not just create the power, but it will

require that military installations allow people there to go through and apply for and get a permit to carry a concealed weapon, just as they could in Fort Hood if they put one foot off post into Killeen. And they ought to be able to step back on the installation.

Mr. PERRY. If the gentleman would yield, I am just curious—you have spent more time here than I have—what was the impetus for the current law which restricts DOD and commanders, as an installation commander myself, from exacting our own authority based on the Constitution?

Mr. GOHMERT. And actually, that was back around the time I became a district judge in Texas. And I didn't learn until I was here in Congress just recently that they had ever passed such a law. There was a Democratic majority in the House, a Democratic majority in the Senate.

I can't imagine why they were thinking they had to protect our military members from themselves when we give them far more lethal weapons—I mean, you give somebody an RPG.

Mr. PERRY. Who is better trained than the United States military, the different branches serving on those bases and posts all around the country, all around the world, dealing with weapons on a daily basis, dealing with ammunition and its effects on a daily basis? Most of what you do revolves around ranges, firing, qualifications because we train. Readiness is important, and using the tools of the trade; whether you like it or not, they are weapons, because there are bad actors out there. And that is what they have to use to be able to fight back.

So that is the one place, specifically the one place on the planet where you would think that people would be able to. As you said, they are trained, are prepared, are knowledgeable, are familiar, are comfortable with. And yet this United States Government does not allow them to defend themselves and, more importantly, the oath and the very Constitution, the set of rules with which we govern this Nation.

When you raise your right hand and take that solemn oath, unfortunately under the current paradigm, under this current administration, when you take the oath to join the military, you are giving away the right to defend yourself while you are on a military base.

Mr. GOHMERT. The gentleman makes so many good points. I would like to yield to the gentleman to answer a question.

Having been a commander, we have talked about how military were qualified, were required to qualify to use weapons. But as a commander, do you know of any one civilian in the civilian world who has more training about not misplacing your weapon or setting your weapon down or leaving your weapon than somebody in the military? The gentleman knows what I talk about.

Mr. PERRY. Certainly you and I can both attest to this. It is a sensitive, it is a controlled item. And from day one, you learn the very harsh reality that you do not ever, ever misplace your weapon. There are very serious penalties for misplacing your weapon. You learn to live with it, to sleep with it, to shower with it. It is you, and you are it. You are together at all times and all things. And accountability is paramount. That is what I mean. There can be no breach of this standard. And there is none. And the military trains you in that very acutely.

So, once again, I would say, there is no place where individuals—men and women—are more familiar, better trained, and more well equipped to deal with firearms than in the military, especially—specifically on a military base.

Mr. GOHMERT. I was talking with one of our Capitol Police yesterday after this shooting at Fort Hood, again. One of our great Capitol Police. We are so blessed with such great qualified protectors of the Capitol area. And he was in the military for 13 years and left the military and became a Capitol policeman. Well, I trust that gentleman now to have a weapon at all times. I am delighted if he will carry a weapon at all times.

But Washington, D.C., has these really well-intentioned laws. Let's eliminate weapons in Washington, D.C. They have been struck down by the Supreme Court because they are unconstitutional. But I want somebody like that, that I could trust, whether he was still in the military, as he was, or as a Capitol policeman. I am very comfortable with him carrying a weapon and feel better knowing that there were people like him around carrying weapons.

So when that question was asked, what has the military done since 2009's Fort Hood mass shooting to prevent this kind of thing from happening, I know that the military cannot do any more than the Commander in Chief orders them to do. I don't know of anything that the Commander in Chief has done, as the commander, where the buck stops, to provide more protection from an incident like as now happened again.

If the gentleman knows of anything that has been done.

Mr. PERRY. I do not. And I thank you for asking. But just thinking about it, the process by which a person joins and maintains the attendance, so to speak, in the military requires an investigation of your person, of your background, who you are, your capabilities, and so on and so forth. And for an administration, rightly so, very concerned about background checks and making sure that only those in our free country avail themselves of their Second Amendment right and not those who shouldn't, such as criminals, who would also not be allowed to either join the military or stay in the military, once again, I would say, there is no safer, no better a place than on a military base because all those folks have been vetted, have been checked, do carry a weapon.

So I find it interesting that maybe the military, maybe DOD has made a recommendation to the administration and said, part of the solution to Nidal Hasan and his heinous acts are to make sure that people can defend themselves, soldiers, servicemembers at different bases and different branches of the services can protect themselves under force of arms, if necessary, on base. But that has yet to be found out.

But it would be very interesting to know if DOD did make that recommendation and nothing was done about it, and nothing was done about it. If there was no cry from the administration to say, hey, Congress, this is a problem. Here is part of the solution set. Get to work.

As you said, we have already gotten to work on that here. But I suspect that that bill—well-intentioned, the right thing to do—will make it out of the House in due course but under this Senate and under this administration will languish. That is what my suspicion will be.

Mr. GOHMERT. Well, I would think, though, that at this point in time, with so many Senators of the Democrat persuasion being concerned about elections and the disaster ObamaCare has been, if we pass a bill that provides for military installations to allow permits to be applied for and obtained for a concealed-carry on a military installation, that the Senate will be in a difficult position if they don't take it up. And the President would hurt his party dramatically if it passed out of the Senate as well and he refused to sign it.

There will be other incidents like Fort Hood again. It appears that we have not been adequately addressing post-traumatic stress disorder. And you never know if someone is going to go off, like we see with Washington, D.C., having such a high murder rate. Just like the old bumper stickers have said in the past, When guns are outlawed, only outlaws have guns. That is exactly what has happened at Fort Hood both times. It is what happened in Killeen with the mass shooting in the cafeteria. And the problem is not honest, honorable, law-abiding Americans having a gun under their Second Amendment rights; it is the outlaws having guns.

There were thousands of cases that came through my court as a district judge, felonies—all of them felonies. And I couldn't remember any cases involving guns where the guns were lawfully acquired. The criminals get guns, and they don't care. The name ''criminal'' comes from the fact that they commit crimes, and they don't care what the law is. They break the law. So the people that are disarmed are those law-abiding citizens.

I really think we cannot stand another 5 years of calling such a terrible disaster just ''workplace violence'' when it is a tragedy that can be prevented, can be stopped. And since the

Commander in Chief has not taken action that would impede it or stop it, we need to do that.

And we need to reverse the law that was passed by the Democratic House and Democratic-controlled Senate back in the early nineties and get a bill to the President's desk. And if the Democrats—at least some of them in the Senate—are not willing to pass such a law or HARRY REID is not willing to bring that to the floor, the answer is very simple: We vote in Republican Senators so that they will bring it to the floor. And next January, then we can present it to the President.

□ 1830

And then if he does not and is not willing to sign it at that point, then we will either have enough to override the veto or we will have a President from a different party come November of 2016 who will allow the military to protect themselves instead of condemning them to helplessly watch while they and their friends are gunned down by an outlaw.

I yield to my friend.

Mr. PERRY. I agree with you on your assessment. I hope you are right about that. I hope you are right, that we accomplish something. It would be great if it wasn't partisan, if we could just do the right thing and allow people who have agreed to serve and take the oath to uphold and defend the Constitution to then have the same protections of that Constitution availed to themselves. And that would be, in my opinion, the right thing to do regardless—regardless—of your party.

So I would hope that we would see that now, see that as a solution set to—look, on this current case, it appears that when confronted with a firearm, this individual who carried out this most recent crime and these atrocities at Fort Hood, when confronted with a firearm himself, that is when the carnage ended.

So it seems to me that maybe it won't stop it, but it certainly can mitigate it, and maybe if these folks in the future that would ponder such an act, if they knew that other members on post would be carrying, as well, they might be reluctant to do the same thing.

Mr. GOHMERT. In the 1 minute we have got left, I just want to thank my friend from Pennsylvania for all of his service to our country in the military and here in Congress. I hope that we are able to get a bill passed through the House, through the Senate, and to the President's desk.

Let me just finish by saying there was an atrocity here on Capitol Hill yesterday with the testimony of the former Acting Director of the CIA. Our military has become an international—it is tragic, but a laughing—

If they are not defending themselves, then how can we count on them to defend us? And after the testimony under penalty of perjury yesterday by a former acting director of the CIA, it has told the world that the only place there has been worse intelligence than we have had, particularly during Benghazi, would have been back at Little Big Horn by General Custer.

We have got to turn this place around so that Americans can protect Americans and Americans serving our military can protect themselves and our intelligence does start living up to the name instead of making it such a tragedy.

With that, Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Ms. CASTOR of Florida (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today and April 4 on account of family obligation in district.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. GOHMERT. Madam Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 6 o'clock and 33 minutes p.m.), the House adjourned until tomorrow, Friday, April 4, 2014, at 9 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

5179. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting the internal and independent reviews of Department of Defense (DoD) programs, policies, and procedures regarding security at DoD installations and the security clearance process; to the Committee on Armed Services.

5180. A letter from the Acting Under Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting authorization of 10 officers to wear the authorized insignia of the grade of major general or brigadier general; to the Committee on Armed Services.

5181. A letter from the Assistant Director for Legislative Affairs, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, transmitting the Annual Report on the Bureau's activities to administer the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act; to the Committee on Financial Services.

5182. A letter from the Chairman and President, Export-Import Bank, transmitting a report on transactions involving U.S. exports to Turk Hava Yollari, A.O. (Turkish Airlines) of Istanbul, Turkey; to the Committee on Financial Services.

5183. A letter from the Chairman and President, Export-Import Bank, transmitting a report on a request from Wells Fargo, N.A. for a 90 percent guarantee on a 36-month revolving credit facility; to the Committee on Financial Services.

5184. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator, Office of Diversion Control, Department of Justice, transmitting the Department's final rule — Schedules of Controlled Substances: Temporary Placement of 10 Synthetic Cathinones Into Schedule I [Docket No.: DEA-386] received March 10, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

5185. A letter from the Chief of Staff, Media Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule—Amendment of Section 73.622(i), Post-Transition Table of DTV Allotments, Television Broadcast Stations (Birmingham, Alabama) [MB Docket No.: 13-261] [RM-11707] received February 19, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

5186. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Secretary of State, transmitting notification that effective February 23, 2014, the danger pay allowance for the Cote D'Ivoire has been eliminated, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 5928; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5187. A letter from the Acting Assistant Legal Adviser, Office of Treaty Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a report prepared by the Department of State concerning international agreements other than treaties entered into by the United States to be transmitted to the Congress within the sixty-day period specified in the Case-Zablocki Act; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5188. A letter from the Office of Economic Impact and Diversity, Department of Energy, transmitting the Department's annual report on the No FEAR Act for Fiscal Year 2013; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5189. A letter from the Associate General Counsel for General Law, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5190. A letter from the Associate General Counsel for General Law, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting two reports pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5191. A letter from the Associate General Counsel for General Law, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5192. A letter from the Associate General Counsel for General Law, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5193. A letter from the Deputy Associate Director for Management and Administration and Designated Reporting Official, Office of National Drug Control Policy, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5194. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Eurocopter France (Eurocopter) Helicopters [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0697; Directorate Identifier 2009-SW-015-AD; Amendment 39-17733; AD 2014-02-05] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 10, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5195. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Bell Helicopter Textron Canada Limited (Bell) Helicopters [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0525; Directorate Identifier 2011-SW-063-AD; Amendment 39-17730; AD 2014-02-02] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 10, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5196. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Beechcraft Corporation Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0611;

Directorate Identifier 2013-CE-019-AD; Amendment 39-17731; AD 2014-02-03] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 10, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5197. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Agusta S.p.A. (Type certificate currently held by Agusta Westland S.p.A)(Agusta) Helicopters [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0478; Directorate Identifier 2012-SW-092-AD; Amendment 39-17736; AD 2014-02-08] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 10, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5198. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0538; Directorate Identifier 2012-NM-212-AD; Amendment 39-17728; AD 2014-01-05] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 10, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5199. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Eurocopter France (Eurocopter) Helicopters [Docket No.: FAA-2014-0039; Directorate Identifier 2013-SW-058-AD; Amendment 39-17737; AD 2014-02-09] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 10, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5200. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Costruzioni Aeronautiche Tecnam srl Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0888; Directorate Identifier 2013-CE-024-AD; Amendment 39-17735; AD 2014-02-07] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 10, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5201. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Bombardier, Inc. Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2012-0997; Directorate Identifier 2012-NM-060-AD; Amendment 39-17729; AD 2014-02-01] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 10, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5202. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; BAE SYSTEMS (Operations) LIMITED Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0793; Directorate Identifier 2012-NM-138-AD; Amendment 39-17727; AD 2014-01-04] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 10, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5203. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Application of Section 871(m) to Specified Equity-Linked Instruments [Notice 2014-14] received March 10, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

5204. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Correction to Revenue Procedure 2014-4 (Revenue Procedure 2014-19) received March 19, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

5205. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Information Reporting of Minimum Essential Coverage [TD 9660] (RIN: 1545-BL31) received March 10, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

5206. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Information Reporting by Applicable Large Employers on Health Insurance Coverage Offered Under Employer-Sponsored Plans [TD 9661] (RIN: 1545-BL26) received March 10, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

5207. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Withholding of Tax on Certain U.S. Source Income Paid to Foreign Persons, Information Reporting and Backup Withholding on Payments Made to Certain U.S. Persons, and Portfolio Interest Treatment [TD 9658] (RIN: 1545-BL18) received March 10, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

5208. A letter from the Director of Legislative Affairs, Office of the Director of National Security, transmitting follow up reports to the Intelligence Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2013; to the Committee on Intelligence (Permanent Select).

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. WOODALL: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 539. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1874) to amend the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 to provide for macroeconomic analysis of the impact of legislation, providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1871) to amend the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 to reform the budget baseline, and providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1872) to amend the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 to increase transparency in Federal budgeting, and for other purposes (Rept. 113–400). Referred to the House Calendar.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. PITTENGER (for himself and Mr. HECK of Washington):

H.R. 4383. A bill to amend the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010 to establish a Small Business Advisory Board, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Ms. ESHOO (for herself, Ms. LOFGREN, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. VARGAS, and Mr. PETERS of California):

H.R. 4384. A bill to provide for the establishment of a fund to provide for an expanded and sustained national investment in biomedical research; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committees on the Budget, Armed Services, and Veterans' Affairs, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. BURGESS (for himself and Mrs. CAPPS):

H.R. 4385. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for the designation of maternity care health professional shortage areas; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. ELLISON (for himself, Mr. PAULSEN, Mr. DUFFY, Mr. HINOJOSA, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Mr. PITTENGER, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. SMITH of Washington, and Mr. KING of New York):

H.R. 4386. A bill to allow the Secretary of the Treasury to rely on State examinations for certain financial institutions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. GARRETT:

H.R. 4387. A bill to amend the Financial Stability Act of 2010 to require the Financial Stability Oversight Council to hold open meetings and comply with the requirements of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, to provide additional improvements to the Council, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. GOSAR (for himself, Mr. DAINES, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. COLE, Mr. MULLIN, Mr. TIPTON, Mr. CARNEY, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. SALMON, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. HONDA, Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA, and Mrs. KIRKPATRICK):

H.R. 4388. A bill to establish the American Indian Trust Review Commission, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. BURGESS:

H.R. 4389. A bill to prohibit the Secretary of Homeland Security from granting a work authorization to an alien found to have been unlawfully present in the United States; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CÁRDENAS (for himself, Ms. BASS, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. NORTON, and Mr. RANGEL):

H.R. 4390. A bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to protect the enrollment of incarcerated youth for medical assistance under the Medicaid program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. CUMMINGS:

H.R. 4391. A bill to establish the Proprietary Education Oversight Coordination Committee; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. FINCHER:

H.R. 4392. A bill to align exemptions for general solicitation of investment in commodity pools similar to the exemption provided for general solicitation of securities under the Jumpstart Our Business Startups Act; to the Committee on Agriculture.

By Mr. FORTENBERRY:

H.R. 4393. A bill to prohibit any Federal agency or official, in carrying out any Act or program to reduce the effects of greenhouse gas emissions on climate change, from imposing a fee or tax on gaseous emissions emitted directly by livestock; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. GRAYSON:

H.R. 4394. A bill to prohibit the awarding of contracts to contractors responsible for delayed openings of Veterans Affairs facilities; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Ms. KELLY of Illinois:

H.R. 4395. A bill to amend part B of title III of the Public Health Service Act to improve essential oral health care for lower-income individuals by breaking down barriers to care; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. LUETKEMEYER (for himself, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. MCCAUL,

Mr. BROUN of Georgia, Mr. BENTIVOLIO, and Mr. LONG):

H.R. 4396. A bill to prohibit the Secretary of Health and Human Services from implementing certain rules relating to the health insurance coverage of sterilization and contraceptives approved by the Food and Drug Administration; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. O'ROURKE:

H.R. 4397. A bill to amend the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 to require all political committees to notify the Federal Election Commission within 48 hours of receiving cumulative contributions of $1,000 or more from any contributor during a calendar year, and for other purposes; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Mr. BECERRA:

H. Res. 537. A resolution electing Members to certain standing committees of the House of Representatives; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. CARTWRIGHT (for himself, Mr. ROGERS of Michigan, Mr. COHEN, Ms. NORTON, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. ADERHOLT, and Mr. MCGOVERN):

H. Res. 538. A resolution expressing support for designation of May as ''National Bladder Cancer Awareness Month''; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas (for herself, Mr. JOYCE, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, and Mr. COFFMAN):

H. Res. 540. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of National Nurses Week on May 6, 2014, through May 12, 2014; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. REED (for himself and Ms. MOORE):

H. Res. 541. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. YOHO (for himself, Mr. POE of Texas, Mr. PERRY, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. WESTMORELAND, Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, and Mr. FRANKS of Arizona):

H. Res. 542. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that United States foreign aid to the Palestinian Authority should be suspended until Palestinian Authority Government Resolutions relating to providing a monthly salary to anyone imprisoned in Israel's prisons as a result of participation in the struggle against the Israeli occupation are repealed; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. PITTENGER:

H.R. 4383.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution

By Ms. ESHOO:

H.R. 4384.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The U.S. Constitution, Article I, Section 8, the General Welfare Clause and the Necessary and Proper clause, Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18.

By Mr. BURGESS:

H.R. 4385.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article One, Section Eight, Clause Three

''To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.''

By Mr. ELLISON:

H.R. 4386.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to Article I, Section 8, Clauses 1 and 3.

By Mr. GARRETT:

H.R. 4387.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 (The Congress shall have Power ''To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States and with the Indian Tribes'') and Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 (The Congress shall have Power ''To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof'').

By Mr. GOSAR:

H.R. 4388.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This legislation is constitutionally appropriate pursuant to Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 (the Commerce Clause) which grants Congress the power to regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among several states and with the Indian Tribes; Article II, Section 2, Clause 2 (the Treaty Clause) which gives the President the Power to make Treaties; Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2 (the Property Clause) which gives Congress the Power to make all Rules and Regulations respecting the Territory or other Property belonging to the United States.

The Supreme Court, in Worcester v. Georgia (1832), reasoned that Indian Nations have always been considered as distinct, independent political communities, as the undisputed possessors of the soil, from time immemorial. Thus, conducting a review of by Congress of the United States' trust relationship with American Indian tribes is constitutionally permissible.

By Mr. BURGESS:

H.R. 4389.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 4 of the Constitution of the United States: To establish an uniform Rule of Naturalization.

By Mr. CÁRDENAS:

H.R. 4390.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 1.

All legislative powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives.

By Mr. CUMMINGS:

H.R. 4391.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3

By Mr. FINCHER:

H.R. 4392.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I Section 8

By Mr. FORTENBERRY:

H.R. 4393.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. GRAYSON:

H.R. 4394.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Clause 8 of the Constitution of the United States.

By Ms. KELLY of Illinois:

H.R. 4395.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8, clauses 3

By Mr. LUETKEMEYER:

H.R. 4396.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Pursuant to clause 7 of Rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, I submit the following statement regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill cited as the ''Religious Liberty Protection Act of 2014.''

The Constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the power of Congress to ensure that Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof as enumerated in the First Amendment.

By Mr. O'ROURKE:

H.R. 4397.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution under the General Welfare Clause.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 10: Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. HUNTER, Mr. MESSER, Mr. PETERS of California, Mr. POLIS, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, and Mr. ROKITA.

H.R. 50: Mr. TIERNEY.

H.R. 494: Mr. BARBER.

H.R. 498: Mr. JOYCE.

H.R. 508: Mr. PERLMUTTER.

H.R. 515: Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, and Mr. DELANEY.

H.R. 526: Mrs. CHRISTENSEN.

H.R. 543: Mr. WESTMORELAND.

H.R. 677: Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois.

H.R. 708: Ms. NORTON.

H.R. 792: Mr. SOUTHERLAND.

H.R. 809: Mrs. CAPITO.

H.R. 1008: Mr. CARTER and Ms. DELBENE.

H.R. 1037: Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi.

H.R. 1074: Mr. RIBBLE.

H.R. 1281: Mr. BURGESS and Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS.

H.R. 1313: Ms. DUCKWORTH.

H.R. 1338: Mr. GRAYSON and Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California.

H.R. 1502: Mr. JOYCE.

H.R. 1507: Mr. GERLACH.

H.R. 1553: Mr. POE of Texas, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. HARPER, Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN, and Mr. MILLER of Florida.

H.R. 1563: Mr. CRENSHAW, Mr. COFFMAN, Mr. CRAWFORD, Mr. MAFFEI, and Mr. WESTMORELAND.

H.R. 1699: Mr. RYAN of Ohio.

H.R. 1725: Mr. SCHIFF.

H.R. 1750: Mr. RICE of South Carolina, Mr. STUTZMAN, and Mr. HUDSON.

H.R. 1776: Mr. MCCLINTOCK.

H.R. 1812: Mr. POE of Texas and Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California.

H.R. 1852: Mr. MARCHANT, Mr. GARDNER, and Mr. OLSON.

H.R. 2053: Mr. COBLE.

H.R. 2084: Mr. DIAZ-BALART.

H.R. 2101: Mr. TIERNEY.

H.R. 2224: Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 2247: Mr. BARR.

H.R. 2364: Mr. TIERNEY and Mr. PETERS of California.

H.R. 2366: Mr. LATTA, Mrs. HARTZLER, Mr. LONG, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Mr. GRAVES

of Missouri, Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. WALDEN, Mr. GIBSON, Mr. NEUGEBAUER, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. STUTZMAN, Mrs. BLACK, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. MCINTYRE, and Mr. LUCAS.

H.R. 2429: Mr. MCALLISTER, Mr. WOODALL, and Mr. GARRETT.

H.R. 2648: Mr. MEEKS and Ms. EDWARDS.

H.R. 2690: Mr. CLEAVER.

H.R. 2706: Mr. MCGOVERN.

H.R. 2807: Mr. GINGREY of Georgia.

H.R. 2825: Ms. SPEIER.

H.R. 2841: Mrs. NEGRETE MCLEOD, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, and Mr. COBLE.

H.R. 2847: Mr. TIERNEY.

H.R. 2870: Ms. BASS, Mr. LEWIS, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. VARGAS, and Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California.

H.R. 2902: Ms. LOFGREN.

H.R. 2939: Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. MATHESON, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. TONKO, Mr. MCALLISTER, Mrs. BEATTY, Mrs. CAPPS, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. HUFFMAN, Ms. NORTON, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. RICHMOND, Mr. RUSH, Ms. SINEMA, Mrs. WALORSKI, and Mr. CAPUANO.

H.R. 3155: Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. WESTMORELAND, Mr. LATHAM, and Mr. OLSON.

H.R. 3282: Ms. NORTON.

H.R. 3335: Mr. BARR.

H.R. 3344: Mr. SCHIFF.

H.R. 3352: Mr. RUSH.

H.R. 3377: Mr. BARTON and Mr. LUETKEMEYER.

H.R. 3382: Mr. SANFORD, Mr. STEWART, Mrs. LUMMIS, and Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan.

H.R. 3400: Mr. KLINE and Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York.

H.R. 3408: Mr. HONDA.

H.R. 3451: Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. DEUTCH, Ms. DELAURO, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. VELA, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. GRAYSON, Mr. VARGAS, Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. WALZ, Ms. KUSTER, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. SERRANO, and Mr. KILDEE.

H.R. 3481: Mr. BOUSTANY, Mr. NUGENT, and Mrs. NAPOLITANO.

H.R. 3508: Ms. MCCOLLUM.

H.R. 3530: Mr. VARGAS.

H.R. 3544: Mr. ROYCE.

H.R. 3576: Mr. PEARCE and Mr. ROONEY.

H.R. 3583: Mr. CICILLINE and Mr. KEATING.

H.R. 3593: Mr. ROE of Tennessee.

H.R. 3601: Mr. MCALLISTER and Mr. PALAZZO.

H.R. 3624: Ms. LOFGREN.

H.R. 3658: Mr. GUTHRIE, Mr. REICHERT, Mr. BOUSTANY, Mr. BARBER, Mrs. CAPPS, Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Mr. WAXMAN, Mr. GRAYSON, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. CROWLEY, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Ms. FUDGE, Mr. POCAN, Ms. MOORE, Mr. NADLER, Mr. MEADOWS, Mr. ROKITA, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. YODER, and Mr. JOYCE.

H.R. 3662: Mr. BLUMENAUER.

H.R. 3698: Mr. STIVERS and Mr. WESTMORELAND.

H.R. 3707: Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas.

H.R. 3708: Mr. BARR.

H.R. 3740: Mr. MCDERMOTT.

H.R. 3836: Mr. MCINTYRE, Mr. PASTOR of Arizona, Mr. TIBERI, and Ms. BROWNLEY of California.

H.R. 3847: Mr. MURPHY of Florida.

H.R. 3929: Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. RANGEL, and Mrs. BEATTY.

H.R. 3978: Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. PETERS of California, and Mr. HONDA.

H.R. 3991: Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana, Mr. WALZ, and Mr. BARR.

H.R. 4031: Ms. FOXX, Mr. MARCHANT, Mrs. NOEM, Mr. DIAZ-BALART, Mr. PEARCE, and Mr. ROONEY.

H.R. 4035: Mr. WESTMORELAND and Ms. LOFGREN.

H.R. 4042: Mr. CRAWFORD and Mr. HUELSKAMP.

H.R. 4060: Mr. MULVANEY and Mr. POE of Texas.

H.R. 4069: Mrs. CAPITO.

H.R. 4079: Ms. SEWELL of Alabama and Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 4080: Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. MCKINLEY, and Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 4108: Mr. CONYERS, Ms. NORTON, and Mr. RUSH.

H.R. 4112: Mr. RANGEL and Mr. PAYNE.

H.R. 4119: Mr. ELLISON and Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois.

H.R. 4122: Mr. DEFAZIO.

H.R. 4124: Mr. RANGEL.

H.R. 4158: Mr. BURGESS, Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas, and Mr. JOYCE.

H.R. 4168: Mrs. CHRISTENSEN.

H.R. 4188: Mr. KILMER.

H.R. 4225: Mr. MULLIN, Ms. JENKINS, Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS, Ms. MOORE, Mr. MCCAUL, Mr. HUDSON, and Mr. NUGENT.

H.R. 4226: Mr. POE of Texas.

H.R. 4234: Mr. GINGREY of Georgia, Mrs. WALORSKI, Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana, and Mr. YOUNG of Alaska.

H.R. 4285: Mr. CÁRDENAS.

H.R. 4299: Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS.

H.R. 4303: Mr. VARGAS.

H.R. 4304: Mr. WESTMORELAND.

H.R. 4318: Mr. FRANKS of Arizona and Mr. STOCKMAN.

H.R. 4336: Mr. PETERSON.

H.R. 4342: Mr. LOBIONDO.

H.R. 4347: Mr. MCGOVERN.

H.R. 4352: Mr. NUGENT.

H.R. 4357: Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mrs. WALORSKI, Mr. DESANTIS, Mr. POSEY, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mrs. LUMMIS, Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. PITTENGER, Mr. FLEMING, Mr. HARRIS, Mr. YOHO, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan, Mr. PEARCE, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. SALMON, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. WESTMORELAND, and Mr. KLINE.

H.R. 4370: Mr. HUELSKAMP.

H. Res. 231: Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. STIVERS, Mr. CAMPBELL, and Mr. BARLETTA.

H. Res. 412: Mr. HONDA.

H. Res. 494: Mr. GARDNER and Mr. MCDERMOTT.

H. Res. 509: Mr. JOYCE, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. DIAZ-BALART, Mr. BRIDENSTINE, Mr. PERRY, Mr. PITTS, Mr. LATTA, and Mr. CÁRDENAS.

H. Res. 527: Mr. RUSH.

H. Res. 529: Mr. SERRANO.

H. Res. 532: Mr. CONYERS, Ms. LOFGREN, and Mr. POLIS.

DELETIONS OF SPONSORS FROM PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were deleted from public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 217: Mr. REED.

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Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 113th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 160 WASHINGTON, THURSDAY, APRIL 3, 2014 No. 54

Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable JOHN E. WALSH, a Senator from the State of Montana.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal God, descend on our hearts. Thank You that Your mercy is from everlasting to everlasting upon those who come to You with reverence.

Today, incline the hearts of our Senators to Your wisdom, empowering them to keep Your precepts and to accomplish Your purposes. Keep them mindful of life's brevity and their accountability to You. Lord, protect them from life's dangers as You guide them through the darkness to a safe haven.

Please be near to the families of the victims of the Fort Hood shooting.

We pray in Your merciful Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

The assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, April 3, 2014.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable JOHN E. WALSH, a Senator from the State of Montana, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. WALSH thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

BRINGING BACK MEMORIES

Mr. REID. Mr. President, every time I see the Presiding Officer introducing the prayer and directing the attention of the Senate to follow the Presiding Officer in reciting the pledge of allegiance, it brings back to me a lot of memories.

When I first came to the Senate, we had several of Members of Congress who had been to war. Now that is not the case. We all look at JOHN MCCAIN with such idealism of what he did in the Vietnam war. There are others but there aren't many, and to have now the Presiding Officer having not only been to war but being a general and having led hundreds of people from Montana to war, I am sure when that Pledge of Allegiance is said by the Presiding Officer, your feelings are a little different from anyone else's because during those bitter battles in Iraq, members of your unit were killed and injured.

So even though we don't say much publicly about the new addition to the Senate, I want the record to reflect that the people of Montana are so fortunate to have this patriot here in the Senate.

We will miss Max Baucus tremendously. He was my friend. But I am really impressed with the Presiding Officer and—I repeat—his having been not only a warrior but a general who led a lot of warriors in war.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following my remarks and those of the Republican leader, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 3979, which is the legislative vehicle for the unemployment insurance extension bill.

We are working on an agreement on the unemployment insurance bill as well as some executive nominations. Senators will be notified when we are able to arrange those votes.

FORT HOOD

Mr. REID. Talking about the military, as I just did, we have to reflect on what took place at Fort Hood yesterday—another tragedy. We have just a general understanding about the motives. But our hearts are all broken as a result of another tragedy at this great military training facility. It was just a few years ago that there were mass murders on that military base.

Our Nation mourns every casualty that befalls our brave servicemembers. These seem so unnecessary and such a sad event. Fort Hood has seen more than its fair share of tragedy in the last few years. We know this community of warriors and their families are grieving and questioning this latest act of senseless violence.

As the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, GEN Martin Dempsey, put it, ''This is a community that has faced and overcome crises with resilience and strength.'' That is true.

We stand with the people of Fort Hood today. We stand with all of our military wherever they are situated in the world, admiring their strength and resilience.

AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

Mr. REID. Mr. President, no one can dispute that Winston Churchill was a statesman and the most famous in the history of our world. This is what he said:

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

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Of this I am quite sure, that if we open a quarrel between the past and the present, we shall find that we have lost the future.

Why do I say that? Even though those remarks were made more than 70 years ago, I believe there are many in Congress who should focus on what Winston Churchill said because it is true. For far too long Republicans have obsessed over the Affordable Care Act—ObamaCare. The Affordable Care Act is the law of the land. It has been for more than 4 years.

From the very day this law was signed, Republicans have zealously worked to undermine it in so many different ways. Day in and day out they have clamored for repeal of this bill. House Republicans have voted more than 50 times trying desperately to cripple ObamaCare. They shut down the government trying to defund health care reform. And how has that worked? While they have obsessed over the past, the country has moved forward.

Now Republicans have to face the fact that millions of their own constituents, millions of Republicans are benefiting from health care reform in record numbers. But my Republican friends still insist on nothing short of repeal. So I ask my Republican colleagues, what would they like to repeal? What would repeal look like?

Because of the Affordable Care Act, millions of Americans can no longer be denied health insurance because of preexisting conditions. What are some of the preexisting conditions that caused so much trouble in the past? Diabetes. How about this one: You are a woman. Many insurance companies considered women having a preexisting disability because they were women. Millions of young adults are now able to stay on their parents' policies until age 26. That is more than 3 million. Millions of seniors are saving huge amounts of money on prescription drugs because we are in the process of filling the doughnut hole. This year alone millions of Americans will receive maternity coverage. Repealing the Affordable Care Act would be repealing many of these and many more. I could spend a long time talking about what would be repealed.

My counterpart, the Senator from Kentucky, will probably address the Senate after I finish. In his home State of Kentucky, 360,000 people have signed up for coverage under the Affordable Care Act. Kentucky is not New York; it is not Texas; it is not California. It is a sparsely populated State, somewhat like Nevada. Yet 360,000 people have signed up for coverage. Of those, 75 percent were previously uninsured. That is approaching 300,000 people. Over a quarter million Kentuckians who did not have insurance now have health coverage under the Affordable Care Act. In other words, ObamaCare has reduced the uninsured population of Kentucky by 40 percent.

I wonder when my friend from Kentucky will explain to the 270,000 Kentuckians how he plans to repeal the law without stripping the new health benefits. How exactly will he and his Republican colleagues guarantee that their newly insured constituents have no lapses in coverage? Remember, they want to do away with 270,000 people who didn't have insurance. They want to do away with 360,000 people in Kentucky who are signed up for insurance. So I await their answer.

In the meantime, Democrats will keep looking to the future, and the future of the Affordable Care Act is bright. Every day more and more Americans are getting health coverage under the law. On Monday we learned that 7,045,000 people had already signed up and about 1 million people on the State exchanges—370,000 in Kentucky, for example. We know there are more than 3 million young people on their parents' insurance because of that. We know there are millions of people who are now covered because of their ability to become part of Medicaid. So we are talking about a lot of people.

Health reform is working, and the law is here to stay. The more Americans see the law is working, the more they want it to stay. The time of fighting over the past is over. Remember what Winston Churchill said:

Of this I am quite sure, that if we open a quarrel between the past and the present, we shall find that we have lost the future.

I say this very seriously: I invite my Republican friends to look to the future. Put this obstruction behind them. Work with us to make the Affordable Care Act even better for their constituents and our constituents and Americans generally. Together, we can help millions more Americans get the health coverage they deserve.

RECOGNITION OF THE REPUBLICAN LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

FORT HOOD

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I wish to start this morning with a word about yesterday's tragic shooting at Fort Hood.

As the investigation continues, we will learn more facts, but what we already know is that Fort Hood has faced a great deal of adversity and challenges over the past few years and that the community there has rallied around our uniformed personnel. We also know that the on-base military police appear to have responded quickly, appropriately, and obviously at great personal risk to themselves. So, as always in a tragedy such as this, we admire the courage and commitment of those who rushed to help the victims. And of course we are all thinking and praying today for the victims, their families, and their fellow soldiers and civilians at Fort Hood.

JOB CREATION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, all week Republicans have been coming to the floor to talk about our proposals to ignite job creation and get the economy back on track. We have been talking about ideas that can help middle-class Americans who have been struggling just to make it in the Obama economy. But our Democratic colleagues don't seem to care all that much. They seem too preoccupied with an election still 7 months away. Instead of working with us on ideas for job creation, they have been talking about pretty much anything else.

Time and again yesterday Republicans asked our Democratic colleagues for consideration of our amendments by the Senate. And time and time again those efforts were rebuffed.

Republicans have a lot of good ideas. All we are asking is for those ideas to get fair consideration. Let's get our amendments pending, have a debate, and actually take a vote.

Some Senate Democrats seem to see things entirely differently. They don't even want the elected representatives of the people to have a say—a say on what Americans say is the most important issue facing our country. This is especially galling because our friends across the aisle always seem to find time for poll-tested show votes aimed at firing up the left. They may not be overly concerned about passing jobs legislation for the American people, but we can bet they will be forcing everyone to endure plenty of political show votes as we get closer to November. The so-called agenda that rolled out last week basically guarantees it. They have already admitted they don't intend to pass the things it contains. That is not the point, they say. The true end is to help Democrats retain their Senate majority. They have essentially already admitted that, which is somewhat dishonorable. No wonder Americans are so disillusioned with Washington.

Look, the American people want us to focus on their concerns, not political show votes talked about by a few political strategists over at the Democrats' campaign committee. As I indicated, jobs are right up there at the top of that list. We will see today whether Senate Democrats are actually serious about giving our constituents what they want. It appears our colleagues might allow consideration of one amendment—just one. We are not even sure about that yet.

At least the amendment we would be considering is a good one, and I appreciate the work of Senator THUNE and others in putting that together. This would reduce the tax burden on small businesses. It would provide relief to the Kentucky coal communities that have been under continual assault by this administration. It would approve the Keystone Pipeline, which would create thousands of jobs right away. It would repeal the medical device tax, which even many Democrats acknowledge is killing jobs. It would eliminate

ObamaCare's 30-hour workweek rule which is cutting paychecks to the middle class. In other words, this is an amendment that seeks to take the causes of joblessness head on rather than simply treating the symptoms of a down economy. It is an amendment that aims to help Americans find jobs with a steady paycheck and the promise of a better life.

There are other amendments not contained within this package the Senate should be voting on too. For instance, the national right-to-work amendment Senator PAUL and I have just introduced—transformational legislation that would empower American workers and put our country on a path to greater prosperity.

But the larger point is this: The Senate needs to be allowed to function again. While Members file amendments on behalf of their constituents, those amendments should get due consideration. That is particularly true when those amendments have bipartisan support and aim to address our still-ailing economy and the families struggling in it. My hope is our Democratic colleagues will allow this to happen.

These are serious times and we cannot afford to waste months on purely partisan proposals that have no hope of passing. We need to work together to advance serious proposals that expand jobs and opportunity.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

SERGEANT FIRST CLASS MATTHEW S. SLUSS-TILLER

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I want to pay tribute to a Kentucky Special Operations Forces soldier who was lost in service to his country, the life of SFC Matthew S. Sluss-Tiller of Catlettsburg, KY, which prematurely ended on February 3, 2010, in Pakistan, where he was serving in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. He was killed when the enemy attacked his unit with an improvised explosive device. He was 35 years old.

For his service in uniform, Sergeant First Class Sluss-Tiller received many awards, medals, and decorations, including the Bronze Star, the Purple Heart, two Meritorious Service Medals, five Army Commendation Medals, the Joint Service Achievement Medal, five Army Achievement Medals, five Army Good Conduct Medals, the National Defense Service Medal with Bronze Service Star, the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, the Kosovo Campaign Medal with Bronze Star, two Afghanistan Campaign Medals with Bronze Service Stars, the Iraq Campaign Medal with Bronze Service Star, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, the Humanitarian Service Medal, three noncommissioned officers professional development ribbons, the Army service ribbon, two overseas service ribbons, the NATO Medal, the combat action badge, and the senior parachutist badge; obviously a much decorated soldier.

Pictured behind me is Sergeant First Class Sluss-Tiller with his daughter Hannah, who was only 3 years old when he died. Matthew's wife Melissa proudly sent this picture to my office so it can be honored on the Senate floor. It was taken the summer before Matthew was killed, and it was his last picture with his daughter.

Melissa remembers the bond between Matthew and Hannah fondly. ''He used to sing to me and Hannah,'' she says.

> He would dance with her standing on his feet, singing loudly. Thinking of it makes me smile. He loved being a husband and a father, and he was great at both.

Born and raised in eastern Kentucky, Matthew graduated from Lawrence County High School in 1993. Brenda Thornbury, his former art teacher, remained friends with Matthew after he graduated and recalls he knew from a young age what he wanted to do. ''Matthew was a wonderful person,'' she says.

> He was always eager to do whatever he needed to do to serve his country . . . he knew he would serve his country. He loved the Lord, and he loved his family.

Matthew's father Edward Tiller agrees. ''From the time I bought him his first GI Joe, he wanted to be an Army man,'' he said.

In short, it seems clear that for Matthew, the Army was not just a job, it was a way of life. He was dedicated to justice and service in the name of our country.

In 1991, Matthew enlisted in the U.S. Army Reserves as a heavy construction mechanic and served at the 261st Ordnance Company located at Cross Lanes, WV. In 1993, he left the family farm and enlisted in the Active-Duty Army as a signal specialist. He served at Fort Bragg, NC, as well as in Germany and in Kuwait.

SFC Jamie Mullinax, a friend of Matthew's who trained with him at Fort Bragg, knew well the look of happiness we can see in Matthew's face behind me. He says:

> If you knew Matt, you knew that smile. He always strived to do the best at what he did. I know he believed in what he was doing and loved wearing the military uniform and believed in what it stood for.

As the list of awards, medals, and decorations I read earlier makes clear, Matthew excelled at being a soldier. In his many years of training, he successfully completed the U.S. Army Airborne course, the Jumpmaster course, the Master Jumpmaster course, the Air Movement Operations course, the Military Transition Team course, the Civil Affairs Qualification course, and the Advanced and Basic Noncommissioned Officer's courses.

Prior to his time of deployment, Matthew deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Joint Guardian in Kosovo. In his final deployment Matthew was assigned to the 96th Civil Affairs Battalion, 95th Civil Affairs Brigade, based out of Fort Bragg.

In his free time Matthew loved golf, hunting, hiking, camping, and riding motorcycles, and he was a passionate fan of UK basketball.

The many people who came to pay their respects at Matthew's funeral in eastern Kentucky witnessed the recognition of Matthew's sacrifice when they saw a three-star general come to their small town to lead the honor guard.

LTG John Mulholland delivered these remarks at the service:

> Matthew was part of America's Army Special Operations Forces and as such was one of the finest soldiers in the world.

He went on:

> That's no exaggeration, that he was embarked on a very important if not critical mission that is directly tied to the security of this country.

Of course, as impressive as his service record was, I think the picture behind me makes clear that the most important job to Matthew was husband and father. I know his family misses him terribly.

Melissa says the following about her husband:

> I believe that our souls are beacons glowing immensely with light so powerful and beautiful that only in heaven can we become a true vision of ourselves. I know my Matthew is standing tall in heaven, his light so stunning a reflection of who he was. God needed him, and I cannot question that.

We are thinking of Matthew's loved ones today, including his wife Melissa, his daughter Hannah, his parents Edward Tiller and Jane Blankenship, his stepparents Von Tiller and Forest Blankenship, his siblings Selena Dawn Pack Blankenship, Michael Blankenship, and Annette Sorg, and many other beloved family members and friends.

Our country has lost a faithful and devoted hero with the passing of SFC Matthew S. Sluss-Tiller. I know my colleagues join me in expressing great condolences to his family for their loss, and great gratitude to them for lending our country such an honorable and noble patriot.

I hope Hannah and all of Matthew's loved ones know that America will always—always—be grateful for his sacrifice.

I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

PROTECTING VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS AND EMERGENCY RESPONDERS ACT OF 2014

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 3979, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

> A bill (H.R. 3979) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

Pending:

Reid (for Reed) amendment No. 2874, of a perfecting nature.

Reid amendment No. 2875 (to amendment No. 2874), to change the enactment date.

Reid amendment No. 2877 (to the language proposed to be stricken by amendment No. 2874), to change the enactment date.

Reid amendment No. 2878 (to amendment No. 2877), of a perfecting nature.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BOOKER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BOOKER. Mr. President, I rise today to speak on behalf of the 2.3 million Americans, including the 140,000 New Jerseyans who have been without a job for months and desperately need our help. These Americans are Americans who are veterans who stood for us in the military and Armed Forces. These are families and individuals with children. These are our seniors. These are folks who have been working for decades and suddenly found themselves in the worst economy of my lifetime without a job.

I am very proud of this body. We are inching closer toward passing legislation to restore Federal unemployment insurance. What this money does is it takes families from crisis with these meager checks to give a little bit of stability so they can do what is necessary to look for work.

It helps them keep their car insurance so they can ride to interviews. It helps them keep the cable service going so they can apply online and actually file their résumés as they look for jobs. It helps them meet mortgage payments, so they can keep a roof over their heads or rental payments as well.

I want to thank the incredible bipartisan leadership of DEAN HELLER and JACK REED. Senator HELLER and Senator REED have been working hard together with a group of us relentlessly to bring us this far. I have been so grateful for the leadership of those two Senators and others because it made us so close in this body to getting unemployment insurance extended.

This is a bipartisan bill. It involves compromise. It is what the American people want us to do, Republicans and Democrats coming together for millions of Americans that are in crisis right now through no fault of their own, in an economy where there are three people looking for a job for every single job that is available.

I want to express my gratitude to the entire bipartisan group cosponsoring the bill. My colleagues, Senator REED, Senator HELLER, Senator MERKLEY, Senator SHERROD BROWN, Senator DURBIN, Senator SUSAN COLLINS, Senator ROB PORTMAN, Senator LISA MURKOWSKI, and Senator MARK KIRK, Republicans and Democrats alike who hammered out a compromise, have done the difficult work and are pushing to move this forward.

I also want to thank people from New Jersey who have shared their stories with me, who have been active and engaging from online posts, letters, and phone calls—all of them fighting to find work. I have heard from Republican New Jerseyans and Democratic New Jerseyans. I have heard from military veterans and single moms. I have heard from folks who are so hungry to work. But while they are looking, they are looking to this body, to all of Congress to help them meet the basic minimum needs so that they can continue to have some stability and not be swallowed up by the quicksand of economic crisis and to be able to continue to find a job.

They are living examples. Each and every one of those millions of Americans are examples of what is at stake if we do not act. I have heard painful stories of people facing real crises, from homelessness to skipping medications, doing everything they can to keep some semblance of stability so that they can find a job. Unfortunately, many are falling through the cracks. Many are facing the darkest of days.

As the Senate prepares to vote on this incredibly vitally important bill, I want to stress that this legislative body is only as effective as both Chambers and parties being able to come together, to really follow in that great American tradition that for the last 50 years, Democrats and Republicans during times of economic crisis, have come together and found a way to hammer out compromises to extend unemployment insurance under Reagan, under Bush, under Clinton, and under Carter. We found a way to get forward, both Chambers being there for Americans in the economic crisis.

Today is a significant step in our fight to restore hope to America's unemployed but only if this bill is also voted on and passed in the House of Representatives.

I have sat in living rooms, diners, and soup kitchens all across the State of New Jersey, and I can tell you the crisis is real. I am hopeful that if my colleagues in the House of Representatives listen to the voices—Republicans and Democrats, red and blue, North and South, all across this country—of their unemployed constituents, they will do what is right. They will shun that intellectually unreal idea that Americans are lazy, that they don't want to work. We have millions of Americans out there fighting for their hope of finding a job, and they need the help of the House of Representatives, as I believe they will get it from the Senate this week.

No matter our party, all of us have folks in our home States who are unemployed and suffering because we have thus far failed to do what every other Congress has done in the past when long-term unemployment rates have been so high, as they are today. We must extend Federal unemployment insurance. America needs our House of Representatives to listen to the pleas of those who are barely making ends meet.

I remember Joan and her daughter, a recent Rutgers University graduate. They live together and were both cut off from unemployment insurance the same week in December. The modest unemployment checks that Joan and her daughter were receiving had helped them to keep up with mortgage payments. While they waited for us to vote, their home was placed into foreclosure.

Then there is Lauren from Clifton, who wrote my office saying she had sent out close to 1,000 resumes without luck and had reached the point where she couldn't pay to keep the heat on in her house during this brutal winter and she feared her phone was going to have to be cut off next. She wrote:

> I've been looking for work tirelessly. What does someone in my situation do?

These folks have worked hard all of their lives. They have played by the rules but unfortunately happen to be in a bad economy not of their making, which they did not contribute to, and are caught in these difficult times. They are doing everything right and so should their representatives in Congress.

Today we are casting a vote for them. Today I am proud to say that in the Senate we are coming together, Democrats and Republicans, hammering out a compromise, meeting each other in the middle, and doing what is expected of us by Americans—reaching out, lending a hand, in a time of crisis. I implore my colleagues in the House of Representatives to do the same.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. THUNE. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BOOKER). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I rise to speak to my amendment No. 2959 to the unemployment insurance legislation that is before us. The amendment is called the Good Jobs, Good Wages, and Good Hours Act.

Twelve times Congress has voted to extend emergency unemployment benefits since 2008, and what do we have to show for those 12 extensions of these benefits. More than 10 million Americans remain unemployed. Of those, more than 3.8 million Americans have been unemployed for longer than 6 months. Millions more remain underemployed or have simply dropped out of the workforce altogether, too discouraged to even look for work in this stagnant economy.

Over that same period a Democrat-led Senate and the Obama White House have done little but grow the size of the government and shrink the size of the middle class.

In 2009, Congress passed a $1 trillion stimulus bill that poured taxpayer dollars into projects such as Solyndra and a battery manufacturer that is now owned by the Chinese. It failed to create the jobs and economic growth that was promised by the White House, but it succeeded in creating 5 straight years of record deficits.

In 2010 Congress enacted ObamaCare—essentially a government takeover of one-sixth of our economy with 2,700 pages of new laws and 25,000 pages of new regulations. It didn't fulfill the President's promise of lowering health care costs or letting families keep their doctors, but it has succeeded in canceling health plans and raising taxes.

In 2010 Congress enacted Dodd-Frank. It hasn't fixed too big to fail, but in one respect it has succeeded in creating jobs. It is estimated that more than 30,000 employees will be required to file the paperwork associated with the $18 billion in Dodd-Frank compliance costs for our financial sector.

Meanwhile, Congress has failed to put a check on the EPA, which continues pushing regulations that have record-setting price tags. These regulations aren't creating jobs, but they are fulfilling the President's promise to make energy prices skyrocket.

Five years into the Obama administration and the scorecard doesn't look very good, with $456 billion in new regulations, $1.7 trillion in new taxes, 10.4 million people unemployed, and economic growth far behind the pace of other post-World War II recoveries.

So here we are debating the 13th extension of emergency unemployment benefits in the past 5 years because we have 3.8 million people in this country, workers who have been out of work for more than 6 months. If enacted, these benefits would last until June. Then what? Are we going to have a 14th extension, perhaps a 15th extension? Without job creating policies, this 13th extension is just another bandaid that doesn't address the true causes of chronic joblessness that plague the Obama economy.

My Republican colleagues and I came to the floor yet again this week to debate and to vote on amendment ideas that will change the course the Obama administration has put the country on. We have offered dozens of amendments that will stimulate private-sector investment, create jobs, and make energy and health care more affordable. I have worked with many of my colleagues on a package of job-creating ideas that we would like to add to this 13th extension of emergency unemployment insurance benefits. My amendment, as I said, is called the Good Jobs, Good Wages, Good Hours Act, and it includes many of these ideas.

I would like to share a few of them with my colleagues in the Senate so people understand that when we come to the floor to talk about offering amendments and getting votes on amendments, we are serious. We have real substantive ideas that we believe will address the fundamental issue—the underlying cause of chronic high unemployment—by getting people back to work through job creation, through an expanding and growing economy.

My amendment includes a provision that has been pushed by Senator HOEVEN that would finally approve the Keystone XL Pipeline. After 5 years of delay, it is time to approve the pipeline and the 40,000 jobs it will support. Senator HOEVEN has been the leading advocate of that here in the Senate.

The amendment I am offering includes Leader MCCONNELL's legislation to stop EPA's war on affordable energy. Leader MCCONNELL's bill puts consumers ahead of liberal and environmental groups by stopping costly regulations that will make it even more difficult for the middle class to make ends meet.

My amendment includes a provision pushed by Senators BARRASSO and HOEVEN to approve more LNG exports to our NATO allies and to the Ukraine, something that is especially timely in light of what is going on in that part of the world. Now is the ideal time to create more domestic jobs while breaking our allies' dependence on Russian energy supplies.

My amendment also addresses the problems created by ObamaCare. It includes a provision pushed by Senator COLLINS that will restore the 40-hour workweek. It will finally repeal the job-destroying medical device tax, which Senators TOOMEY and HATCH have been tirelessly fighting, which has cost us, by some estimates, 30,000 jobs already in our economy because of this new job-killing tax.

My amendment ensures that veterans and the long-term unemployed are not punished by the costs of the ObamaCare employer mandate. It includes a provision Senator BLUNT has authored that raised this issue in the Senate on behalf of veterans, and in the House a similar bill passed by a vote of 406 to 1. Certainly we can find few Democrats who are willing to provide ObamaCare relief to veterans and the long-term unemployed.

My amendment also provides permanent targeted tax relief to millions of small businesses. Small businesses create 65 percent of all new jobs. Yet this administration has done little more than punish them with more regulations and higher taxes. This amendment makes permanent higher expensing levels, provides capital gains tax relief for investing in small businesses, and expands options to increase cashflow at Main Street businesses across the country. It allows small businesses to deduct more startup costs, and puts the selfemployed on an equal playing field when paying for health care costs.

This amendment also includes commonsense regulatory reform put forward by Senator PORTMAN that will ensure taxpayers know the true cost of new regulations. It requires agencies to conduct a cost-benefit analysis and provide advanced notice of any major new regulations.

Finally, this amendment includes the House-passed SKILLS Act, which Senator SCOTT has introduced as an amendment to the UI bill. Currently, we have 50 Federal worker training programs spread across nine Federal agencies. Many of them are duplicative and few of them have been evaluated for whether or not they are effective. This amendment would combine 35 of those programs into one Workforce Investment Fund that will empower governors to tailor programs to their States and benefit employers and employees alike.

My point simply is that Senate Republicans stand ready to offer more than just the status quo. We understand the long-term unemployed want more than just 20 more weeks of unemployment benefits. They want a job. We understand those who are struggling to adapt in a changing economy want more than a morass of broken worker training programs. They want relevant training that prepares them for the jobs that are in demand today. We understand that low-income families want more than government programs designed to help them just get by. They want more opportunity and a better future for their children. We understand that Main Street businesses across the country cannot afford endless regulations coming from Washington, DC. They want a chance to succeed and to fulfill their American dream.

I am hopeful that at least some of our colleagues on the other side of the aisle understand that basic principle too and will join us in including job-creating measures as part of this 13th extension of emergency unemployment benefits. We can do better for the American people. We should do better by the American people.

We have serious proposals, serious job-creating proposals that don't get a chance to see the light of day because the majority party in the Senate blocks amendments from being offered, blocks amendments from being debated, and blocks amendments from being voted on.

So what do we have. We have the status quo. That means that for the 13th time we have to extend unemployment insurance benefits to people who have been unemployed for way too long because we have failed to put policies in place that are actually good for job creation, that are actually the right types of incentives for our small businesses to hire, that take away the burdensome cost of taxes and regulations that make it more expensive and more difficult for our small businesses to hire, and because we fail to take into consideration the impact that so many of these things we do here in Washington have on hardworking people in this country who are trying to lift

their families into the middle class and to provide a better future for their children and grandchildren.

That is what every American wants. That is what every family in America aspires to. We ought to do something about it. Another meager government check that helps people get by isn't the way to a brighter and better future. The way to a brighter and better future is a good-paying job with an opportunity for advancement. That is what we ought to be focused on, and that is what the provisions I just mentioned, that are included in my amendment, would do.

My amendment incorporates many of the ideas Members on our side have advanced, all with an eye toward creating jobs and growing and expanding the economy in a way that will create those good-paying opportunities and give people a better chance at a better future. So I really hope we will get the chance to vote. We can't, evidently, get individual amendments that have been offered by individual Members voted on, so we have taken a number of ideas and incorporated them into this amendment, an alternative to what is being proposed by the Democrats, which simply treats the symptom of this problem but does nothing to address the underlying cause of the problem.

We want to focus on the problem; we want to focus on the cause; we want to focus on solutions; and we believe the Senate ought to be the place where we have an opportunity to vote on those very solutions. So I encourage my colleagues on both sides to open this process. Let us allow the American people to have their voices heard—not just the voices of a few but the voices of the many people in the Senate who have good ideas about how to create jobs, grow the economy, and build a better future for our children and grandchildren.

Mr. President, I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak to the Senate as if in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CREATING REAL VALUE

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, in Kansas there is a company called Koch Industries that is an important component of our State, its economy, and many, several thousand Kansans work there. Unfortunately, in the political discourse of our country, Koch Industries and its owners are often subject to attacks.

I happened to be reading the Wall Street Journal this morning, and I noticed a column, an opinion piece written by the chairman of the board of Koch Industries, Charles G. Koch, and I wish to share that with my colleagues today.

It seems to me the things that are outlined in Mr. Koch's opinion piece, while not everyone would agree, they are certainly within the wide mainstream of American thought and certainly reflect opinions that are worthy of debate and discussion in our country and on the Senate floor.

We all bring diversity, a different set of values, opinions, beliefs of political philosophy to the debate on the Senate floor, and I wanted to share one of Koch Industries owner's beliefs about those values and his philosophy and how it affects Americans today.

This is an opinion piece from today's Wall Street Journal written by a Kansan, Charles Koch. Mr. Koch says:

I have devoted most of my life to understanding the principles that enable people to improve their lives. It is those principles—the principles of a free society—that have shaped my life, my family, our company and America itself.

Unfortunately, the fundamental concepts of dignity, respect, equality before law and personal freedom are under attack by the nation's own government. That's why, if we want to restore a free society and create greater well-being and opportunity for all Americans, we have no choice but to fight for those principles. I have been doing so for more than 50 years, primarily through educational efforts. It was only in the past decade that I realized the need to also engage in the political process.

Again, Mr. Koch speaking:

More than 200 years ago, Thomas Jefferson warned that this could happen. ''The natural progress of things,'' Jefferson wrote, ''is for liberty to yield and government to gain ground.'' He knew that no government could possibly run citizens' lives for the better. The more government tries to control, the greater the disaster, as shown by the current health-care debacle. Collectivists (those who stand for government control of the means of production and how people live their lives) promise heaven but deliver hell. For them, the promised end justifies the means. A truly free society is based upon a vision of respect for people and what they value. In a truly free society, any business that disrespects its customers will fail, and deserves to do so. The same should be true of any government that disrespects its citizens. The central belief and fatal conceit of the current administration is that you are incapable of running your own life, but those in power are capable of running it for you. This is the essence of big government and collectivism.

Instead of encouraging free and open debate, collectivists strive to discredit and intimidate opponents. They engage in character assassination. . . . This is the approach that Albert Schopenhauer described in the 19th century, that Saul Alinsky famously advocated in the 20th, and that so many despots have infamously practiced. Such tactics are the antithesis of what is required for a free society—and a telltale sign that the collectivists do not have good answers.

Rather than try to understand my vision for a free society or accurately report the facts about Koch Industries, our critics would have you believe we're ''un-American'' and trying to ''rig the system,'' that we're against ''environmental protection'' or eager to ''end workplace safety standards.''

These falsehoods remind Mr. Koch of the late Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan's observation, ''Everyone is entitled to his own opinion, but not to his own facts.''

Here are some facts about my philosophy and our company: Koch companies employ 60,000 Americans; who make many thousands of products that Americans want and need. According to government figures, our employees and the 143,000 additional American jobs they support generate $11.7 billion in compensation and benefits. About one-third of our U.S.-based employees are union members.

Koch employees have earned well over 700 awards for environmental, health and safety excellence since 2009, many of them are from the Environmental Protection Agency and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration. EPA officials have commended us for our ''commitment to a cleaner environment'' and called us ''a model for other companies.''

Our refineries have consistently ranked among the best in the nation for low per-barrel emissions. In 2012, our Total Case Incident Rate—

That is a safety measure—

was 67% better than a Bureau of Labor Statistics average for peer industries. Even so, we have never rested on our laurels. We believe there is always room for innovation and improvement.

Far from trying to rig the system, I have spent decades opposing cronyism and all political favors, including mandates, subsidies, and protective tariffs—even when we benefit from them. I believe that cronyism is nothing more than welfare for the rich and powerful, and should be abolished. Koch Industries was the only major producer in the ethanol industry to argue for the demise of the ethanol tax credit in 2011. That government handout . . . needlessly drove up food and fuel prices as well as other costs for consumers—many of whom were poor or otherwise disadvantaged.

Mr. Koch says:

Now the mandate needs to go, so that consumers and the marketplace are the ones who decide the future of ethanol.

Instead of fostering a system that enables people to help themselves, America is now saddled with a system that destroys values, raises costs, hinders innovation and relegates millions of citizens to a life of poverty, dependency and hopelessness. This is what happens when elected officials believe that people's lives are better run by politicians and regulators than by the people themselves. Those in power fail to see that more government means less liberty, and liberty is the essence of what it means to be American. Love of liberty is an American ideal. If more businesses (and elected officials) were to embrace a vision of creating real value for people in a principled way, our nation would be far better off—not just today, but for generations to come. I'm dedicated to fighting for that vision. I'm convinced that most Americans believe it's worth fighting for, too.

That is the opinion piece from the Wall Street Journal this morning, written by a Kansan, Charles Koch.

I commend that opinion piece and its thoughts to my colleagues in the Senate.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. BALDWIN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam President, I come to the floor today to address the unemployment benefits legislation. This legislation is, frankly, an admission that after 5 years of spending more money for costly government stimulus—all of it borrowed—to try to increase employment in America, we still have an unemployment crisis.

Not long ago at the White House, Mr. Sperling said that there are three applicants for every job in America and wages are down. In effect, this legislation is an admission that taxing, spending, regulating, and borrowing has not worked. Indeed, those policies will never work. More regulation, more taxing, more borrowing, and more debt will not improve the economy. We know that. Despite what some so-called experts say, we know that is not a policy that will work, but urgent action is needed.

According to testimony we heard this week in the Budget Committee, if you adjust for the retirement of the baby boomers, the labor force is still short 4.5 million people, the equivalent of $500 billion in national income lost each year. But the majority has circled their wagons around this spend-and-borrow agenda.

For instance, our friends are blocking a Republican amendment requiring companies to hire legal workers, not unlawful workers. The E-Verify system should be required nationwide. It would simply check the Social Security number of applicants, which would identify many people who have no right to be employed in America because they are not here lawfully. In a time of high unemployment, we ought not to be filling our jobs with people who are not lawful and not lawfully able to work in America, while at the same time financially supporting people who are unemployed in the country. At the same time, congressional Democrats have pushed for a bill that would more than double the future H–1B guest worker visas that are frequently used for offshore jobs.

As ranking member of the Budget Committee, I have to inform my colleagues that this unemployment bill is not honestly paid for, and that it violates the Ryan-Murray budget agreement that was signed into law just over 3 months ago. We said we were not going to spend above a certain amount.

Actually, Ryan-Murray raised the amount the Budget Control Act had limited spending to when we were in a tight fix. I think this year in particular was probably the toughest year under the Budget Control Act, so relief was provided and it raised the spending limits for a fifth year and it helped. Just 3 months ago we reaffirmed those spending limits and said we were not going to go above them.

Yet just this past Monday, the Senate passed the so-called doc fix which exceeded the Ryan-Murray spending limits by $6.1 billion this year alone. We adopted a limit, and what do we do? We want to help our doctors, but instead of reducing spending somewhere else in this massive government, we come up with a gimmick argument to say we are paying for it and add, in effect, $6.1 billion to the expenditures this year. We objected to that, but people voted to waive the budget with an up-or-down vote. Do you want to stick by the agreement we reached 3 months ago or do you want to raise it and spend more? The majority in the Senate voted to spend more, and this is why we have such an extreme debt threat in America today.

The bill that is before us now is the unemployment insurance legislation, which exceeds the 2014 limit on spending by another $9.9 billion. Our Federal budget is $3.5 trillion—$3,500 billion—and we can't find some other reductions if we want to fund a new expenditure, such as unemployment compensation? We can't find someplace that we can tighten our belts and pay for it?

My colleagues say that while spending increases this year, the bill is paid for over the next decade. They promised that although we will spend more this year, a decade later—10 years—we are going to get around to paying for it. There are three major problems with this contention, and we just have to address them so there is no mistake about it. This is not legitimate, and it threatens the financial integrity of the country.

The Ryan-Murray budget deal established spending limits. You cannot get out of those spending limits by raising fees and taxes. Taxing more to spend more was not the deal. The deal in the Budget Control Act said that we are going to reduce the growth in spending. We were on track—over 10 years—to grow spending $10 trillion. Under the Budget Control Act, we were going to allow spending to increase, but it would only increase $8 trillion, not $10 trillion.

Now we are told that the Budget Control Act, which includes the sequester—we can't live with it. Growing and spending $8 trillion is not enough; we have to grow spending even more. Every time some worthy cause is brought before the Senate, we take the easy way out. We come up with a gimmick pay-for or we just violate the budget and spend the money anyway. What good is it to have a Ryan-Murray budget agreement or a Budget Control Act if nobody adheres to it?

Second, one of the big reasons our country is going broke is the philosophy of "spend today and promise to pay for it tomorrow." Here is what a new Bloomberg analysis—an independent group—concluded:

> Since December 2013 [three months ago] the Republican House and the Democratic Senate have approved more than $40 billion worth of spending "offsets" in the form of cuts that would take place in 2023 at the earliest or timing shifts in policy to bring savings into the 10-year window . . .

Both of these gimmicks are not legitimate, will not work, and have been criticized by independent groups that are concerned about the future of the Republic.

Third, the promised revenue offsets are phony savings. The offsets come from something called "pension smoothing"—wow, what is "pension smoothing"?—and "prepayment of premiums to the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation." These are two popular schemes—double counting and timing shifts—that allow companies to prepay their payments for up to 5 years. In good times companies can pay ahead to the PBGC trust fund and Congress can take the money out the backdoor and spend it on—in this case—unemployment. In bad times this will leave the taxpayer further on the hook if PBGC has to take over a failed pension plan. It is taking money out of the plan that was supposed to be set up to guarantee and insure pensions.

I realize some of this sounds complex, but that is the problem: the big spenders in Washington have turned bilking taxpayers into an art form. Some spend their whole time trying to come up with a gimmick to get around the actual requirement, which is for us to set priorities and to recognize we cannot fund everything we would like to fund.

If we have a new idea for a new program, the Budget Control Act says: OK, do it, but you have to do it within the spending limits. You have to find some spending reduction to justify a new spending increase. That is what we agreed to, and that is what the President of the United States signed into law. He also signed Ryan-Murray into law. Is he here advocating responsible action? No, he is here supporting the Democratic leadership to push these budget-busting provisions and is not properly paying for them. Frankly, that is a disappointment.

The President of the United States is the chief person who talks to the American people. He has yet to look them in the eye and tell them we are on an unsustainable course, and we are going to have to tighten our belts. Instead, every time he talks, he talks about a new spending. A new program that spends more, in essence, is borrowing more and increasing our debt even further.

In the few months since Ryan-Murray was passed, the Senate—driven by a Democratic majority—has passed five bills that busted through the Ryan-Murray limits. There have been five bills that busted the budget. We just agreed to it, and they just voted for it 3 months ago.

They say these are all important measures and we have to pass them, so we should disregard those prior promises we made to the American people. The whole point of a spending limit is to make Congress set priorities. If you feel you have legislation that needs to pass, it is your duty to find a way to pay for it within the limits of spending we agreed to.

This is not a radical concept. This is responsible governance. It is done in cities and States all over America. They are living within their means. They are tightening up their efficiencies in productivity. People holler and wail whenever they make those cuts, but those cities, counties, and States are still standing. They have not been sucked into the ocean. They are still operating. They are going to be leaner, more efficient, and more productive as the result of going through a tight budget time. As money rises, and hopefully the economy bounces back, they will be in a better position in the future to serve the taxpayers of their communities efficiently.

Here are the budget violations in the pending bill, and these budget violations were all confirmed. I am the ranking Republican of the Budget Committee, and the Democratic chairman, Senator MURRAY, is a fine and fair chairman of the committee. Her team has acknowledged these violations of the budget, and as a result, it is subject to a budget point of order. There is not a dispute about what I am saying today.

There is $9.9 billion in spending in excess of the top-line outlays for fiscal year 2014 set by the Ryan-Murray spending agreement. There is also another violation of the Budget Control Act because there is $9.9 billion of spending in excess of the Finance Committee's allocations.

The committees have certain allocations. The Finance Committee has a certain allocation, and now it is spending $9.9 billion more. How much is $9.9 billion? Well, in Alabama we have a lean State government, and I am proud of it. My State's budget is about $2 billion. This is $9.9 billion, and it is in violation of our agreement.

Also, there is a $10.7 billion increase in long-term deficits in the decade beyond the budget window that is subject to a budget point of order, and that is in violation of the budget.

Ordinarily, we would be able to raise a point of order to enforce all three of these violations. However, two of these points of order were wiped away by a loophole created in the language of the Ryan-Murray legislation. I warned them that it was in there, and I urged my colleagues not to adopt it, but it was adopted anyway. Two of the budget points of order I just mentioned are not subject to floor action and have been eliminated, basically, through the use of the deficit-neutral reserve fund. At the time of the Ryan-Murray deal's consideration, the Budget Committee staff—my staff—did the work and we warned that the 57 deficit-neutral reserve funds in the Ryan-Murray bill would be used to increase spending above the spending limits. We warned that would happen. The way that works is the majority can get around the budget rules that limit spending if they propose to offset new spending with new higher taxes.

So we are witnessing today exactly what I warned would happen: The minority has lost the procedural tool to block spending increases as long as they pay for it with more taxes.

What we agreed to under the Budget Control Act was that we couldn't spend above this limit, and if we raised taxes, it would be used to reduce the deficit. So now we have been able to switch that around so the raising of taxes is allowed to increase new spending.

These deficit reserve funds have been used by Senator REID and the majority to pass a proposed additional $13 billion in spending above the caps already. However, the unemployment bill still triggers a long-term deficit point of order because it uses revenue timing shifts to conceal long-term deficit impact. So it is still in violation of the budget, even though two of the points of order are gone.

We do need to look at the long-term deficit picture. It is good that we still at least have that point of order we can raise. We can't just spend today because it fits within the 10-year window and somehow looks OK, when we know in the outyears it is going to add to the deficit of the United States. So the budget drafters and the BCA people have language in to prohibit that, rightly so. The problem is we won't adhere to it.

Last year, we paid our creditors $221 billion in interest payments—$221 billion on our roughly $17 trillion debt. That is a huge amount of money. The Federal highway bill is $40 billion. Aid to education—a whole bunch of programs we have—$100 billion in total. The Defense budget is $500 billion. We paid our creditors last year $221 billion in interest alone on the debt. That is enough to pay for 172 weeks of unemployment benefits for everyone collecting at the end of last year. Over the course of the next 10 years, according to CBO, we will spend a cumulative $5.8 trillion in interest payments on our debt. Over the next 10 years, CBO—our accounting firm that tries to do the right thing every day and tells us what is going to happen with our budget—tells us we are going to spend over $5 trillion, almost $6 trillion, in interest in the next 10 years—money that could be used to help people, to rebuild our infrastructure, to fix crumbling roads and bridges. At today's levels, that $5.8 trillion could pay for a great amount of great things.

The CBO also told us that 10 years from today, the 1-year annual interest payment will not be $221 billion, it will be $880 billion—$880 billion, an increase of over $650 billion in interest payments each year—not one time, but that year alone we will pay $600 billion more in interest. So how can we fund programs? Isn't it going to crowd out spending we need?

Washington is squandering our national inheritance. We are a nation deeply in debt. I would say to my colleagues that every time you violate our budget limits—because I am not voting for it—every time you add more to the Nation's credit card, you are increasing the interest burden that is crushing America, and you reduce the amount of money that will be available to spend on whatever program you would like to spend it on as the years go by. Interest costs represent the fastest growing item in our budget. How much money will there be left over for your chosen government projects when our interest payment reaches almost $1 trillion a year? CBO says that by 2024, it will hit $880 billion. How many more years will it take, 2 or 3, to reach $1 trillion?

We must help the unemployed, no doubt about it. We need to help them get better jobs, more jobs, and better pay, and we have to do so without adding more to the debt. That is what is placing a wet blanket over the American economy.

We need to produce more American energy. We can do that.

We need to streamline our Tax Code to lower rates, close loopholes, and boost economic growth. We need to eliminate regulations that are reducing productive activities and sending jobs overseas.

We need to endorse a trade policy that defends the American worker from unfair trade practices. Too much of that is occurring. We don't need to lose a single job to unfair trade practices.

We need an immigration policy that serves the interests of the American worker. At a time of high unemployment, the very idea the Senate would pass a bill that would permanently double the number of guest workers who can enter the country boggles the mind. That, in addition to the fact they would legalize 11 million and increase the annual flow of immigrants into the country from 1 million a year—the most generous of any Nation in the world—to 1.5 million. In effect, under the bill that passed this Senate, we would be providing permanent legal status to about 30 million people in the next 10 years. Our current law allows for 1 million a year—about 10 million over the next 10 years. Is it any wonder people are having a hard time getting a job today?

There is not a tight labor market out there; there is a loose labor market. How do I know? Because wages are going down. If employers are desperate and need more workers and can't find them, why aren't they having to pay higher wages to get good workers?

We have to stand up. The American people need to know what is happening to them.

What is the solution, our colleagues say? Well, unemployment is too high and wages are not going up; let's borrow more money and spend it by sending out unemployment checks to people who are unemployed because somebody illegally here took a job they could have taken.

There is no doubt about this: We need to create and transform the welfare office into an office that transforms the lives of people who are struggling today. We have 40 job programs, at least. We have more than 80 different

means-tested social programs. Those all need to be consolidated. There needs to be one central place where an American who is hurting, who is out of work and needs help, may be given financial help, but also counseled and provided training in the things they might need to get a job. Maybe instead of a subsidy while they're unemployed, individuals need help with transportation to go to work. Maybe they need help relocating to another town where the jobs are readily available.

This idea that we just continue to spend more and more on attempting to help people by giving them money without helping them transform their lives and become productive has to end. In fact, all the means-tested programs all added up amount to more than $750 billion, which is more than all the other individual programs we spend money on—more than Social Security, more than Medicare, more than Medicaid, more than the Defense Department.

This country has some challenges in front of it. If we would respond with classic American values of hard work, individual responsibility, and our technology and training, we could turn this country around. But we don't have any leadership in that regard. Any change, any suggestions that we would reduce a subsidy program in order to fund job training or even fund unemployment compensation is a nonstarter around here, it appears.

I am worried about where we are. This unemployment insurance violates the budget. We should not pass it. We should do it within the budget and we need to analyze it carefully to make sure we are doing it in a way that actually helps those we intend to help.

I thank the Chair. I yield the floor, and I note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COONS). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I came to the floor today with the intention of asking unanimous consent to pass H.R. 3521, which we have heard a lot about on the floor lately between Senator VITTER and Senator SANDERS. This bill would authorize the construction of 27 veterans clinics—2 of them in our State, Louisiana, 1 in Lake Charles and 1 in Lafayette.

It is a long and sad story about why these clinics have not been built. I will get into that in a minute. As you can see, Texas, California, Florida, Georgia, and other States are affected. I know the Senators from those States support what we are trying to do.

Yesterday or the day before, my colleague came to the floor to call me ''ineffective.'' I would like to say that I was a little bit shocked to hear that. I have been called many things on the floor of this Senate—hardheaded, stubborn, tenacious, the Senator who never quits. I have never been called ineffective, so it was a little bit shocking.

What I can say is that I think I have spent 18 years on the floor of the Senate and here working with colleagues on both sides of the aisle and developing very strong friendships, very good relationships and trusting friendships that I think have accrued in large measure in a very beneficial way to the State I represent and to the region of the country I am also so proud to represent, the gulf coast.

Maybe my colleague was having a bad day. I am going to let it go, but it was a little shocking to hear that word.

Back to the issue. The issue is quite serious. The issue is that we have had a process of building veterans clinics in this country a certain way for a very long time. About 3 years ago CBO kind of out of the blue decided to change the scoring mechanism—instead of the way we were doing it through a leasing process, change the scoring system to cause the budget problem, the constraints in the budget to not allow us to move forward with the construction of these veterans facilities.

But added to that change, what is really happening in Louisiana and why this is such an important issue for us is that we were scheduled to build our two clinics and had waited in line patiently for many years. Our clinics were getting ready to be built in Lafayette and Lake Charles, which are a very important part of our outreach to the tens of thousands of veterans in our State.

The Veterans' Administration itself made a very serious mistake, which they have admitted in writing, verbally. General Shinseki has been down to our State to visit these sites, to talk with many of us in Louisiana about how unfortunate it was that mistakes in the bidding process were made—not by us, not by the State, not by the locals, but by the Federal Government. Because of these mistakes, our process of building these clinics was delayed.

That is why House Member BOUSTANY—a wonderful colleague and a dear friend and a great leader—has been leading the effort. These are basically in his district. He and I have been working very closely to try to bring to the attention of the leadership here the fact that they made the mistake, not us. We should not have to pay the penalty because of that.

Then, in the midst of that fight, this new scoring mechanism came down.

Now we cannot get out from underneath either the offset required or the new process required to get our clinics built. It has nothing to do with need—we are at the top of that list. We have the need. We have the veterans. We have the commitment of the Federal Government to get these built.

All of our delegation has been working very closely to try to get these clinics built. I am happy to say that I am here today—as I have always been on this issue—supporting it and will ask in just a minute—I wanted to ask but will not ask in just a minute—for unanimous consent to build these clinics without an offset, just as the House bill passed. It is a $1.6 billion charge. It would move without an offset. That is what the House voted on. It was a huge vote, 346 votes, Republicans and Democrats. I think when we have a vote like that, we need to really pay attention over here. They voted to build these clinics at a cost of $1.6 billion without an offset.

That is what I am going to ask for. Senator COBURN will object. He has let me know he will object. Unfortunately, because of personal reasons, he is unable to be here today. So out of respect for the process of the Senate and out of courtesy, I will not be asking for that unanimous consent now, but I will be asking for it early next week.

Just to be clear, it will be a unanimous consent to build these 27 clinics based on the House vote without this bill going back to the House, going straight to the President's desk for signature by the President.

The offset the Senator from Louisiana offered is a bogus offset. We have a letter from CBO that I would like to read into the RECORD. The junior Senator from Louisiana offered his offset to supposedly raise the $1.6 billion that will pay for this. This is from the CBO analysis.

It says: Based on preliminary estimates of the amendment offered by Senator VITTER, based on the information of the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs and their current practices and joint purchases of prescription drugs, I do not estimate any savings for drug purchases relative to current law. My preliminary estimate of the amendment would be a minimal discretionary cost of less than $500,000.

There is no money to be saved by the amendment offered by Senator VITTER, so I would be offering the bill to build these clinics with no offset, and that is what the House passed. It will go directly to the President's desk, and we will resolve the problem for these States. Then we will finally figure out a way to get back on track building clinics that we need and figure out a way to pay for these clinics in the future, but these clinics got stuck in kind of a technical bureaucratic mess in the recalculation. Ours, in particular, were caught because they should have been built in the 2 years before this new scoring process came to be, which is why Louisiana is having a particularly difficult time.

But as the record will show, our entire delegation has supported this effort. I honor the leadership of Congressman BOUSTANY from the House, who has literally worked on this tirelessly for 6 years. I thank the House delegation for sending this bill over.

I will not require an offset. The offset Senator VITTER offered is bogus.

As soon as Senator COBURN can get back, which will be early next week, I will be offering this unanimous consent. Unfortunately, I understand he will object to it because he believes we should find a way to pay for it. There might be other objections as well, but I am looking forward to the debate with Senator COBURN next week.

I yield the floor and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. (Ms. HIRONO). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

GM RECALL

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Madam President, yesterday's hearing of the commerce committee's subcommittee on consumer safety provided a powerful and important moment in our legislative process, and I want to thank my colleague, the chairman of that subcommittee, Chairman MCCASKILL, for enabling us to come together, as well as my other colleagues on both sides of the aisle, Senators KLOBUCHAR and BOXER and AYOTTE, for their very insightful and significant questions and comments on a challenge that should unite us on both sides of the aisle—the tragic events, death and life-changing injuries to unsuspecting drivers who were victims of a defective ignition switch in automobiles manufactured by GM; a car defect that should have been fixed, disclosed, and remedied before these deaths occurred.

I want to thank the families of the victims of these defective cars for coming forward and being at that hearing yesterday and sharing their stories with me and others. They are doing a great public service through their courage and strength.

I want to also thank Mary Barra, the CEO of GM. As I said to her then, and I will repeat now, I admire her fortitude and her service in coming forward to face the questions of our committee and be the face of General Motors on the issues that confront us now in car safety. I admire her career at GM—an engineer who has risen through the ranks, a second-generation employee at an iconic, great American manufacturing company.

I have long admired that company and the products it has produced. They have enriched the lives of so many Americans over the years. My hope is this hearing and this process will be a turning point for the company in facing these car safety challenges.

I admire greatly also its dealers and employees. Some of them have contacted me, especially Connecticut dealers, telling me how they are reaching out proactively to the drivers of these defective vehicles, asking them to bring them to their company so they can be repaired before they do further damage.

This great company can reclaim its iconic brand and luster by breaking with its past, and Mary Barra has the opportunity for this historic contribution. As I said to her yesterday, she may be surrounded by a phalanx of lawyers and public relations people who will advise her to be cautious, to be timid, and to be reactive, but now is the time for her to seize the initiative and take three simple steps as a beginning.

No. 1, establish a compensation fund for all who have suffered damage from this defective ignition switch which caused cars to crash, some of them to burn—victims who have suffered injuries and death as well as economic damage. No. 2, provide a warning—a clear, strong warning—to drivers still behind the wheels of vehicles that still have this defective ignition switch. The cars are under recall but unrepaired. People are still driving them, many not knowing the full risk they have undertaken by continuing to drive. A strong warning to ground those vehicles until they are repaired is what is needed now.

Third, support our legislation. Senator MARKEY and I have offered legislation that would provide for better reporting by car companies, a stronger accountability system, and better disclosure through a database to consumers so they will know what the risks are before they take them and can make informed choices about what they drive and when.

These steps are well warranted by the past misconduct of GM, but they are also potentially a model for other companies in doing the right thing—facing the truth, telling truth to power, and making sure innocent consumers are protected against harms that may not be known to them.

She had the opportunity to break with the past culture—a culture of deniability and of deception. Deception is what happened at GM. These ignition switches were known to be defective. As early as 2001, year after year there were reliable and material facts indicating to GM it had a responsibility to fix these vehicles. Yet they took no action to repair them, to recall them, to inform consumers. And the fix was not a major costly one. It was $2 per vehicle—easily done. Yet in 2005, 2006, GM made a business decision that the price was too high, the time was too long, and it continued to provide those vehicles for sale to consumers.

Then it deceived the U.S. Government. I have already spoken on the floor about section 612 of the agreement GM signed that indicated there were no material adverse facts at the time it was bailed out in 2009 as part of the reorganization. That deception is bad enough, but what happened as a result of that reorganization was a shield from liability, a form of immunity against legal accountability granted only because GM failed to disclose to the United States and to the bankruptcy court that it might well be liable and in fact was responsible for these defective vehicles. That shield from liability still bedevils the victims of injuries, death, and economic damage as they seek to hold GM accountable because GM itself is invoking that shield in courts today around the country and seeking to dismiss actions brought against it, seeking to return them to the bankruptcy court where the black hole of discharge will prevent recovery.

I welcome the independent investigation GM has undertaken by a very credible and respected former U.S. attorney. I welcome the appointment of consultant Ken Feinberg, also well respected, with experience and expertise in providing compensation. But GM itself has still said there is no compensation fund and it will not commit to one. And as able as these two individuals are, the question remains, what will it take? What facts or evidence will be required to persuade GM to do the right thing?

I think there is more than ample evidence—in fact, abundant evidence now—as to what the path should be, and I urged it yesterday on Mary Barra. GM should very simply do the right thing now: Establish a compensation fund sufficient to seek to make these victims whole. Nothing will erase or even ease the pain and grief suffered by these families and loved ones, but justice has its own virtue. GM has the rare opportunity in American corporate life to do justice and not wait for its consultants and its investigators to ''work through the issues here.'' Working through the issues here means doing right by those victims.

Yesterday I asked Ms. Barra about the safety of the vehicles still on the road. She assured me they were fine to drive—as long as the key was not overloaded, as long as the ignition switch was used alone without additional keys. She assured me there was no more risk to drive one of those vehicles than any other in use today.

I asked her about the contradiction of that statement with the recall notice itself. I am going to display it here. It says that these vehicles are risky to drive, in effect, if your keyring is carrying added weight or—and I emphasize that it is an ''or''—there are rough road conditions or jarring or impact-related events.

Unfortunately, too many of our highways and our byways have rough road conditions or provide the opportunity for jarring events.

Ms. Barra may believe tests and analyses done by her company she referred to yesterday assured her and GM that driving these defective vehicles is safe as long as it is done with only the ignition key, without the added weight of additional keys, but she must know, because she has children—as do I and most Members of this body—that they will drive with additional keys on that ignition switch. In fact, hundreds of thousands—millions of Americans have no idea that driving these vehicles with

added keys provides that kind of potentially fatal risk. When these cars lose power, they lose steering, they lose their brakes, and they lose their airbags. Losing power, brakes, and steering is terrifying, but airbags are essential if power is lost and the car crashes, as victims of these crashes have discovered, to their sorrow and the grief of their families.

This kind of pothole, a rough road condition, a potentially jarring event—how common are they? This photograph is from Surf Avenue in Stratford, a beautiful town along the coast of Connecticut. I could take hundreds of these photographs from Connecticut, which has better roads than many other places in our State or country. They are as common as the roads themselves.

Those risks are GM's responsibility to warn. It has failed to do so. I asked Ms. Barra what evidence or facts would persuade her to issue a stronger warning. The recall notice itself said that risk increases if your keyring is carrying added weight—such as more keys or the key fob itself; the key fob alone adds additional weight—or your vehicle is experiences rough road conditions or other jarring or impact-related events. What would persuade her to issue this warning to consumers: Stop driving these cars until they are repaired.

I specifically asked her whether evidence about drivers who have, in fact, experienced the power loss without adding additional weight to their keyrings—if they encountered these kinds of conditions and their cars shut down—would persuade her to change her view. She answered to me:

> Senator, if I had any data, any incidents where with just the key, or the key and the ring, there was any risk, I would ground these vehicles across the country.

Ms. Barra, let me tell you about Laura Valle. In March of 2014, Ms. Valle, who owns a 2007 silver Chevrolet Cobalt, received GM's recall letter instructing her to remove all items from her keyring, leaving only the vehicle key. As the recall notice instructed, she continued to drive her vehicle using only the vehicle key. Yet, while driving with a friend, she lost power. Fortunately, she was on the right side of the road and she was able to pull the vehicle to a stop.

There will be other instances. I know they will come forward to me, to my colleagues, and to lawyers who may represent them.

Today I call on GM to issue that warning. There is more than ample evidence or, as Ms. Barra said, ''data,'' ''incidents'' where the key or just the key and the ring led to the vehicle stopping not because there was added weight but because they encountered rough road conditions or jarring events, which could consist of simply leaning the wrong way or the driver's knee moving.

These vehicles create unacceptable risks before they are repaired. The advice GM should give to people is this: Bring these cars to be repaired immediately. Stop driving them. In the meantime, use the loaners GM has offered.

GM has the opportunity to avoid another business decision. It may be more costly to provide loaners, but in the long run they will save lives and dollars.

Finally, I ask GM to do the right thing again by supporting the legislation Senator MARKEY and I have introduced. This legislation is critically important to the future. It can't correct the past, but it can make sure that accidents are reported; that defects are made known to the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration; and that there are not only incentives for reporting but there is increased accountability for failing to do so; and require NHTSA to establish a publicly accessible, searchable database that will allow drivers and consumer safety advocates to connect the dots. Companies that are unwilling to connect those dots will be brought to justice, will be required to recall these vehicles and find out about defective models in time to save lives.

Ms. Barra has not yet committed to supporting this bill. In my view, it is her responsibility to do so. It is the responsibility of GM to take this action now. She and GM have the opportunity to change corporate culture not only in that company but in others by setting a model—leading by example, not by their words at a Senate hearing or letters of apology but by action. Action speaks louder than words. Action speaks louder than the appointment of a consultant or an investigator whose report may not be made fully public.

Ms. Barra was unwilling to make that commitment yesterday. It is a corporate culture that refused to make a 57-cent change to car ignitions—or a $2 change—even though that change would have saved lives. Now is the time to hold GM accountable, for GM to issue that warning that will help save others from a fate known only too well by those families who came to be with us yesterday.

I look forward to working with Ms. Barra, GM, my colleagues, and with all who are interested in improving car safety and to using this sad, tragic, unfortunate experience as a turning point and a teaching moment—a rare moment—of bipartisan action to make our roads safer.

Thank you, Madam President.

I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Carolina.

Mr. SCOTT. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SCOTT. Thank you, Madam President.

I rise today to discuss my two amendments to the legislation we have been debating this week. I think most of us would agree we need to give folks a hand up. That makes a lot of sense. But we also need to ensure they have a solid foundation on which it stands. The best way we can help the unemployed is to help them find a job. My amendments aim to do just that. First, we will restore the 40-hour workweek which was destroyed by ObamaCare. The employer mandate currently requires employers to provide health insurance to full-time employees, and the new definition of a full-time employee is 30 hours per workweek. As a result, employers are cutting hours for many of the employees to fewer than 30 hours per week.

I have heard from several employers at home in South Carolina, representing institutions as large as Clemson University and as small as the local surf shop that are suffering the consequences of this new 30-hour definition.

A few weeks ago I was on a bus in Charleston talking with some of my constituents. I started speaking with one young man who had just moved to South Carolina from Georgia looking for new opportunities. He worked for a restaurant and had recently received notice that his hours were getting cut. After talking with this young man for a few minutes, it became very clear to me that his pay was cut and his hours were dwindling as a direct result of the 30-hour rule. Not only was he losing 25 percent of his pay, he was losing the ability to work overtime.

According to the Hoover Institution, 2.6 million Americans are especially at risk of having their hours and wages cut like the young man with whom I was speaking. Of those 2.6 million Americans, 59 percent of them are between the ages of 19 and 34, 63 percent are women, and 90 percent do not have a college degree. Further, families most at risk are those with a median income, $29,126.

Many of these millions of Americans who are earning hourly wages to support their family will see a 25-percent cut in their pay as employers struggle with the massive new costs forced on them by the Federal Government—their Federal Government. Thanks to ObamaCare, not only will these workers not have health insurance but they will no longer have full-time jobs. We must—and I want to emphasize we must—restore the 40-hour workweek, period.

My second amendment is the same as my SKILLS Act which I introduced as a part of my opportunity agenda earlier this year. It provides much needed reforms to modernize the government's bureaucratic means of workforce development and training programs. With 4 million jobs currently unfilled across our Nation today, including 65,000 jobs in South Carolina, job skills training is critical for folks looking for work. We have to make sure people are prepared

for continued success, and that starts with education and workforce training.

Thanks to the leadership of my colleague, Mrs. FOXX in the House, the SKILLS Act has already passed with some Democratic support on the other side of the Capitol. It is well past time for that to happen in the Senate, and I hope my colleagues will join me in providing more skills and more opportunities to develop the skills to put Americans back to work.

This is truly a conversation about jobs. How do we encourage job growth and stop the government from blocking job creation? It is a simple answer. These two amendments are steps in the right direction. Let's not let politics dictate the future of these two amendments. We can do better, and we should.

Thank you, Madam President, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that at 2:30 p.m. today all postcloture time on the Reed of Rhode Island amendment No. 2874 be considered expired; that the following amendments be withdrawn: Nos. 2875, 2877, 2878; that Senator SESSIONS or designee then be recognized to raise a point of order against the Senator REED of Rhode Island amendment No. 2874; once the budget point of order is raised, Senator MURRAY or designee be recognized to make a motion to waive; the Senate then proceed to vote on the motion to waive; if the motion to waive is agreed to, the Senate then proceed to vote on adoption of the Reed of Rhode Island amendment No. 2874; that upon disposition of the Reed amendment, the Senate proceed to vote on the motion to invoke cloture on H.R. 3979; that if cloture is invoked on the bill, no other amendments or motions be in order to the bill; that at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, April 7, all postcloture time be considered expired and the bill as amended, if amended, be read a third time and the Senate proceed to vote on passage of the bill, as amended, if amended.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Washington.

THE MINIMUM WAGE

Mrs. MURRAY. There are a number of women who are going to be joining me today. They are leaders in this Capitol who are working each and every day, both here and back in their home States, to give more of their constituents a chance to succeed. Today we are here to talk about one small idea that stands to make a huge difference in the lives of our constituents, and for women in particular, and that is the idea that if you are putting in 40 or 50 or 60 hours of work per week you should be able to put food on your table and pay your bills, and you won't be stuck below the poverty line.

This idea could change the lives of millions of Americans if Congress simply acted and raised the minimum wage. We need to act now because right now one in four women—one in four women—is making minimum wage today. That is 15 million American women who are making the equivalent of about 2 gallons of gas per hour. Are we prepared to tell them that should be enough to support themselves and their kids?

In fact, as I am sure you will hear repeated by others today, nearly two-thirds of those who earn minimum wage or less are women. This is coming at a time when more women are now depended upon as the sole income earners in their families. Right now in cities and towns across America there are millions of those women who are getting up at the crack of dawn for work every day. They are stuck living in poverty. They cannot save for a car, much less a house. They cannot pay for school so they can get better skills and a better paying job. They cannot even afford to provide their children with more winter clothes or basic medical care. That is not how it is supposed to work in America, the country where you are told if you work hard and play by the rules you can get ahead.

So when we talk about the minimum wage, let's be clear: Raising the minimum wage is about bringing back our middle class. I am proud that in my State of Washington we are taking the lead. In our State our workforce enjoys the highest minimum wage in the country, and I am glad to point out to all of our friends on the other side of the aisle, Washington State's economy has not been negatively impacted by our high minimum wage. In fact, our economy has benefited from a high minimum wage.

Job growth has continued at a rate above the national average. Payrolls in our restaurants and bars have expanded due to people having more money in their pockets to spend at dinner or a night on the town, and poverty in Washington State has trailed the national level for at least 7 years now. That is why I support making the national minimum wage $10.10 for families from Washington to Wisconsin, from Massachusetts to Minnesota and Hawaii and everywhere in-between.

It is not enough to make you rich, but it is a small raise for millions of families who desperately need it. It is a small raise for moms and dads who need help. We have to do more. Today, two-thirds of families rely on income from both parents, but thanks to our outdated Tax Code, a woman thinking about reentering the workforce as a second earner in her family may face higher tax rates than her husband. That is unfair, and it has to change.

Last week I introduced the 21st Century Worker Tax Cut Act which will help solve that problem by giving struggling two-earner families with children a tax deduction on that second earner's income.

My hope is that over the coming weeks we can all come together in this Chamber on behalf of millions of American women who—like my own mother when I was growing up—are the sole caregiver and breadwinner in their families.

I hope our colleagues have gotten a sense of how the current $7.25 an hour translates to a grocery trip for a family of four, shopping for school supplies or even how it impacts people's daily commutes.

That is why we are here today—to give that mom or that dad a fair shot at succeeding in America. I am proud to be joined today by a number of my colleagues in the Senate who are strong women and fighting for women and men in their home States.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCHATZ). The Senator from Wisconsin.

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. President, when my grandparents were raising me, I learned that if you work hard and play by the rules, you should be able to get ahead. As I traveled throughout the State of Wisconsin meeting with Wisconsinites I know that my fellow Wisconsinites learned that very same thing when they were growing up. Today people are working as hard as ever, and they deserve to get ahead, but many are working full time and even two jobs to make ends meet. Yet far too many are just barely getting by or living in poverty.

As I have traveled my State, Wisconsinites have told me that the powerful and the well-connected seem to get to write all of their own rules, while the concerns and struggles of the working poor and middle-class families go unnoticed here in Washington. They feel like our economic system is tilted towards those at the very top and that our political system exists to protect those unfair advantages. The House budget introduced by Congressman PAUL RYAN—from my own home State—is a perfect example of that. Instead, we should make sure that everybody gets a fair shot.

I am really proud to join my colleagues this afternoon to deliver our own call for action. It is simple. The time is now to give hard-working Americans a raise. We can do that if both parties work together to reward hard work so an honest day's work pays more. We can do that by raising the minimum wage.

I believe we need to build a fairer economy and grow the middle class. I believe our economy is strongest when we expand opportunity for everyone, and that is why I am an original cosponsor of the Minimum Wage Fairness Act. Raising the minimum wage would improve the economic security of families across the country and strengthen the overall economy. It would give 28 million American workers a raise—including over 595,000 Wisconsinites—and will benefit more than a quarter million Wisconsin children who would have at least one parent getting that raise.

It would mean workers in Wisconsin would have $816 million more to spend

in local businesses, which according to the Economic Policy Institute would boost Wisconsin's GDP by $516.6 million and generate 1,800 new jobs after only 3 years.

Because women are disproportionately low-wage workers—making up two-thirds of low-wage workers in the country—raising the minimum wage would also directly impact millions of women across America.

Nadine, from Appleton, WI, would directly benefit from a raise. Nadine is a 20-year-old woman who makes the tipped minimum wage. She works as a server in a family restaurant. I probably need to remind some people that the tipped minimum wage is only $2.13 an hour. Nadine got her first job at age 14 so she could start saving for college. She started college but had stopped attending because she simply could not afford it. She even moved from her small hometown to a larger city in search of a better job so she would be able to return to school.

In telling her story, Nadine writes:

> Raising the minimum wage is not an abstract notion in my life. It is a real factor that affects me in several important ways. First, and most importantly, it is important to me because I am a young woman and I am working to support myself. I had to put going to college on hold because I couldn't afford it. Without a higher income, I worry I won't ever be able to transition from dead-end jobs into a long-term career.

Nadine currently averages $200 to $300 per week. She spends $50 on gas every week because she can't afford a more fuel-efficient car. She eats simply in order to budget $30 each week for food. The rest of her income goes to rent and other bills. Needless to say, it doesn't go far.

Nadine picks up every shift available to her and doesn't rely on government assistance of any kind. She worries she will never be able to experience having a family and finishing college, traveling, and just having a fair shot at building a stronger future for herself.

Women such as Nadine make up 72 percent of workers in predominately tipped occupations. Workers in tipped occupations are twice as likely as other workers to experience poverty, and servers are almost three times as likely to be in poverty.

If for no other reason, we need to raise the minimum wage because in America no one who works full time should have to live or raise a family in poverty. Raising the full minimum wage and the tipped wage will give 15 million women a raise—including 330,000 in my State of Wisconsin. Women who make up 80 percent of America's 2.8 million working single parents would benefit from an increase in the minimum wage, thereby reducing child poverty among female-headed households.

According to the Center for American Progress, raising the minimum wage to $10.10 an hour would reduce dependence on government programs, including the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, which we commonly call SNAP, which would see nearly 3.5 million fewer enrollments and save $46 billion over the decade. Raising the minimum wage will help make progress towards closing the gender pay gap.

I look forward to getting the job done and reward the hard work of women across our great country.

I look forward to getting the job done and passing the Minimum Wage Fairness Act so American women will get the raise they deserve.

I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I am so proud to join Senator MURRAY, who organized several of the women here, to speak out in favor of the minimum wage increase for the workers of America.

My colleagues have said it well, but it bears repeating: No one in America—male or female—should have to live in poverty after putting in a full day's work. Yet that is the case today.

We should give hard-working Americans a fair shot to get ahead so they can raise their families. Everyone deserves that fair shot, and that is why Democrats have a fair-shot agenda. Right now we don't seem to have many Republicans joining us in our desire to raise the minimum wage so that it gets people above the poverty line when they work full time.

I would argue that anyone who votes against that level of pay—which is about $10.10 an hour to get a worker right above poverty—simply wants to keep people in poverty, and that is not the American way. Right now a mom who is working full time and makes minimum wage earns just $290 a week. That is just $15,000 a year, which is below the poverty rate for a single mom.

No mom or dad should come home from a full day's work and have to worry about whether they can feed their children or whether they can afford a roof over the heads of their kids.

I see Senator WARREN is here, and she has brought such attention and focus to the unfairness in the number I am about to say. There are 400 families in America that control as much wealth as 150 million Americans. To hear people in this Chamber—who do just fine supporting their families—oppose the minimum wage is absolutely, in my view, a morally wrong position. They have their right to it, but I think it is morally wrong.

The minimum wage is a two-thirds problem for women. Let's be clear. Almost two-thirds of workers earning minimum wage or less are women, two-thirds of tipped minimum wage workers are women, and in two-thirds of American families, women are the breadwinners or co-breadwinners. We have a two-thirds problem. Women are overrepresented in low-wage jobs, and that is why I am so proud that next week Senator MIKULSKI is going to lead us toward equal pay for equal work. It is a wonderful bill. I think it is called the Paycheck Fairness Act.

When we lift the salaries of these workers, it helps entire families. Senator HARKIN's bill, which we are all supporting, will benefit 14 million children. We have to do it for workers like Wendy Arellano, who works directing vehicles at an airport and has two other jobs, but she still doesn't make enough to support her two daughters.

We should do it for women like Shareeka Elliot, who works all night as a janitor scrubbing the floors and cleaning the toilets but still doesn't make enough to get her kids above the poverty line.

We should do it for women like Nyah Potts, who is working so hard to finish her college degree, but she is struggling to make enough to support herself and her son. I joined Nyah at a press conference last week.

In closing, I want to talk for a minute about the tipped minimum wage. This is a disgrace because the tipped minimum wage at the Federal Government is $2.13 an hour. We all know—because it has been studied—that there are waitresses and there are waiters, and most of the less-expensive restaurants hire women, and they don't get big tips. If there is a storm, and suppose nobody comes into the restaurant that day, they get paid $2.13 an hour. This bill does move us up to 70 percent of minimum wage for tipped workers. Personally, I think there ought to be no difference. In California, we pay our workers—all of them, tipped or not—the full minimum wage. And no one can tell me that California's restaurants are suffering. They are some of the most successful in the country and in the world.

So let's be clear. History shows raising the minimum wage doesn't hurt the economy.

Now we will hear our colleagues on the Republican side cite the CBO study that said we could lose hundreds of thousands of jobs. That study is an outlier.

In 1956, the minimum wage was a buck. I hate to say it, but I remember those days. It was a dollar. And I remember, I worked my first job as a telephone operator for Hilton Hotels, and I earned the minimum wage. Actually, then, because I was a teenager, it was half the minimum wage, so I worked for 50 cents an hour. I was not very good at that job, but I tried hard. But let's say Congress had that attitude then: We are not going to raise the minimum wage because we will lose jobs. The minimum wage would still be a dollar an hour. How ludicrous.

Since then—since 1956—we have raised the minimum wage 18 times. Guess what. Did we lose jobs? No. The economy grew by more than 80 million jobs.

I know others are waiting to speak. I am so excited to finally get to vote on paycheck fairness and on minimum wage. All we Democrats are saying is, let's give Americans a fair shot.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I will be making a point of order in a moment against the bill before us because it violates the budget we agreed to. I will share briefly for a few moments—the order is that we are to commence voting at 2:30. I believe that is correct. I think I was approved for 5 minutes. If the Chair would notify me when my time is up, because others I see here might want to speak.

In August of 2001, this Congress—House and Senate, Republicans and Democrats—along with the President of the United States, agreed on the Budget Control Act. It limited spending—the growth of spending only. How much did it limit the growth? Well, at that time we were projected to spend $10 trillion more over the next 10 years than we were currently spending. So the Budget Control Act didn't cut the budget, really, although a few agencies in the short term have had reductions, Defense being the primary one. But over the 10 years, under the Budget Control Act we would grow spending $8 trillion instead of $10 trillion—not enough of a reduction in spending, I say to my colleagues, to cause this country to sink into the ocean; that is for sure. Really, not enough, because our deficits are so high.

In December of last year, this Congress passed the Ryan-Murray Budget Act which amended the spending agreement we struck in the Budget Control Act. The Ryan-Murray bill broke the budget agreement and allowed more money to be spent than we had agreed to in the BCA, but it capped overall spending for the next 8 years. So that was the agreement. It passed, and the President signed it 3 months ago. It is now the law of the land.

What I would say to my colleagues is this—today is the third or fourth time we will vote on legislation, since the Ryan-Murray spending agreement passed, that busts the budget—that busts the spending limits we agreed to.

There are multiple budget violations against this bill. Two of them are voided by loophole language in the Ryan-Murray legislation that people didn't fully understand at that time. That loophole language allows the use of a deficit-neutral reserve fund to, in effect, erase budget points of order. So two of the budget points of order that lie against this bill cannot be raised because a deficit-neutral reserve fund—which I think is a gimmick—essentially erases them. But one of the violations still remains, because this bill will add to the debt outside the 10-year window.

One of the things we have learned is that when we pass laws today that sound good—and sometimes those laws, even if they are within the budget window, they may, indeed, in the out years add to the debt of the United States. Kent Conrad, a Democrat and former chairman of the Budget Committee—it was his language that created this long term point of order, because he was concerned we were passing things that might be OK within the budget window but were adding to the debt in the long term. So that is why we have this point of order.

The cost estimate from the Congressional Budget Office clearly shows that this UI bill violates that principle of the budget, and lays out the numbers that so say. Our chairman of the Budget Committee, Senator MURRAY, has acknowledged that this bill does, in fact, violate the budget.

But we need to stay within our budget. Violating the budget agreement is simply a refusal to make tough choices. We spend $3,700 billion a year, and we can't find $8 billion or $9 billion in savings to fund a program that we think needs to be funded today like unemployment insurance? People want to deal with that and help people who are unemployed, and I understand that desire. But if we do so, we should do it by finding offsets, not spending more than we agreed.

People say we can raise taxes to pay for the new spending. Well, that violates the budget too, because our agreement says we can spend only so much. And if my colleagues want to raise taxes, I believe we ought to use that money to pay down the deficit, not grow the government.

This past year, we spent $233 billion on interest on the debt, an amount that is virtually half the Defense budget. The highway bill is $40 billion. In 10 years, the Congressional Budget Office—Dr. Elmendorf testified before the Budget Committee a few weeks ago—says that in 10 years, 1 year's interest payment on the debt of the United States of America would be $880 billion. That is over $650 billion more in 1 year on interest than we are paying today.

So you can see why we have to adhere to our promises to contain spending. We cannot continue to vote time and time again to violate the spending limits we agreed to. It just adds to the debt and to our interest payments on the debt. No wonder the American people are unhappy with us. This is irresponsible. I am confident we can find the $9 billion or whatever we need to fund any program in this bloated government of ours. But, no, it won't even be discussed. There is no discussion about finding honest reductions in spending from places where money is wasted. Instead, we just come up with a plan that gimmicks the spending and adds to the long-term debt of the United States.

In conclusion, I would say it is quite clear that this legislation—the unemployment extension—will add to the long-term debt of the United States.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has spoken for 5 minutes.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, the pending measure, amendment No. 2874 to H.R. 3979, the vehicle for the unemployment insurance extension, violates section 311(b) of the fiscal year 2009 budget resolution by causing a net increase in the deficit over $5 billion in the 10-year period from 2024 to 2033.

Therefore, I raise a point of order against this measure pursuant to section 311(b) of S. Con. Res. 70, the Concurrent Resolution on the Budget for fiscal year 2009.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, pursuant to section 904 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 and the waiver provisions of applicable budget resolutions, I move to waive all applicable sections of that act and applicable budget resolutions for purposes of the pending amendment, and I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays are ordered.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the vote occur at the time set under the previous order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Hawaii.

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent for an extension of time for 6 minutes to be divided equally between myself and Senator STABENOW.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, I will keep my remarks short because I know there are others who want to speak on why we need to raise the minimum wage from $7.25 to $10.10. I will focus on Hawaii.

In Hawaii, nearly 100,000 women would get a raise if we were to do this. That is one out of five women workers in Hawaii. The Presiding Officer and I are both from Hawaii. We know the high cost of living in Hawaii. Minimum wage amounts to about $14,500 a year. The average rent for a one-bedroom residence in Hawaii is almost $1,300 a month. That is more than $15,000 a year. It is no wonder people in Hawaii have to work more than one job.

In Hawaii, tourism is our No. 1 industry. We have a lot of tipped workers. They work in our restaurants. Do my colleagues know there are many people who work in our restaurants who can't even afford to eat in the restaurant in which they work?

When we raise the minimum wage, we are going to enable a lot of families to not have to rely on various programs such as SNAP. In Hawaii, over 15,000 workers would no longer need these kinds of benefits.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HIRONO). The Senator from Michigan.

Ms. STABENOW. Madam President, first let me say that we should be congratulating everyone who has gotten us to a point where we are going to be able to help people who have been

working hard to find a job and still have not found a job to put food on the table for their families and pay their rent. To be able to allow them to receive emergency unemployment assistance is incredibly important. The votes we are doing here are very important to give people who want a job and need a job a fair shot to be able to survive until they can get a job.

THE MINIMUM WAGE

I also want to speak for just a moment, as so many of my colleagues have today, about what it means for women to have a pay raise through the minimum wage because the minimum wage is very much a women's issue, as you have heard, because a disproportionate number of folks who are earning the minimum wage are, in fact, women. And it is not college students; the average age is about 30, 35 years old.

This is a critical issue for Michigan families, including 416,000 women in Michigan who would directly benefit from raising the minimum wage to $10.10 an hour and another 141,000 whose wages would also increase. This is not just about people earning the minimum wage; it is about lifting up wages, increasing purchasing power, and helping businesses large and small be able to get more customers because people can buy things because they have money in their pockets.

Let me repeat, in terms of the numbers for Michigan, 557,000 women in Michigan who are working hard and just want a fair shot—just a fair shot—to get ahead would benefit from the legislation the Senate will soon be voting on called the Minimum Wage Fairness Act.

Too many people, including far too many women, are simply trying to stay afloat, let alone get ahead. The minimum wage used to be worth more. Its value has eroded since it peaked back in 1968, and it is harder and harder for people to put food on the table and a roof over their family's heads.

Today, a single mom can clean houses and scrub floors for 40 hours a week—working hard—and still find that she earns less than the poverty level. There is something wrong with that. If you are going to work hard 40 hours a week, you ought to be able to lift your family out of poverty.

Work ought to be valued in this country. In fact, for a family of three, you are $4,000 below the poverty line if you are working for the minimum wage. It is just not right.

To add insult to injury, if you compare that to the average CEO's salary today, you could put 933 minimum-wage workers, 933 women working hard—and I would daresay maybe harder than the folks who are at the top as CEOs—trying to put food on the table for their kids, buy them cloths, make sure they can care for them, 933 minimum-wage workers combined equals the salary of the average CEO.

So I would urge that we come together and look at this as Henry Ford did 100 years ago in 1914 when he doubled the salary of his workers to $5 a day. He lifted them up. The small businesses around his plant saw increases in their business and hired more people because more people had money in their pockets. They could come in and buy the food and goods.

We are talking about people working hard, again, every single day—moms who are cleaning hotel rooms and are on their feet all day; they are mopping floors, preparing food; they go home; they take care of their families. All they want is a fair shot to succeed and be able to make their lives and their children's lives better.

Let's have a strong, bipartisan vote on raising the minimum wage.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I rise in support of increasing the minimum wage. Congress needs to do away with wages that don't reward hard work and workplace policies that belong in an episode of ''Mad Men.'' This Congress needs to do two things to make sure we give a fair shot to everyone and build a stronger middle class: raise the minimum wage and pass the Paycheck Fairness Act.

The minimum wage is at an historic all-time low. It has lost 30 percent of its buying power compared to its peak buying power in 1968. The minimum wage only pays $15,000 a year. That is $4,000 below the poverty line for a family of three. Increasing the minimum wage to $10.10 per hour would pay $20,200 a year—lifting that family of three out of poverty.

What does increasing the minimum wage mean for Maryland? Increasing the minimum wage will give 450,000 workers in Maryland a raise. Increasing the minimum wage will improve the lives of 210,000 Maryland children because their parent just got a raise. When we raise the minimum wage, we all move a rung up on the opportunity ladder.

I am on the side of economic fairness and building a stronger middle class to bring opportunities to families across the Nation. That is why I am an enthusiastic cosponsor of the Fair Minimum Wage Act. This bill raises the minimum wage from $7.25 per hour to $10.10 an hour over 3 years and indexes the minimum wage to inflation in the future.

Everyone who works hard and plays by the rules deserves a fair shot at the American dream. That means raising the minimum wage so that hard work is worth it—because a full-time job shouldn't mean full time poverty.

The minimum wage for employees who earn tips is barely over $2 per hour. The Fair Minimum Wage Act will slowly increase that base wage by less than $1 a year until it reaches 70 percent of the regular minimum wage. Women are nearly three-quarters of workers earning tips at their jobs. For a hotel housekeeper in the western Maryland mountains, a hairdresser on the Eastern Shore, or a restaurant server in Baltimore or Bethesda, this raise is economic security so that a slow week in an off-peak season doesn't mean below-poverty wages.

The minimum wage is a women's issue. Women make up two-thirds of minimum-wage workers nationwide. Congress needs to raise their wages and make sure they are not being redlined or sidelined by outdated policies or harassed and intimidated when seeking justice for pay discrimination.

Being a woman costs more, and women pay more for everything. Women pay more in medical costs than men—an estimated $10,000 over a lifetime. Women are often responsible for child care. Women even get charged more for dry cleaning. We are charged more for our blouses than men's shirts, and we are tired of being taken to the cleaners. When we earn less, we are asked to pay more.

Women are almost half of the workforce and 40 percent of them are the sole breadwinners in their families. They are tired of being paid crumbs.

Women continue to make less. Women are still making only 77 cents for every $1 a man makes. Women of color suffer even greater injustice. If you are African American, you earn 62 cents for every $1 a man makes. If you are Hispanic, you earn 54 cents for every $1 a man makes.

Everybody likes to say to us: Oh, you have come a long way. But I don't think we have come a long way. We have only gained 18 cents in 50 years.

By the time she retires, the average woman will lose more than $431,000 over her lifetime because of the wage gap. That affects your Social Security and pension. It weakens your retirement security.

This is not about men versus women. It is about building a middle class. Wages have been flat for everyone. Men need a pay raise too. When they get it, we will stand shoulder to shoulder with them—because we all need a raise to raise our families.

The Fair Minimum Wage Act is about putting change in the lawbooks and change in family checkbooks. Women of America, it is time to suit up, square our shoulders, put on our lipstick, increase the minimum wage for everyone, and fight the fair pay revolution.

AMENDMENTS NOS. 2878, 2877, AND 2875 WITHDRAWN

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, amendments Nos. 2878, 2877, and 2875 are withdrawn.

VOTE ON MOTION TO WAIVE

Under the previous order, the question is on agreeing to the motion to waive.

The yeas and nays have been ordered.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. COBURN), the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN), the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ), and the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) would have voted ''nay.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. WARREN). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 60, nays 36, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 99 Leg.]

YEAS—60

Baldwin	Heinrich	Murray
Begich	Heitkamp	Nelson
Bennet	Heller	Portman
Blumenthal	Hirono	Pryor
Booker	Johnson (SD)	Reed
Boxer	Kaine	Reid
Brown	King	Rockefeller
Cantwell	Kirk	Sanders
Cardin	Klobuchar	Schatz
Carper	Landrieu	Schumer
Casey	Leahy	Shaheen
Collins	Levin	Stabenow
Coons	Manchin	Tester
Donnelly	Markey	Udall (CO)
Durbin	McCaskill	Udall (NM)
Feinstein	Menendez	Walsh
Franken	Merkley	Warner
Gillibrand	Mikulski	Warren
Hagan	Murkowski	Whitehouse
Harkin	Murphy	Wyden

NAYS—36

Alexander	Fischer	Moran
Ayotte	Flake	Paul
Barrasso	Graham	Risch
Blunt	Grassley	Roberts
Boozman	Hatch	Rubio
Burr	Hoeven	Scott
Chambliss	Inhofe	Sessions
Coats	Isakson	Shelby
Cochran	Johanns	Thune
Corker	Johnson (WI)	Toomey
Crapo	Lee	Vitter
Enzi	McConnell	Wicker

NOT VOTING—4

Coburn	Cruz
Cornyn	McCain

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote the yeas are 60, the nays are 36. Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn having voted in the affirmative, the motion is agreed to.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 2874

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is on agreeing to amendment No. 2874.

The amendment (No. 2874) was agreed to.

Mr. REID. For the knowledge of all Members, we are going to have one more vote today and the next vote will be Monday at 5:30 p.m.

I just want to tell everyone, sometimes people get upset at Senator MCCONNELL and me because we don't know what is going on. Well, I hate to admit this, but sometimes he and I don't know what is going on. It is hard to get, sometimes, where we are. So I appreciate that even though Senator MCCONNELL and I have a few little dustups on the floor in front of everybody, whenever we are in private we work well together to try to do the best things for this body.

To get to where we are today wasn't easy, and we should have a good week next week. I know there is a lot of angst on both sides with the things they want to get done, but everyone should be patient. We are trying to work through the process.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the clerk will report the motion to invoke cloture.

The bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on H.R. 3979, an act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

Harry Reid, Jack Reed, Patrick J. Leahy, Thomas R. Carper, Elizabeth Warren, Tammy Baldwin, Edward J. Markey, Christopher A. Coons, Tom Harkin, Cory A. Booker, Tom Udall, Kirsten E. Gillibrand, Barbara Boxer, Angus S. King, Jr., Christopher Murphy, Al Franken, Bernard Sanders.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on H.R. 3979, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirement contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from from Oklahoma (Mr. COBURN), the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN), the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ), and the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) would have voted ''nay.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 61, nays 35, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 100 Leg.]

YEAS—61

Ayotte	Heinrich	Nelson
Baldwin	Heitkamp	Portman
Begich	Heller	Pryor
Bennet	Hirono	Reed
Blumenthal	Johnson (SD)	Reid
Booker	Kaine	Rockefeller
Boxer	King	Sanders
Brown	Kirk	Schatz
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Schumer
Cardin	Landrieu	Shaheen
Carper	Leahy	Stabenow
Casey	Levin	Tester
Collins	Manchin	Udall (CO)
Coons	Markey	Udall (NM)
Donnelly	McCaskill	Walsh
Durbin	Menendez	Warner
Feinstein	Merkley	Warren
Franken	Mikulski	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Murkowski	Wyden
Hagan	Murphy	
Harkin	Murray	

NAYS—35

Alexander	Flake	Paul
Barrasso	Graham	Risch
Blunt	Grassley	Roberts
Boozman	Hatch	Rubio
Burr	Hoeven	Scott
Chambliss	Inhofe	Sessions
Coats	Isakson	Shelby
Cochran	Johanns	Thune
Corker	Johnson (WI)	Toomey
Crapo	Lee	Vitter
Enzi	McConnell	Wicker
Fischer	Moran	

NOT VOTING—4

Coburn	Cruz
Cornyn	McCain

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote the yeas are 61, the nays are 35. Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen having voted in the affirmative, the motion is agreed to.

The Senator from Montana.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—H.R. 2259

Mr. WALSH. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to consideration of Calendar No. 314, H.R. 2259; that the bill be read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. TOOMEY. Madam President, reserving the right to object, I want to inform the Chair that two of our colleagues have concerns about this legislation—Senators COBURN and CRUZ—and would like to address those concerns with the sponsors. So on their behalf, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Montana.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 255

Mr. WALSH. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to Calendar No. 173, S. 255; that the committee-reported amendment be agreed to; the bill, as amended, be read a third time and passed; and the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. TOOMEY. Madam President, this is the same legislation, and so for the same reason, on behalf of Senators COBURN and CRUZ, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Montana.

Mr. WALSH. Madam President, in the far northwestern corner of Montana is one of the most special places on Earth—the North Fork of the Flathead River. The North Fork is a spectacular gravel-bed river that starts in British Columbia and runs along the western half of Glacier National Park before arriving in Flathead Lake.

The North Fork is a world-class trout fishery, with bulltrout and cutthroat trout sharing the same winding waters that grizzly bears rely on for huckleberries. It is the most important wildlife corridor between the Great Plains and the Cascades, and Montanans have always enjoyed rafting, hiking, fishing, and hunting in it.

Today, about 2 million people visit Glacier National Park each year, bringing $170 million into the local economy and supporting 2,750 jobs.

For 40 years, Montanans have fought to keep the North Fork pristine. My colleague Senator JON TESTER and I are committed to taking this across the finish line.

Four years ago, Montana and British Columbia reached a historic agreement to protect the river on both sides of the border. Two years ago Canada upheld its end of the bargain. Today, the U.S. Congress has the opportunity to do the same. The entire Montana congressional delegation is in bipartisan agreement that the North Fork deserves to be withdrawn permanently from future mineral development. Montanans of all stripes have endorsed this action, including the local chambers of commerce and energy companies such as ConocoPhillips.

In fact, the primary interest in more than 80 percent of existing Federal leases in the watershed have voluntarily been relinquished. Everyone recognizes how important it is to keep the North Fork pristine. It is just the right thing to do.

The Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee passed the North Fork Watershed Protection Act with no opposition last June. The House passed the North Fork Watershed Protection Act by voice vote last month. This bill is our chance to leave a jewel in the crown of the continent in better shape than we found it.

I ask my colleagues to join me and all Montanans in that effort. We can send this bill to the President to sign today.

Mr. TESTER. Madam President, will the junior Senator from Montana yield for a question?

Mr. WALSH. I will.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The senior Senator from Montana.

Mr. TESTER. Madam President, when my colleague's motion was objected to, the good Senator from Pennsylvania, Senator TOOMEY, said he understood Senators COBURN and CRUZ wished to have further conversation. Has my colleague had a chance to visit with Senators COBURN and CRUZ already about this bill?

Mr. WALSH. Yes, I have.

Mr. TESTER. So that has already been done.

I want to thank my colleague Senator WALSH for attempting to bring up the North Fork Watershed Protection Act for a vote. I also want to echo his frustration that once again politics is trumping good policy.

The North Fork bill is a Montana-made bill. Folks back home who support this bill are from all political sides of the spectrum. It has wide bipartisan support. Members of both parties, as Senator WALSH pointed out, voted it out of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee. Yet today two Senators—whom I would challenge to find the North Fork on a map—have decided to hold this bill up.

Let me remind them what this bill does. It ensures access along the North Fork for hunters and anglers who contribute to Montana's $6 billion outdoor economy. If you want to talk about economic development, this is an incredible driver.

The bill also honors a commitment to our neighbor to the north, Canada. Three years ago British Columbia signed an agreement to retire oil and gas leases on their side of the border, expecting us to protect the region as well. This bill guarantees we hold up our end of the bargain, and it ensures we pass along our outdoor way of life.

I should also point out that Exxon and Conoco both have also given up their leases in this region. Why? Because this drainage feeds Flathead Lake, which is the largest freshwater body of water west of the Mississippi. It is an incredible ecosystem.

I think what has happened today is a loss not only for Montana, not only for America's great outdoors, but for this entire country.

This fight is not over. For far too long in this body we have had people who obstruct just because they can. It is time to start working together and doing what is right, whether we are talking about conservation issues, tax issues, unemployment issues, or whatever it might be. It is time to start moving the country forward because people are suffering out there.

I thank the Chair, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The junior Senator from Montana.

Mr. WALSH. Madam President, I am so disappointed my colleagues on the other side of the aisle are blocking the desire of Montanans to protect the North Fork. This bill is a no-brainer. I invite my colleagues to visit Montana and see the North Fork for themselves. Their actions today show why Washington is broken. Despite years of bipartisan hard work, narrow interests can trump responsible leadership.

I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

GREEN MOUNTAIN LOOKOUT HERITAGE PROTECTION ACT

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, I come to the floor this afternoon to request unanimous consent to pass a bill that is a very small step in what will be a very long recovery process for a community in my home State of Washington that was devastated by a landslide less than two weeks ago.

This is the Green Mountain Lookout bill, which will be passed shortly. It is not going to rebuild anybody's home—which needs to be done—or provide desperately needed human aid that we are supporting through our recent Federal disaster designation. What this small, little bill does is provide a glimmer of hope for the long-term recovery of this region, and in particularly of the community of Darrington.

For years now, along with Senator CANTWELL, I have fought to pass this bill through procedural and political hurdles because I know what it means to Snohomish County and that region of my State. The Green Mountain Lookout is more than a hiking destination. It is part of the Pacific Northwest heritage. It is a cherished historical landmark. It is a place where parents have brought their kids for generations to appreciate the splendor of the great outdoors in the Northwest, and it is a place that has been a vital source of tourism-related income for the people who have been impacted by this deadly landslide that struck this region.

I was in Darrington this weekend and had an opportunity to sit down with the mayor and many of the town officials—a town of about 1200 people—and they told me tremendous stories about the families that have been lost, about people who had driven to the store on that Saturday morning and now only had what they wore when they left their homes a few hours earlier. I heard about the needs this community is going to have for a long time and the emotional impact.

After finishing our official meetings, the mayor took us aside and told me, Senator CANTWELL, and Congresswoman DELBENE that the one glimmer of hope he thought he could provide for this community was passage of this Green Mountain Lookout bill that we are going to pass in just a few moments.

So I want to extend truly heartfelt thanks to both Senator LANDRIEU and Senator MURKOWSKI, who have been incredibly understanding, and to all the Members of the Senate who have been helpful in going through the process of getting the bill to the floor today. They know what it means when communities large or small are impacted by a disaster of this size, and both of them know that the Federal Government needs to be there quickly to provide support.

Madam President, the people of Oso, Arlington, and Darrington have a very long road to recovery ahead, so I was very pleased when the President granted a major disaster declaration just last night which will be vital to meeting many of the immediate human needs that we are going to be facing.

It is important that these communities know we are in it for the long term as well. Even a small step like this one that supports the region's tourist economy and brings that little bit of hope is critical to showing them that all of us and the Federal Government will be there for them. So as they mourn their loved ones and work hard to recover and ultimately rebuild, I am proud that we will not forget them.

With that, Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 338, S. 404.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 404) to preserve the Green Mountain Lookout in the Glacier Peak Wilderness

of the Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, with an amendment.

(Insert the part printed in italic.)

S. 404

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Green Mountain Lookout Heritage Protection Act''.

SEC. 2. CLARIFICATION OF LEGAL AUTHORITY OF GREEN MOUNTAIN LOOKOUT.

(a) LEGAL AUTHORITY OF LOOKOUT.—Section 4(b) of the Washington State Wilderness Act of 1984 (Public Law 98–339; 98 Stat. 300; 16 U.S.C. 1131 note) is amended by striking the period at the end and inserting the following: '', and except that with respect to the lands described in section 3(5), the designation of such lands as a wilderness area shall not preclude the operation and maintenance of Green Mountain Lookout.''

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect as if included in the enactment of the Washington State Wilderness Act of 1984.

SEC. 3. PRESERVATION OF GREEN MOUNTAIN LOOKOUT LOCATION.

The Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the Chief of the Forest Service, may not move Green Mountain Lookout from its current location on Green Mountain in the Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest unless the Secretary determines that moving Green Mountain Lookout is necessary to preserve the Lookout or to ensure the safety of individuals on or around Green Mountain. If the Secretary makes such a determination, the Secretary shall move the Green Mountain Lookout to a location outside of the lands described in section 3(5) of the Washington State Wilderness Act of 1984 and designated as a wilderness area in section 4(b) of such Act.

SEC. 4. ALASKA NATIVE VETERAN ALLOTMENT.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) APPLICATION.—The term ''application'' means the Alaska Native Veteran Allotment application numbered AA-084021-B.

(2) FEDERAL LAND.—The term ''Federal land'' means the 80 acres of Federal land that is—

(A) described in the application; and

(B) depicted as Lot 2 in U.S. Survey No. 13957, Alaska, that was officially filed on October 9, 2009.

(3) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of the Interior.

(b) ISSUANCE OF PATENT.—Notwithstanding section 41 of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (43 U.S.C. 1629g) and subject to subsection (c), the Secretary shall—

(1) approve the application; and

(2) issue a patent for the Federal land to the person that submitted the application.

(c) TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The patent issued under subsection (b) shall—

(A) only be for the surface rights to the Federal land; and

(B) be subject to the terms and conditions of any certificate issued under section 41 of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (43 U.S.C. 1629g), including terms and conditions providing that—

(i) the patent is subject to valid existing rights, including any right of the United States to income derived, directly or indirectly, from a lease, license, permit, right-of-way, or easement on the Federal land; and

(ii) the United States shall reserve an interest in deposits of oil, gas, and coal on the Federal land, including the right to explore, mine, and remove the minerals on portions of the Federal land that the Secretary determines to be prospectively valuable for development.

(2) ADDITIONAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—The Secretary may require any additional terms and conditions for the issuance of the patent under subsection (a) that the Secretary determines to be appropriate to protect the interests of the United States.

Mrs. MURRAY. I ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported amendment be agreed to, the bill, as amended, be read a third time and passed, and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The committee-reported amendment was agreed to.

The bill (S. 404), as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

Mrs. MURRAY. Thank you, Madam President.

I know the town of Darrington will thank you as well.

PROTECTING VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS AND EMERGENCY RESPONDERS ACT OF 2014—Continued

Mrs. MURRAY. I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SESSIONS. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COONS). Without objection, it is so ordered.

RODRIGUEZ NOMINATION

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, the Judiciary Committee, of which I am a member, voted out the nomination of Leon Rodriguez to be Director of the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, also known as USCIS. This agency has been at the center of the collapse of immigration enforcement in America, and Mr. Rodriguez, if confirmed, will—it seems certain—continue to accelerate that collapse. I think it is an important issue for all of us to talk about. It is not so much about him personally, but it is what he is going to be asked to do.

This is about what has been happening at Homeland Security—and USCIS is an important part of that—and how it is impacting the rule of law in America and immigration enforcement in America—or nonenforcement. It is a very serious matter. What I am going to say today is based on my best judgment of how and why it is happening and why this Congress needs to speak up about it.

I have an article from the Washington Post, which is dated December 18, a few months ago. The article in the Washington Post is headlined ''Federal Workers' Job Satisfaction Falls, with Homeland Security Depart. Ranking Lowest Again.''

It goes on to say:

> Federal employees who deal with homeland security matters remain some of the government's least-satisfied, as overall workforce morale hit its lowest point in a decade, according to a report that began ranking agencies on such issues in 2003.

It goes on to say:

> The Department of Homeland Security, a perennial bottom-dweller in the ''Best Places to Work in the Federal Government'' rankings, marked its third consecutive year of decline and its second straight year of being last among the 19 largest agencies. This is not acceptable, and I raised that issue with Secretary Napolitano repeatedly at the hearings.

I will remind my colleagues that the officers association of another one of the three core immigration agencies—the Immigration and Customs Enforcement Service—unanimously voted no confidence in their then-Director John Norton mainly because he refused to allow them to comply with their duty under the law to enforce immigration laws in America. We had the Director of ICE and—you will learn—the Director of USCIS, and I suggest the Homeland Security Director, investing their time and effort in seeing that the laws of the United States were not enforced rather than being enforced.

This gentleman is not prepared to lead this job if he were to be supported in his activity, but, in fact, he was sent here because he will not rock the boat. He will be given this position to continue this policy of nonenforcement, even against the will of the officers who serve under him.

The last thing we should do is put someone in a critical law enforcement position, as these are, who doesn't know anything about it, No. 1, and who is going to carry out President Obama's policies, which is fundamentally not to enforce the law. I know there are people who think that is an exaggeration, but I am going to talk about it, and we are going to keep talking about it, and we are going to show what the facts are. This is a serious matter.

Mr. Rodriguez is not a trained administrator. He has never led a police department. He has never led and managed a real law enforcement agency. He has been a prosecutor of white-collar crime cases. He served for several years in the civil rights part of Homeland Security, but he has not managed the officers out there on the ground who are trying to deal with violent criminal aliens and get them deported and all the gimmicks that they use to get around that. He was a chief of staff to Mr. Perez, the head of the civil rights division in the Department of Justice. Mr. Perez is nearly a radical pro-amnesty nonenforcement leader himself. They were both members of CASA de Maryland, which is very much a pro-amnesty activist group that proposes ideas that are outside the mainstream.

I assume Majority Leader REID will bring this nomination up for a vote in

the Senate, and it will be an important moment. Will the Senators vote to defend the integrity of the immigration laws we passed or will they help install someone to one of the most important positions in government who will further erode and undermine those laws? This is the question we are dealing with. We need to be honest about it. I don't think there is any mystery here.

First, Mr. Rodriguez lacks the normal background and experience for a position such as this. He doesn't have it. I am not saying he is not a good civil rights lawyer or white-collar crime lawyer, but he doesn't have the leadership experience to lead an agency such as this. His only apparent encounter with immigration was his service on the board of CASA de Maryland, which encourages illegal immigrants to defy law enforcement. It has been a very active group.

Tellingly, Mr. Rodriguez refused to answer questions regarding whether he believes an illegal immigrant who is ordered deported or convicted of a felony criminal offense or convicted of multiple misdemeanors or convicted of a single sex-related offense or convicted of a single drunk driving offense or known to be a gang member should be eligible for legal status in America. That is a pretty fair question to ask a nominee to this important position because USCIS evaluates people as to whether they have the requisites to be given legal status and a pathway to citizenship in America.

Mr. Rodriguez would not even say whether someone who has been denied legal status should be deported. So they come in and ask for legal status, and it is turned down, and he was asked: Should that person get to stay in the country or should that person be deported? There is only one answer to that question. If you are not eligible to be in the country and you had your hearing and you have been denied legal status, there is only one answer, and that is you should be deported. These should not be difficult questions for someone who wants to head an agency that is charged with ensuring the integrity of our system.

The President has summarily suspended entire portions of immigration law, granting unilateral reprieve to people based on everything from family connection to age of illegal entry, and criminal record. He just issues an order.

The Los Angeles Times reported earlier this week on the collapse of interior enforcement. They reported that ''immigrants living illegally in most of the continental U.S. are less likely to be deported today than before Obama came into office.'' Boy, that is an understatement. That is an absolute fact. It went on to state:

> Expulsions of people who are settled and working in the United States have fallen steadily since his first year in office, and are down more than 40% since 2009.

It is really a lot more than 40 percent. They went on to quote the former Acting Director of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, John Sandweg, who left a little over a month ago. He was a top official in the Obama administration. He said: ''If you are a run-of-the-mill immigrant here illegally, your odds of getting deported are close to zero.'' This is a guy who held an important position in the Department of Homeland Security. His duty was to identify people who are here illegally.

In effect, the administration's policy is that unless you commit a felony or other serious crime, you are free to illegally work here, claim certain tax benefits, and obtain fraudulent documents so you can get a job. Apparently having a fraudulent document to get a job you are not lawfully entitled to get is not something that gets you deported in this administration. Not apparently, that is the policy if truth be known.

It is an open invitation to every would-be illegal immigrant to come to the United States unlawfully and to every visa holder who is here lawfully on a visa for a limited time to ignore the expiration date of their visa and remain unlawfully in the country. That is the law the President has set.

If the immigration laws are not enforceable by virtue of the plain fact that they are duly passed laws by the Congress of the United States, then there is no real immigration law. Anyone who wishes is free to come on visa, let the visa expire and never leave. If you can get past the border in some fashion unlawfully, they can stay and nobody is going to impact you.

Yet, on March 13, after meeting with representatives of various amnesty groups, the Homeland Security Secretary—the top man, Mr. Johnson—reaffirmed that he is working to fulfill the President's request to reduce enforcement even further. It is astonishing that the President would order a review of enforcement policies, not for the purpose of repairing enforcement flaws but to weaken it even more.

According to a March 14, 2014, Los Angeles Times article quoting administrative officials:

> The changes under review would effectively stop most deportations of [illegal immigrants] with no criminal convictions other than violations.

So any fraudulent documents that are used to come here and violate immigration laws or get a job or get into the country unlawfully don't count. You can do this all day. Come on down. This means that even fugitive aliens, and those who have committed immigration felonies would now be exempt from enforcement. It would represent a total evisceration of immigration law, including those laws designed to protect the wages and jobs of working Americans.

I will say parenthetically—we just had a vote on unemployment insurance because we continue to have a very high unemployment rate. We extended the normal limit on unemployment benefits to people who don't have a job, and now we are doing nothing to protect American workers from people who are illegally here and taking jobs they need for their families.

In addition to that, the Senate passed a comprehensive immigration bill that would double the number of guest workers—the people who come here just to work—at a time of high unemployment.

We have a bill that will be coming up soon, I suppose, to raise the minimum wage. Why? Because wages have not risen sufficiently. We are not happy about that. In fact, wages have been declining for over a decade. This is a serious trend.

Dr. Borjas at Harvard attributes a good deal of that to the large flow of immigration, particularly in lower income Americans who are being hammered by this large flow of lower skilled foreign workers. It is supply and demand.

Why are wages not going up, colleagues? Do you believe in the free market? They are not going up because we have more workers than we have jobs.

Mr. Sperling, the President's former top economic adviser, admitted a few weeks ago that there are three applicants for every job in America. The last thing we need to be doing is doubling the number of foreign workers brought into the country and not enforcing the law with regard to people who have entered illegally, isn't that correct? I mean, can't we agree on issues such as that?

In 2012—go back to this, the problems—and people need to know this. The mainstream media does not want to talk about it. They don't tend to report it, but it has been out there for months—years. It is the reality. This is what a 2012 inspector general report of the Department of Homeland Security—this is their own inspector general, who serves at the pleasure of the Homeland Security Secretary. They issued a report which found that senior officials at USCIS—that is the Citizenship and Immigration Services, where this individual will be the head—they found that senior officials at USCIS have been pressuring employees to rubberstamp applications for immigration benefits despite obvious signs of fraud.

Kenneth Palinkas, president of the National Citizenship and Immigration Services Council—the union representing 12,000 adjudicators, officers, and staff—issued a statement in May of 2013 that echoed the findings of the report. This is what Mr. Palinkas's group said:

> USCIS adjudications officers are pressured to rubberstamp applications instead of conducting diligent case review and investigations. The culture at USCIS encourages all applications to be approved, discouraging proper investigation into red flags and discouraging denial of applications. USCIS has been turned into an approval machine.

This is not acceptable. What are we paying 18,000 officers to do? Don't the

American people expect that they are supposed to be reviewing applications, not rubberstamping them; identifying people who may be terrorists or criminals or have no likelihood of producing anything worthwhile in America, who are not going to be successful in America, and who may be otherwise unlawfully eligible to enter, while we turn people down who have the lawful right to enter and put them on a backlog? It doesn't make any sense.

According to Mr. Palinkas:

> USCIS has created an almost insurmountable bureaucracy which often prevents USCIS adjudications officers from contacting and coordinating with ICE agents and officers in cases that should have their involvement.

Look, the ICE officers are kind of like the criminal investigators. They deal with people who are apprehended inside the country. They deal with people who have been arrested or in jail on one cause or another—assaults, drugs, violence, criminality. So USCIS is evaluating paperwork to see if somebody is qualified, and they have some red flag, and they would like to call the ICE officers to see if this is the same guy who committed an assault or an armed robbery a few years ago, and they are being discouraged from doing that. What is this? It is exactly the opposite of what we are paying them to do.

Mr. Palinkas continues:

> USCIS officers are pressured to approve visa applications for individuals that ICE agents have determined should be placed into deportation proceedings.

So they are pressuring them to approve these individuals who have not been approved.

I see Senator WARREN is here, and I will wrap up. I didn't realize she had been approved to speak at this time, and I will wrap up briefly.

We need to put an end to this lawlessness, and the next Director of USCIS must ensure the integrity of our immigration system—it is just that simple—as his mission statement calls for him to do. They must be independent and able to stand up for the rule of law under what undoubtedly will be tremendous political pressure from an administration and pro-amnesty activist groups who seem to be dominating the agenda and who have little interest in seeing the great classical American rule of law enforced.

Mr. Rodriguez, unfortunately, I am convinced is not that person. He would not be the right person if he really had the support of his leadership. He just doesn't have the background. He has never managed a major agency with 18,000 employees or anything like it. He does not have any experience on the frontlines of what they do every day and how they do it. But it is even worse because—look, why didn't they choose somebody who is experienced in DHS? Why didn't they choose a police chief or a military officer, someone who knows how to lead and manage a big agency such as this one, somebody with independence and integrity? Why? Because they don't want somebody with independence and integrity committed to the enforcement of law. They have already decided they are not enforcing the law, and they want somebody such as this Casa de Maryland protege to go into that agency who is not going to enforce the law.

It is a serious statement I make, and I think it is fundamentally accurate. I am just buffaloed that this is the fact.

Mr. Jonathan Turley, a constitutional lawyer who has written about government issues and constitutional issues for quite a number of years—Professor Turley has written recently and participated in a discussion where he said that what the President is doing with regard to immigration is beyond any justifiable utilization of prosecutorial discretion, that it amounts to a nullification of law by the President, who takes an oath and is constitutionally required to see that the laws of this country are faithfully carried out.

This is a very serious matter. We need to talk about it. This nomination sort of provides us an opportunity to recognize what is happening, and the American people are going to need to speak up. We need to be able to change what is happening to restore the great American heritage of law.

I thank the Chair and yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

MINIMUM WAGE

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, it has taken us 4 months, but we are finally on the verge of passing a long-overdue emergency extension of unemployment benefits. So I come to the floor this afternoon to urge my colleagues to continue supporting America's working families by raising the minimum wage.

Over the past 50 years the value of the minimum wage has sharply declined. In 1968 the minimum wage was high enough to keep a working parent with a family of three out of poverty. In 1980 the minimum wage was at least high enough to keep a working parent with a family of two out of poverty. Today the minimum wage isn't even high enough to keep a fully employed mother and a baby out of poverty. This is fundamentally wrong. Anyone who works full time should not live in poverty.

For nearly half a century, as we came out of the Great Depression, we lived by the basic principle that we all do better when we work together and build opportunities for everyone. For nearly half a century, as our country got richer our workers got richer, and as our workers got richer our country got richer. As the pie got bigger, we all got a little bit more. That is how it was, and that is how we built America's great middle class.

But that is not how it works now for low-income workers. Dr. Arin Dube of the University of Massachusetts has explained that if the minimum wage had kept up with increases in productivity, it would be $22 an hour today. But it didn't keep up. So today, while corporate profits soar, millions of hard-working moms and dads are left behind, working full time and still living in poverty.

Democrats aren't proposing to increase the minimum wage to $22 an hour. Our proposal is much more modest—a raise to $10.10 an hour. That is modest by comparison, but for at least 14 million children who depend on a parent whose wages would go up as a result of this legislation, this increase will make their lives a whole lot more secure.

This bill is about the lives of minimum-wage workers, but it is also about every taxpayer in America and about the corporate welfare taxpayers are forced to dole out when these companies pay poverty-level wages.

More than half of low-wage working families participate in government assistance programs for food, for health care, and for other expenses. A study by researchers at UC Berkeley and the University of Illinois show that we spend about $240 billion a year providing benefits to working families through food stamps, Medicaid, and other antipoverty programs.

When big companies pay poverty-level wages and then count on the government to cover basic expenses for their employees, they get a boost from every American taxpayer who helps pick up the ticket for food stamps and Medicaid. Taxpayer dollars are being used to boost the profits of private companies that don't want to pay their employees enough to keep them out of poverty. That is corporate welfare, plain and simple.

I understand why some businesses might like to keep it that way, but American taxpayers have had enough of this corporate welfare. American workers have had enough of this corporate welfare. America has had enough of this corporate welfare.

This is an uphill fight. Those big corporations that pay poverty-level wages want to keep wages the way they are. And why not? It is more money for corporate dividends and CEO bonuses. So those companies hire armies of lobbyists and lawyers who lean on Washington politicians to keep things exactly the way they are. Minimum-wage workers don't have an army of lobbyists and lawyers, and American taxpayers don't either. But Congress doesn't work for those big companies. We work for the workers and the taxpayers and the voters who sent us here.

It is time to call out this corporate welfare for what it is, and it is time to fight back. It has been 7 years since Congress last increased the minimum wage. Senator Ted Kennedy led that fight, and I am proud to carry that fight forward today. It is time to honor work again, time to honor people who get up every day and bust their tails to try to build a life for themselves and their children. It is time to increase the minimum wage.

Thank you, Mr. President. I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to speak and that Senators MURKOWSKI, BEGICH, and WICKER be allowed to join me in a colloquy as they come to the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, thank you very much.

PIRATE FISHING

Mr. President, we are coming to the floor today because the four of us serve as the cochairs of the Senate Oceans Caucus. I know the Presiding Officer from Delaware has a keen interest in oceans issues as well, and we appreciate his support for the caucus.

We have worked very hard in this caucus to find bipartisan common ground on issues that relate to the seas and to our oceans, and one of the areas we have worked on is the area that is described in the jargon as IUU fishing, which means illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing. The better word for it, the clearer word for it, the more accurate word for it is pirate fishing.

These are fishermen around the world who go to sea and they fish above legal limits, they fish out of season, they fish for catches they are not allowed to catch, they fish in waters they are not allowed to fish in, and then they come to shore and market their illicit product. When they do that, they hurt legitimate fishermen and they hurt American fishermen in two ways. First of all, fish migrate around the globe. If they are knocked down, damaged, and caught illegally in other areas, then the American fishery for that same species is hurt. The second is that depresses the global price for fish. These people can flood the market with illegal fish. That drops the price through the law of supply and demand, and now our American fishermen—who are fishing lawfully, who are abiding by the catch limits, who are fishing in the right seasons and places—suffer a disadvantage in the pricing when their fish get to market.

So this is an important issue for our States, and it is not for nothing that we are all coastal State Senators who are here to express our support for action on these treaties.

In the United States, commercial fish landings are over $5 billion in revenue a year. Recreational anglers spend more than $25 billion a year. So this is big business, and pirate fishing is a big hit to our big business. Pirate fishing losses have been estimated at between $10 billion and $24 billion every year. When you consider that our whole recreational fishing industry is only roughly $26 billion—and this is a $24 billion raid, basically, on the international fisheries—it is important that we can do this.

So there is a package of treaties that has come out of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. There are four of them. Three of them are traditional fishing treaties covering the South Pacific, the North Pacific, and the Northwest Atlantic fisheries. You can only imagine what the North Pacific fishery means for Alaskan fishermen and what the Northwest Atlantic fishery means for our northeastern fishermen. It is very important that we get these treaties cleared through the Senate.

I am delighted that Chairman MENENDEZ and his ranking member Senator CORKER have passed these bills through the Foreign Relations Committee with very strong bipartisan support. I think we have a really good chance to get something done in a bipartisan fashion that is good for our industry and also the right thing to do.

It is simply unfair when international pirate fishers are able to knock down the fisheries market internationally and take away product that we would otherwise catch.

I see the senior Senator from Alaska has joined me on the floor. I just mentioned the North Pacific treaty, which I know has specific relevance to her State.

We are in a parliamentary position where we have unanimous consent to engage in a colloquy—Senator MURKOWSKI and I and Senator WICKER and Senator BEGICH as they arrive. So I now yield the floor to Senator MURKOWSKI. Let me say how much I appreciate her leadership. She has been the cochair of the Oceans Caucus. It was significantly her initiative that we should focus on pirate fishing, and I applaud all the work she has done, together with Senator WICKER, who has now joined us.

I yield to the Senator from Alaska.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I thank my friend and my colleague from Rhode Island, who also is my cochair on the Senate Oceans Caucus. As he has noted, this is an issue of IUU fishing—illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing—and, really, that is too polite a term for it. It is really piracy—piracy of our fisheries.

Senator WHITEHOUSE has been very engaged in working on so many of these key issues. I think this is quite important what we are discussing today—the positive step forward, not only for fishermen in my State but for fishermen around the Nation.

I would like to thank those who have been involved in this effort in addition to Senator WHITEHOUSE—Senator WICKER, as well as Senator BEGICH, for their efforts to help advance these treaties. I would also like to recognize Senator MENENDEZ and Senator CORKER for their support through the Foreign Relations Committee process.

It should come as no surprise to any of my colleagues here in terms of Alaska's role with our fisheries. Alaska leads all States in terms of both volume and value of commercial fisheries, with approximately 1.84 million metric tons, worth $1.3 billion. The seafood coming out of Alaska accounts for over 52 percent of our Nation's commercial seafood harvest. Our commercial, sport, and subsistence fisheries are really at the heart of coastal Alaska. They are the source of economic livelihood for more than 80,000 Alaskans who are directly or indirectly employed in the industry. I count my family as part of Alaska's fishing families who support very well managed, sustainable fisheries.

But what we have seen from these acts of piracy—this illegal fishing—let's take, for instance, the crab fisheries, is very serious. Illegally harvested Russian king crab has been a real problem for us in Alaska since the early 1990s. In 2011 NOAA law enforcement seized 112 metric tons of illegally harvested Russian king crab that was being shipped to U.S. markets through the Port of Seattle. So what happens here is you have the Russians, who are taking too many of the king crab, illegally harvesting them and then effectively dumping them on the U.S. markets. Well, what do you think that does, then, to the price of the crab we are catching here lawfully in the United States? It is depressing the price of crab. Now, I know this. I mentioned that my family is in the fishing business. My cousin is involved in the crab industry. They have seen the prices of crab go down between 20 and 25 percent because of this illegal harvesting by the Russians.

This is not just a small problem. This is not something that is just happening right now. This has been happening for decades now, and it needs to be stopped. I do want to take a moment to express my appreciation for the amazing work our U.S. Coast Guard does, as well as the other agencies, NOAA and the State Department, their combined efforts they are making to combat pirate fishing. It is greatly appreciated by me and my constituents.

We have four treaties in front of us that will help to level this playing field and ensure that our coastal fishing communities will face less unfair competition from pirate fishing vessels that simply have not been held to the high fisheries management standards we have here in the United States.

Two of the treaties we are looking at are particularly important for my State. One is the Port State Measures Agreement. This sets global standards to combat IUU fishing, and it helps to protect our U.S. fishermen by keeping the foreign, illegally caught fish from entering the global stream of commerce. It is hugely important for us.

The other one I would like to highlight is the Convention on the Conservation and Management of High Seas Fisheries Resources in the North

Pacific Ocean. This will ensure that the North Pacific Fisheries Commission is established and also helps to ensure that there is a fisheries management regime in place to deter this IUU fishing within the region adjacent to Alaska. So it is critically important when it comes to our fisheries and the sustainability of our fisheries and how we manage our fisheries.

We are trying to play by the rules. We expect others to be doing the same.

So, again, I appreciate the work so many have done to help advance these treaties that are before us.

I see my colleague from Mississippi on the floor, and I would like to hear again from him in terms of support for these treaties.

With that, I yield to my friend from Mississippi.

Mr. WICKER. I thank my colleague.

Mr. President, I do not know if I need to seek recognition to be in a colloquy, but I do appreciate the remarks of the Senator from Rhode Island and the Senator from Alaska.

I rise this afternoon to join them in wholehearted support of these four important measures. They are an important step in combating—the term we use, as the Senator from Alaska said—is illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing, IUU fishing, but I will also join my colleagues in saying that it is nothing short of pirate fishing.

It has broad economic, social, and ecological consequences. I am glad to join in support of these four measures. They have been hotlined. For those within the sound of our voices today that do not understand that, it is an expedited way to move things on a unanimous basis. I have every reason to believe that it will only be a matter of time before we have these hotline requests cleared on both sides of the aisle.

Alaska and Rhode Island have their interests in this. I can assure you that Mississippi does too. Mississippi is home to many hard-working fishing communities. They depend on the oceans for their livelihoods. We are the sixth largest seafood-producing State in the country. Many people might not realize that. We are second in the Gulf of Mexico to the State of Louisiana.

Pirate fishing hurts our fishermen. Our fishermen abide by the law. Pirate fishing puts them at a competitive disadvantage, as the Senator said. These fishermen who are small business owners, for the most part, should not be penalized for playing by the rules. International cooperation and standards are needed to protect local commerce and the environment. That is what the Agreement on Port State Measures would do.

Under the agreement, vessels carrying illegally harvested fish would not be allowed to enter our ports and thereby dilute the market with fraudulent product. In this way, the agreement would protect U.S. fishermen, seafood buyers, and consumers, while also supporting marine habitat, coastal economies, and coastal communities.

Estimates show that pirate fishing costs as much as $23 billion per year globally and poses a serious threat to the sustainability of marine habitat. In parts of the world it accounts for up to 40 percent of the wild marine fish caught.

Other treaties under consideration address high seas fisheries resources. As the Senator from Alaska said, one in the North Pacific, yet another in the South Pacific, as well as amendments to the 1978 Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization Convention. These amendments simply update the conventions with standards similar to those that we in the United States use for our domestic waters.

These treaties can serve as powerful tools for showing that the United States is committed to enforcing fisheries laws and encouraging other countries to follow suit. Like other fisheries treaties that the Senate has ratified, they would protect America's interests, and they would protect American workers.

Our commercial and recreational fishing industries are responsible for 1.7 million American jobs and countless more at docks and facilities for processing and distribution. In summary, these four measures are good for the economy, they are good for the seafood industry, they are good for consumers, they are good for small business people, and they are good for our commercial fishermen.

It is an opportunity for us to strike a blow for bipartisanship and internationalism. I am glad to see the widespread support. I look forward to the measures being cleared on both sides of the aisle. I see my other distinguished colleague from Alaska here.

I yield the floor.

Mr. BEGICH. Mr. President, what you will find with these issues is that they are bipartisan. Fish know no boundaries of political persuasion. They look at what is important to them. We like to catch them and eat them. So it does not matter where they come from, whether from the seas of Alaska or from the gulf. So I thank the Senator for the opportunity to say a few words.

To Senator WHITEHOUSE, my thanks for organizing and allowing this opportunity. I will tell you, we do not mean to outnumber you, having two Alaskans here. We are so dedicated to this issue. I can tell you having this opportunity to have these four treaties ratified is incredibly important for us.

I know lots of times we talk about illegal, unreported, unregulated fishing. I like to simply call it pirate fishing. These are people who steal our fish out of our waters and then try to sell them back to us. Clearly it is what it is: stealing our stock and packing our fisheries and passing, as was just mentioned, the cost to our markets of $23 billion a year nationwide—worldwide—because of these pirate fishermen and fisherwomen.

Alaskan crab fishermen, for example—for people who like to watch a reality show, ''The Deadliest Catch'' is one of those. ''The Deadliest Catch'' guys tell me that there is over a half a billion dollars in lost crab because of illegal imports that are coming in. They may be stolen or labeled incorrectly.

The human impact is even more appalling, when you think about it. The working conditions on those boats are deplorable. They do not call them ''rust buckets'' for nothing. They are. They are dangerous. They are unsafe. There is forced labor, human trafficking, slavery. You name the list; it is everything you can imagine in these ships.

Again, you can call it what you want, but at the end of the day, what is happening is pirate fishing. They are stealing the fish. Again, illegal fishing is a stateless criminal enterprise. There are no flags. They steal fish with impunity. They victimize their workers. We need to fight back. These treaties help do it.

The Coast Guard—we love our coasties. It does not matter if they are in Alaska or around the country. They do an incredible job. They track down these criminals on the high seas and chase them down. You can see in this picture where they have caught one of the ships—our Coast Guard cutters in the North Pacific a few years back.

There is no question when they catch these ships what should happen to them, from my perspective. I am a little more radical on this. I know we will have these treaties, which are important. But you know, in my view, if they catch a ship like this, they should take the crew off, take the hazardous waste off, and sink it to the bottom of the ocean. Then we are done. The people will get a clear message.

I know some lawyers object to my idea. I recognize that. But let me tell you, we had some ships—this one, for example. As you can see, it is not only a rust bucket; you can see the rust bleeding off of it. This is one of these ships that was washed into our waters from the tsunami in Japan. You can see a well-placed artillery shell hit it in the middle because they decided to sink it.

So after the Coast Guard's lawyers thought it was not a good idea, we had a piece of equipment that they then went ahead and sunk. I will tell you, you do this kind of activity, and I guarantee you the pirates of this country who are trying to steal our fish will get a clear and simple message.

But it is important to go after these pirates. The Coast Guard—in this case it was an old rust bucket they sunk to the bottom. I have taken to the floor many times to say they need better tools, more cutters, more patrol aircraft to do their job and increase their capacity in going after these pirates—not only pirates on fishing, but also smuggling drugs and all the other work that these illegal ships are doing that they need to go after. We need to have tougher laws. That is what these treaties do. They strengthen the laws. They

are bipartisan. The Port State Measures Agreement tightens rules on seafood imports, provides for better inspection, and lists the pirate boats so we know who to keep out of our waters.

Others deal with protecting high seamounts and other needed provisions specific to the North Pacific, the South Pacific, and the Atlantic. They have been in years of negotiations. I applaud our teams at the State Department and NOAA and the many Senators who have engaged in this issue to solve this problem, to create more tools for us to enforce.

We need to do our part. We need to support these treaties. Again, it is a bipartisan effort. We need to support these treaties because it will support our fishermen, support our economies throughout the ocean States and the Gulf States and throughout the States that impact with fisheries. We also need to do it because of the rule of law and protecting and respecting the rule of law and human dignity that we insist on.

When we think of the impact of these individuals who are trapped on these boats—literally, the human trafficking, slavery, and forced work that these guys are taken to on these pirate ships is appalling. We should be appalled just by that fact alone, besides the billions they steal from the waters and try to resell from their harvest in our oceans illegally.

So let me just sum up by saying again that I know my idea of sinking a pirate ship may be a little radical. But the Coast Guard did it on one ship. My view is, why not more? But at least we will have some treaties, maybe with this work on the floor tonight. Again, to Senator WHITEHOUSE, I thank him for organizing all of us who care so deeply about the fishing industry and these treaties that will make a difference. When you put more tools in the toolbox, it will have an impact.

You can rest assured I will do everything I can to gather the support necessary to make sure these treaties pass. I will stop at this point. I appreciate the effort. Thank you for allowing me to have visual aids. Sometimes words are great, but visual aids make impact. Hopefully, people can see. Hopefully, these pirates will see we are serious and this is not some movie that Johnny Depp is in either. We are going after those pirate ships.

Thank you for the opportunity to say a few words.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Mississippi and the two Senators from Alaska for participating in this bipartisan effort. Let me conclude by reading something that Chris Lischewski, who is the CEO and President of Bumble Bee Foods, wrote to me:

> Everybody loves a tuna fish sandwich. And Bumble Bee has been in that industry for a long time. They are a proud American company. But tuna travel great distances. They are a fish, that if foreign pirates go after them and fish them illegally, and fish them unsustainably and knock that population down, that comes home to roost for good old Bumble Bee Foods.

Here is what the CEO of that company said:

> IUU fishing is a multi-billion dollar industry that undermines our global conservation and sustainability efforts.

By that he means his company.

> Illegal fishing penalizes legitimate fishermen and processors and it must be stopped. While the United States has done a good job at developing laws to detect and deter IUU fishing, other nations have not. We strongly support the agreement on Port State Measures to prevent, deter and eliminate the illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, because it creates an obligation for other nations to take action against IUU fishing.

I yield the floor. If any of my colleague wish to speak, let me just say that they do so with my gratitude for this bipartisan moment in the Senate and in support of the jobs that the fishing industry provides for our constituents.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I think we are waiting here for a couple of minutes. I will use a couple of minutes to speak again to those who come to our assistance when it comes to the enforcement of our fisheries laws—the men and women of our Coast Guard, NOAA, and our other enforcement agencies.

Senator BEGICH has somewhat dramatically shown some of the scenes. This is not easy stuff out there. When you have somebody who we have reason to believe has been operating illegally in violation of our agreed fisheries laws, more likely than not they are not just going to stand by and let you board and take a peek. They are going to take chase.

As we are hearing, as we are trying to find some evidence of the missing Malaysian jetliner, the oceans out there are pretty darn big. Usually, the conditions are not ones in which you would want to go out on a pleasure cruise.

Our men and women who are engaged in those enforcement efforts are truly heroes to us in terms of the efforts that they make, the energy that they expend, and the risk that they place themselves at.

So day after day, as they cover our waters, as they work to ensure that there is a effective management of our fisheries, their efforts to enforce these laws, their efforts to provide for a level of protection and safety, their efforts to bring the pirates to justice are truly to be applauded.

I thank the Senator for the opportunity to make that brief statement. I see my friend and colleague is at the ready, hopefully to announce that we will be able to move to passage of these significant treaties.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. It appears that we will shortly be able to do that. This is a happy coincidence in which four Senators in bipartisan fashion have come to the floor to support action on four treaties that will help protect our fishing industry, and it turns out that at this moment the treaties have been cleared for ratification on both sides of the aisle. In a moment I will be able to take us through those parliamentary steps, but on behalf of all four of us, I should express my appreciation to Chairman MENENDEZ and to his ranking member Senator CORKER for the leadership they have shown in getting these treaties through the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. I know it was in a strongly bipartisan fashion. I think it was in a unanimously bipartisan fashion.

The Presiding Officer is a member of that distinguished committee, and I want to express my appreciation to the Presiding Officer, Senator COONS of Delaware.

It is good to be able to do these kinds of things in a bipartisan fashion. It reminds me a little bit of our friend Senator ENZI's 80/20 rule: We get 80 percent done in the Senate without incident, but then, of course, nobody notices. The other 20 percent we fight over, and the fight gets 80 percent of the attention.

So it is a happy moment when we can do something good for our industry, good for our fisheries, do it in a bipartisan fashion, and do it smoothly.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

AGREEMENT ON PORT STATE MEASURES TO PREVENT, DETER, AND ELIMINATE ILLEGAL, UNREPORTED, AND UNREGULATED FISHING

CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF THE HIGH SEAS FISHERIES RESOURCES IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC OCEAN

CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF HIGH SEAS FISHERIES RESOURCES IN THE NORTH PACIFIC OCEAN

AMENDMENT TO THE CONVENTION ON FUTURE MULTILATERAL COOPERATION IN THE NORTHWEST ATLANTIC FISHERIES

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to consider Calendar Nos. 1, 2, 3, and 4, treaty document Nos. 112–4, 113–1, 113–2, 113–3, en bloc; that the treaties be considered as having advanced through the various parliamentary stages up to and including the presentation of the resolutions of ratification; that any committee declarations be agreed to as applicable; that any statements be printed in the RECORD as if read; further, that when the votes on the resolutions of ratification are taken, they be in the order reported, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon

the table en bloc; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action and the Senate then resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The treaties will be stated.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Treaty document No. 112–4, a resolution of advice and consent to ratification of the Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter, and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated Fishing;

Treaty document No. 113–1, a resolution of advice and consent to ratification of the Convention on the Conservation and Management of the High Seas Fisheries Resources in the South Pacific Ocean;

Treaty document No. 113–2, a resolution of advice and consent to ratification of the Convention on the Conservation and Management of High Seas Fisheries Resources in the North Pacific Ocean; and

Treaty document No. 113–3, a resolution of advice and consent to ratification of the Amendment to the Convention on Future Multilateral Cooperation in the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. I ask for a division vote on each of the resolutions of ratification.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

A division vote has been requested.

On treaty document No. 112–4, Senators in favor of the resolution of ratification will rise and stand until counted.

Those opposed will rise and stand until counted.

On a division vote, two-thirds of the Senators present having voted in the affirmative, the resolution of ratification is agreed to.

The resolution of ratification is as follows:

Resolved, (two-thirds of the Senators present concurring therein),

Section 1. Senate Advice and Consent Subject to a Declaration.

The Senate advises and consents to the ratification of the Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter, and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated Fishing, done at the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, in Rome, Italy, November 22, 2009, and signed by the United States November 22, 2009 (the Agreement'') (Treaty Doc. 112–4), subject to 12 the declaration of section 2.

Sec. 2. Declaration.

The advice and consent of the Senate under section is subject to the following declaration: The Agreement is non self-executing.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. A division vote has been requested.

On treaty document No. 113–1, Senators in favor of the resolution of ratification will rise and stand until counted.

Those opposed will rise and stand until counted.

On a division vote, two-thirds of the Senators present having voted in the affirmative, the resolution of ratification is agreed to.

The resolution of ratification is as follows:

Resolved, (two-thirds of the Senators present concurring therein),

Section 1. Senate Advice and Consent Subject to a Declaration.

The Senate advises and consents to the ratification of the Convention on the Conservation and Management of High Seas Fishery Resources in the South Pacific Ocean, done at Auckland, New Zealand, November 14, 2009, and signed by the United States January 31, 2011 (the ''Convention'') (Treaty Doc. 113–1), subject to the declaration of section 2.

Sec. 2. Declaration.

The advice and consent of the Senate under section is subject to the following declaration: The Convention is not self-executing.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. A division vote has been requested.

On treaty document No. 113–2, Senators in favor of the resolution of ratification will rise and stand until counted.

Those opposed will rise and stand until counted.

On a division vote, two-thirds of the Senators present having voted in the affirmative, the resolution of ratification is agreed to.

The resolution of ratification is as follows:

Resolved, (two-thirds of the Senators present concurring therein),

Section 1. Senate Advice and Consent Subject to a Declaration.

The Senate advises and consents to the ratification of the Convention on the Conservation and Management of High Seas Fisheries Resources in the North Pacific Ocean, done at Tokyo February 24, 2012, and signed by the United States May 2, 2012 (the ''Convention'') (Treaty Doc. 113–2), subject to the declaration of section 2.

Sec. 2. Declaration.

The advice and consent of the Senate under section is subject to the following declaration: The Convention is not self-executing.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. A division vote has been requested.

On treaty document No. 113–3, Senators in favor of the resolution of ratification will rise and stand until counted.

Those opposed will rise and stand until counted.

On a division vote, two-thirds of the Senators present having voted in the affirmative, the resolution of ratification is agreed to.

The resolution of ratification is as follows:

Resolved, (two-thirds of the Senators present concurring therein),

Section 1. Senate Advice and Consent Subject to a Declaration.

The Senate advises and consents to the ratification of the Amendment to the Convention on Future Multilateral Cooperation in the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries, adopted at the Twenty-Ninth Annual Meeting of the North Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO) (the 10 ''Amendment'') in Lisbon, Portugal, September 28, 2007 (Treaty Doc. 113–3), subject to the declaration of section 2.

Sec. 2. Declaration.

The advice and consent of the Senate under section 1 is subject to the following declaration: The Amendment is not self-executing.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. I thank the Presiding Officer.

If there is no further business regarding these treaties, I yield the floor.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. MORAN. I ask unanimous consent to address the Senate as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO ALVIN BRENSING

Mr. MORAN. The story of Kansas is one that involves many people, many jobs, much ado about caring for others. Our State is a State of manufacturing workers, factory workers, teachers, farmers, and people who work hard every day to make a difference in their community and to make a difference in our State and Nation. Today I wish to pay tribute to one of those unsung heroes. In this case, it is a businessman, a volunteer, a husband, and a father who lived a full life before passing away in December of last year.

Alvin Brensing was born and raised on a farm outside of Hudson, a rural Central Kansas town with a population of 125. After high school, Brensing graduated with honors from Salt City Business College in Hutchison and in May 1937, at the age of 21, started working as a bookkeeper at the Stafford County Flour Mills.

As German immigrants, the Krug family realized that their American dream was going to be accomplished by establishing the flour mill more than a century ago. Alvin worked under William Krug and then Leonard Brim to help grow the company before being named its president in 1986. Under his leadership, Stafford County Flour Mills doubled its capacity and grew 2½ times its size. It was one of the last independent flour mills remaining in the United States, and the mill produces Hudson Cream Flour. Many of my colleagues and many Americans will have seen the bag of flour with the great symbol and emblem—Hudson Cream Flour. Hudson Cream Flour has a reputation around the Nation as a top-notch baking flour for its consistency and texture. It also serves as a tradition for this West Virginia family who wrote the company saying:

After using Hudson Cream Flour for all the years I have cooked . . . and can remember even my grandmother and mother using nothing else . . . I read for the first time the ''absolute satisfaction guarantee'' and really had a good laugh! I thought, if those people in Kansas only knew the absolute satisfaction my family has enjoyed from their product. The things we pass down in our family are good morals, good cooking, and Hudson Cream flour!

After Alvin's wife died in 1993, he came to miss the smell of fresh bread and soon began experimenting with ingredients. Alvin came up with three

recipes, including ''Al's Cinnamon Raisin Bread,'' which is included on the back of every Hudson Cream Flour bag.

Alvin always put farmers and customers first. Current Stafford County Flour Mills president Reuel Foote reflected that Alvin often said, ''Our word is our bond—if you agree to do something, you do it.''

While Alvin dedicated most of his life to ensuring the success and future of the mill, he was also a tireless volunteer in the Hudson community. Brensing took it upon himself to maintain Hudson's Trinity Cemetery, where his parents and his wife Zelda are buried. In fact, he upgraded a shed on the property into a building where loved ones can now comfortably look up the location of their loved ones' graves.

Alvin was also known as the local weatherman, collecting data for the National Weather Service from a local grain elevator. His daughters remember their dad turning the furnace on each Sunday morning to heat up the Trinity Community Church.

His legacy of leadership and volunteerism is what will live on as the Stafford County Flour Mills continue to support the community and educate youth, whether through the county 4–H Program or through the dozens of mill tours each year. The mill also continues Alvin's tradition of giving each schoolkid a 5-pound bag of flour after each tour to encourage them to experiment with recipes and baking.

Alvin taught through his actions that satisfaction in life comes from what you do for others rather than what you do for yourself. This is the legacy I want to pay tribute to today, and this is the legacy he lived and leaves behind for the next generation.

We want those who follow him and us to know they have their chance to return home, put down their roots, and raise their own families in places such as Hudson, KS. Our Nation faces so many challenges today, but we must remain committed to doing what it takes so that tomorrow and every day thereafter our children and grandchildren have the opportunity to enjoy that special way of life in places like Kansas and to pursue their own American dream.

I ask my colleagues to join me in paying tribute and remembering the life of a great Kansan, Alvin Brensing.

I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

DELTA XI CENTENNIAL

• Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, I wish to honor my brothers of Sigma Nu Fraternity, especially the Delta Xi Chapter at the University of Nevada, which is celebrating 100 years of leadership, service, and brotherhood this year.

Since its founding in 1869 at the Virginia Military Institute, Sigma Nu has installed over 279 chapters and initiated more than one-quarter of a million members, including myself, an initiate and alumni of the Epsilon Omicron Chapter at the University of Southern California. It is an honor to know our fraternity's mission—to develop ethical leaders inspired by the principles of love, honor, and truth—has prevailed for nearly a century.

The Delta Xi Chapter of our fraternal network is a standout among chapters in the Nation. Established by the Nevada Club at the turn of the 20th century, the brothers of Delta Xi have since initiated well over 1,900 members and awarded more than 100 deserving scholarships.

Their members not only prioritize their academic involvement within the University of Nevada system, but also give back to their local community through service. Their achievements and contributions to the community will only continue to grow as Sigma Nu is dedicated to fostering the personal growth of each man's mind, heart, and character. Through its dedication to leadership and philanthropic commitments, our fraternity has sustained a nationally renowned reputation.

As Delta Xi celebrates its centennial year, its members have much to be proud of and look forward to for many years to come. I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the Delta Xi Chapter of Sigma Nu.•

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Pate, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

REPORT RELATIVE TO THE ISSUANCE OF AN EXECUTIVE ORDER DECLARING A NATIONAL EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT TO THE UNUSUAL AND EXTRAORDINARY THREAT TO THE NATIONAL SECURITY AND FOREIGN POLICY OF THE UNITED STATES POSED BY THE SITUATION IN AND IN RELATION TO SOUTH SUDAN—PM 38

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs:

To the Congress of the United States:

Pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.) (IEEPA), I hereby report that I have issued an Executive Order (the ''order'') declaring a national emergency with respect to the unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States posed by the situation in and in relation to South Sudan.

The order does not target the country of South Sudan, but rather is aimed at persons who threaten the peace, stability, or security of South Sudan; commit human rights abuses against persons in South Sudan; or undermine democratic processes or institutions in South Sudan. The order provides authority for blocking the property and interests in property of any person determined by the Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Secretary of State:

To be responsible for or complicit in, or to have engaged in, directly or indirectly, any of the following in or in relation to South Sudan:

actions or policies that threaten the peace, security, or stability of South Sudan;

actions or policies that threaten transitional agreements or undermine democratic processes or institutions in South Sudan;

actions or policies that have the purpose or effect of expanding or extending the conflict in South Sudan or obstructing reconciliation or peace talks or processes;

the commission of human rights abuses against persons in South Sudan;

the targeting of women, children, or any civilians through the commission of acts of violence (including killing, maiming, torture, or rape or other sexual violence), abduction, forced displacement, or attacks on schools, hospitals, religious sites, or locations where civilians are seeking refuge, or through conduct that would constitute a serious abuse or violation of human rights or a violation of international humanitarian law;

the use or recruitment of children by armed groups or armed forces in the context of the conflict in South Sudan;

the obstruction of the activities of international peacekeeping, diplomatic, or humanitarian missions in

South Sudan, or of the delivery or distribution of, or access to, humanitarian assistance; or

attacks against United Nations missions, international security presences, or other peacekeeping operations;

To be a leader of (i) an entity, including any government, rebel militia, or other group, that has, or whose members have, engaged in any of the activities described above or (ii) an entity whose property and interests in property are blocked pursuant to the order;

To have materially assisted, sponsored, or provided financial, material, logistical, or technological support for, or goods or services in support of, any activity described above or any person whose property and interests in property are blocked pursuant to the order; or

To be owned or controlled by, or to have acted or purported to act for or on behalf of, directly or indirectly, any person whose property and interests in property are blocked pursuant to the order.

I have delegated to the Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Secretary of State, the authority to take such actions, including the promulgation of rules and regulations, and to employ all powers granted to the President by IEEPA as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of the order. All agencies of the United States Government are directed to take all appropriate measures within their authority to carry out the provisions of the order.

I am enclosing a copy of the Executive Order I have issued.

BARACK OBAMA.

THE WHITE HOUSE, *April 3, 2014*.

ENROLLED BILL PRESENTED

The Secretary of the Senate reported that on today, April 3, 2014, she had presented to the President of the United States the following enrolled bill:

S. 2183. An act United States international programming to Ukraine and neighboring regions.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC–5204. A communication from the Acting Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting, pursuant to law, the annual report of the National Security Education Program for fiscal year 2013; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–5205. A communication from the Acting Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting a report entitled ''Federal Voting Assistance Program's (FVAP) 2013 Annual Report to Congress''; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–5206. A communication from the Director of Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement: Clauses with Alternates-Research and Development Contracting'' ((RIN0750–AI10) (DFARS Case 2013–D026)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 26, 2014; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–5207. A communication from the Director of Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement: Clauses with Alternates-Quality Assurance'' ((RIN0750–AH95) (DFARS Case 2013–D004)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 26, 2014; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–5208. A communication from the Assistant to the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Application of the Revised Capital Framework to the Capital Plan and Stress Test Rules'' (RIN7100–AE–01 and RIN7100–AE–02) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 1, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–5209. A communication from the Assistant Director for Regulatory Affairs, Office of Foreign Assets Control, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Iranian Transactions and Sanctions Regulations'' (31 CFR Part 560) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 2, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–5210. A communication from the Director, Office of Financial Research, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Office's annual report on recruitment and retention, training and workforce development, and workforce flexibilities; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–5211. A communication from the Executive Director of the Office of Minority and Women Inclusion, Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Office's fiscal year 2013 Annual Report to Congress; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–5212. A communication from the Regulatory Specialist of the Legislative and Regulatory Activities Division, Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Technical Amendments: Removal of Rules Transferred to the Consumer Finance Protection Bureau; OCC Address Change'' (RIN1557–AD76) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 2, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–5213. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel for Legislation, Regulation and Energy Efficiency, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Energy Conservation Program: Energy Conservation Standards for Commercial Refrigeration Equipment'' (RIN1904–AC19) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 1, 2014; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC–5214. A communication from the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''The Chesapeake Bay Program 2013''; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–5215. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Virtual Currency'' (Notice 2014–21) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 1, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–5216. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Application of One-Per-Year Limit on IRA Rollovers'' (Announcement 2014–15) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 1, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–5217. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Modification of Revenue Procedure 2013–22'' (Rev. Proc. 2014–28) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 1, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–5218. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Guidance on Section 1.1502–75(b)'' (Rev. Proc. 2014–24) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 1, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–5219. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Applicable Federal Rates—April 2014'' (Rev. Rul. 2014–12) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 1, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–5220. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Announcement and Report Concerning Advance Pricing Agreements'' (Announcement 2014–14) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 1, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–5221. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to sections 36(c) and 36(d) of the Arms Export Control Act (DDTC 13–169); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–5222. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the activities of the Millennium Challenge Corporation during fiscal year 2013; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–5223. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20–303, ''Senior Citizen Real Property Tax Relief Act of 2014''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–5224. A communication from the Regulatory Coordinator, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Standards to Prevent, Detect, and Respond to Sexual Abuse and Assault in Confinement Facilities'' (RIN1653–AA65) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 2, 2014; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–5225. A communication from the Director, Administrative Office of the United States Courts, transmitting, pursuant to law, reports entitled ''Executive Summary of the 2013 Annual Report of the Director of the Administrative Office of the United States Courts'' and ''Judicial Business of the United States Courts''; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–5226. A communication from the Chairman of the National Health Care Workforce

Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the status of the Commission; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–5227. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a petition to add workers who were employed at the Joslyn Manufacturing and Supply Co. in Fort Wayne, Indiana, to the Special Exposure Cohort; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

PETITIONS AND MEMORIALS

The following petition or memorial was laid before the Senate and was referred or ordered to lie on the table as indicated:

POM–209. A concurrent resolution adopted by the General Assembly of the State of Ohio urging the President of the United States, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and the Congress to take prompt action to reduce the processing time for veterans' disability benefit claims; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 21

Whereas, The men and women of the United States armed forces have bravely and selflessly served our country; and

Whereas, The United States Department of Veterans Affairs disability benefits program provides monetary support to veterans whose military service has caused or aggravated a disabling medical condition; and

Whereas, The number of veterans applying for disability benefits has increased in recent years because of the large number of new veterans and the expansion of eligibility for benefits for certain service-connected diseases; and

Whereas, The United States Government Accountability Office reports that between fiscal years 2009 and 2012, the average length of time for the Department of Veterans Affairs to complete a disability claim increased from 161 days to 260 days; that the number of backlogged claims, which have been awaiting a decision for more than 125 days, has more than tripled since September 2009; and that appeals processing at the Department's regional offices has slowed by 56 per cent over the last several years: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That we, the members of the 130th General Assembly of the State of Ohio, urge the President of the United States, the United States Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and the Congress of the United States to take prompt action to reduce the processing time for veterans' disability benefit claims; and be it further

Resolved, That the Clerk of the House of Representatives transmit duly authenticated copies of this resolution to the President of the United States, the United States Secretary of Veterans Affairs, the President Pro Tempore and Secretary of the United States Senate, the Speaker and Clerk of the United States House of Representatives, each member of the Ohio Congressional delegation, and the news media of Ohio.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. TESTER, from the Committee on Indian Affairs, without amendment:

S. 161. A bill to extend the Federal recognition to the Little Shell Tribe of Chippewa Indians of Montana, and for other purposes.

S. 1074. A bill to extend Federal recognition to the Chickahominy Indian Tribe, the Chickahominy Indian Tribe-Easter Division, the Upper Mattaponi Tribe, the Rappahannock Tribe, Inc., the Monacan Indian Nation, and the Nansemond Indian Tribe.

By Mr. TESTER, from the Committee on Indian Affairs, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 1219. A bill to authorize the Pechanga Band of Luiseno Mission Indians Water Rights Settlement, and for other purposes.

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEE

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. LEAHY for the Committee on the Judiciary.

Cheryl Ann Krause, of New Jersey, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Third Circuit.

Richard Franklin Boulware II, of Nevada, to be United States District Judge for the District of Nevada.

Salvador Mendoza, Jr., of Washington, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Washington.

Staci Michelle Yandle, of Illinois, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of Illinois.

Leon Rodriguez, of Maryland, to be Director of the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services, Department of Homeland Security.

Damon Paul Martinez, of New Mexico, to be United States Attorney for the District of New Mexico for the term of four years.

(Nominations without an asterisk were reported with the recommendation that they be confirmed.)

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. MARKEY:

S. 2203. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend the tax treatment for certain build America bonds, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. HARKIN, and Mr. BROWN):

S. 2204. A bill to establish the Proprietary Education Oversight Coordination Committee; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. ENZI (for himself, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. RISCH, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. SCOTT, and Mr. THUNE):

S. 2205. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exempt certain small businesses from the employer health insurance mandate and to modify the definition of full-time employee for purposes of such mandate; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. COBURN (for himself and Mrs. MCCASKILL):

S. 2206. A bill to streamline the collection and distribution of government information; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. KING:

S. 2207. A bill to amend the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 to require all political committees to notify the Federal Election Commission within 48 hours of receiving cumulative contributions of $1,000 or more from any contributor during a calendar year, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

By Mr. KIRK (for himself and Ms. KLOBUCHAR):

S. 2208. A bill to allow the Secretary of the Treasury to rely on State examinations for certain financial institutions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. KAINE, and Mrs. SHAHEEN):

S. 2209. A bill to require a report on accountability for war crimes and crimes against humanity in Syria; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Ms. HEITKAMP):

S. 2210. A bill to amend the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act to require the Secretary of Agriculture to make loan guarantees and grants to finance certain improvements to school lunch facilities, to train school food service personnel, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mr. MURPHY (for himself and Mr. BOOKER):

S. 2211. A bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to protect the enrollment of incarcerated youth for medical assistance under the Medicaid program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. FISCHER:

S. 2212. A bill to amend the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010 to strengthen the review authority of the Financial Stability Oversight Council of regulations issued by the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mrs. FISCHER:

S. 2213. A bill to replace the Director of the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection with a five-person Commission; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself and Mr. KIRK):

S. Res. 410. A resolution expressing the sense of the Senate regarding the anniversary of the Armenian Genocide; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. INHOFE (for himself, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. COBURN, Mr. KIRK, Mr. JOHNSON of Wisconsin, Mr. CHAMBLISS, and Mr. RUBIO):

S. Res. 411. A resolution expressing the sense of the Senate with respect to the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the Republic of Moldova; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 132

At the request of Mr. CARPER, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 132, a bill to provide for the admission of the State of New Columbia into the Union.

S. 315

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 315, a bill to reauthorize

and extend the Paul D. Wellstone Muscular Dystrophy Community Assistance, Research, and Education Amendments of 2008.

S. 452

At the request of Mr. FRANKEN, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. PRYOR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 452, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to reduce the incidence of diabetes among Medicare beneficiaries.

S. 530

At the request of Mr. PAUL, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 530, a bill to make participation in the American Community Survey voluntary, except with respect to certain basic questions, and for other purposes.

S. 635

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 635, a bill to amend the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act to provide an exception to the annual written privacy notice requirement.

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mrs. FISCHER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 635, supra.

S. 642

At the request of Mr. ENZI, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 642, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act and title XVIII of the Social Security Act to make the provision of technical services for medical imaging examinations and radiation therapy treatments safer, more accurate, and less costly.

S. 1011

At the request of Mr. JOHANNS, the names of the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) and the Senator from Georgia (Mr. CHAMBLISS) were added as cosponsors of S. 1011, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the centennial of Boys Town, and for other purposes.

S. 1029

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the names of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) and the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI) were added as cosponsors of S. 1029, a bill to reform the process by which Federal agencies analyze and formulate new regulations and guidance documents.

S. 1143

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1143, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act with respect to physician supervision of therapeutic hospital outpatient services.

S. 1332

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Ms. HEITKAMP) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1332, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to ensure more timely access to home health services for Medicare beneficiaries under the Medicare program.

S. 1369

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Ms. LANDRIEU) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1369, a bill to provide additional flexibility to the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System to establish capital standards that are properly tailored to the unique characteristics of the business of insurance, and for other purposes.

S. 1410

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the names of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) and the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON) were added as cosponsors of S. 1410, a bill to focus limited Federal resources on the most serious offenders.

S. 1694

At the request of Mr. HARKIN, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1694, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow a credit against income tax for the purchase of hearing aids.

S. 1733

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1733, a bill to stop exploitation through trafficking.

S. 1996

At the request of Mrs. HAGAN, the names of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. UDALL), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. CHAMBLISS), the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR), the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO), the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) and the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) were added as cosponsors of S. 1996, a bill to protect and enhance opportunities for recreational hunting, fishing, and shooting, and for other purposes.

S. 2013

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2013, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the removal of Senior Executive Service employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs for performance, and for other purposes.

S. 2171

At the request of Mr. FRANKEN, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2171, a bill to address voluntary location tracking of electronic communications devices, and for other purposes.

S. CON. RES. 33

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. Con. Res. 33, a concurrent resolution celebrating the 100th anniversary of the enactment of the Smith-Lever Act, which established the nationwide Cooperative Extension System.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. HARKIN, and Mr. BROWN):

S. 2204. A bill to establish the Proprietary Education Oversight Coordination Committee; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 2204

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Proprietary Education Oversight Coordination Improvement Act''.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) EXECUTIVE OFFICER.—The term ''executive officer'', with respect to a proprietary institution of higher education that is a publicly traded corporation, means—

(A) the president of such corporation;

(B) a vice president of such corporation who is in charge of a principal business unit, division, or function of such corporation, such as sales, administration, or finance; or

(C) any other officer or person who performs a policy making function for such corporation.

(2) FEDERAL EDUCATION ASSISTANCE.—The term ''Federal education assistance'' means any Federal financial assistance provided under any Federal law through a grant, a contract, a subsidy, a loan, a guarantee, an insurance, or any other means to a proprietary institution of higher education, including Federal financial assistance that is disbursed or delivered to such institution, on behalf of a student, or to a student to be used to attend such institution, except that such term shall not include any monthly housing stipend provided under chapter 33 of title 38, United States Code.

(3) PRIVATE EDUCATION LOAN.—The term ''private education loan''—

(A) means a loan provided by a private educational lender (as defined in section 140(a) of the Truth in Lending Act (15 U.S.C. 1650(a))) that—

(i) is not made, insured, or guaranteed under title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070 et seq.);

(ii) is issued expressly for postsecondary educational expenses to a borrower, regardless of whether the loan is provided through the educational institution that the subject student attends or directly to the borrower from the private educational lender (as so defined); and

(iii) is not made, insured, or guaranteed under title VII or title VIII of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 292 et seq. and 296 et seq.); and

(B) does not include an extension of credit under an open end consumer credit plan, a reverse mortgage transaction, a residential mortgage transaction, or any other loan that is secured by real property or a dwelling.

(4) PROPRIETARY INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—The term ''proprietary institution of higher education'' has the meaning

given the term in section 102(b) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1002(b)).

(5) RECRUITING AND MARKETING ACTIVITIES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), the term ''recruiting and marketing activities'' means activities that consist of the following:

(i) Advertising and promotion activities, including paid announcements in newspapers, magazines, radio, television, billboards, electronic media, naming rights, or any other public medium of communication, including paying for displays or promotions at job fairs, military installations, or college recruiting events.

(ii) Efforts to identify and attract prospective students, either directly or through a contractor or other third party, including contact concerning a prospective student's potential enrollment or application for a grant, a loan, or work assistance under title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070 et seq.) or participation in preadmission or advising activities, including—

(I) paying employees responsible for overseeing enrollment and for contacting potential students in-person, by phone, by email, or by other internet communications regarding enrollment; and

(II) soliciting an individual to provide contact information to an institution of higher education, including through websites established for such purpose and funds paid to third parties for such purpose.

(iii) Such other activities as the Secretary of Education may prescribe, including paying for promotion or sponsorship of education or military-related associations.

(B) EXCEPTIONS.—Any activity that is required as a condition of receipt of funds by an institution under title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070 et seq.), is specifically authorized under such title, or is otherwise specified by the Secretary of Education, shall not be considered to be a recruiting and marketing activity under subparagraph (A).

(6) STATE APPROVAL AGENCY.—The term ''State approval agency'' means any State agency that determines whether an institution of higher education is legally authorized within such State to provide a program of education beyond secondary education.

(7) VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATION.—The term ''veterans service organization'' means an organization recognized by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for the representation of veterans under section 5902 of title 38, United States Code.

SEC. 3. ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMITTEE.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established a committee to be known as the ''Proprietary Education Oversight Coordination Committee'' (referred to in this Act as the ''Committee'') and to be composed of the head (or the designee of such head) of each of the following Federal entities:

(1) The Department of Education.

(2) The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau.

(3) The Department of Justice.

(4) The Securities and Exchange Commission.

(5) The Department of Defense.

(6) The Department of Veterans Affairs.

(7) The Federal Trade Commission.

(8) The Department of Labor.

(9) The Internal Revenue Service.

(10) At the discretion of the President, any other relevant Federal agency or department.

(b) PURPOSES.—The Committee shall have the following purposes:

(1) Coordinate Federal oversight of proprietary institutions of higher education to—

(A) improve enforcement of applicable Federal laws and regulations;

(B) increase accountability of proprietary institutions of higher education to students and taxpayers; and

(C) ensure the promotion of quality education programs.

(2) Coordinate Federal activities to protect students from unfair, deceptive, abusive, unethical, fraudulent, or predatory practices, policies, or procedures of proprietary institutions of higher education.

(3) Encourage information sharing among agencies related to Federal investigations, audits, or inquiries of proprietary institutions of higher education.

(4) Increase coordination and cooperation between Federal and State agencies, including State Attorneys General and State approval agencies, with respect to improving oversight and accountability of proprietary institutions of higher education.

(5) Develop best practices and consistency among Federal and State agencies in the dissemination of consumer information regarding proprietary institutions of higher education to ensure that students, parents, and other stakeholders have easy access to such information.

(c) MEMBERSHIP.—

(1) DESIGNEES.—For any designee described in subsection (a), the head of the member entity shall appoint a high-level official who exercises significant decision making authority for the oversight or investigatory activities and responsibilities related to proprietary institutions of higher education of the respective Federal entity of such head.

(2) CHAIRPERSON.—The Secretary of Education or the designee of such Secretary shall serve as the Chairperson of the Committee.

(3) COMMITTEE SUPPORT.—The head of each entity described in subsection (a) shall ensure appropriate staff and officials of such entity are available to support the Committee-related work of such entity.

SEC. 4. MEETINGS.

(a) COMMITTEE MEETINGS.—The members of the Committee shall meet regularly, but not less than once during each quarter of each fiscal year, to carry out the purposes described in section 3(b).

(b) MEETINGS WITH STATE AGENCIES AND STAKEHOLDERS.—The Committee shall meet not less than once each fiscal year, and shall otherwise interact regularly, with State Attorneys General, State approval agencies, veterans service organizations, and consumer advocates to carry out the purposes described in section 3(b).

SEC. 5. REPORT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Committee shall submit a report each year to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate, the Committee on Education and the Workforce of the House of Representatives, and any other committee of Congress that the Committee determines appropriate.

(b) PUBLIC ACCESS.—The report described in subsection (a) shall be made available to the public in a manner that is easily accessible to parents, students, and other stakeholders in accordance with the best practices developed under section 3(b)(5).

(c) CONTENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The report shall include—

(A) an accounting of any action (as defined in paragraph (3)) taken by the Federal Government, any member entity of the Committee, or a State—

(i) to enforce Federal or State laws and regulations applicable to proprietary institutions of higher education;

(ii) to hold proprietary institutions of higher education accountable to students and taxpayers; and

(iii) to promote quality education programs;

(B) a summary of complaints against each proprietary institution of higher education received by any member entity of the Committee;

(C) the data described in paragraph (2) and any other data relevant to proprietary institutions of higher education that the Committee determines appropriate; and

(D) recommendations of the Committee for such legislative and administrative actions as the Committee determines are necessary to—

(i) improve enforcement of applicable Federal laws;

(ii) increase accountability of proprietary institutions of higher education to students and taxpayers; and

(iii) ensure the promotion of quality education programs.

(2) DATA.—

(A) INDUSTRY-WIDE DATA.—The report shall include data on all proprietary institutions of higher education that consists of information regarding—

(i) the total amount of Federal education assistance that proprietary institutions of higher education received for the previous academic year, and the percentage of the total amount of Federal education assistance provided to institutions of higher education (as defined in section 102 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1002)) for such previous academic year that reflects such total amount of Federal education assistance provided to proprietary institutions of higher education for such previous academic year;

(ii) the total amount of Federal education assistance that proprietary institutions of higher education received for the previous academic year, disaggregated by—

(I) educational assistance in the form of a loan provided under title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070 et seq.);

(II) educational assistance in the form of a grant provided under title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070 et seq.);

(III) educational assistance provided under chapter 33 of title 38, United States Code;

(IV) tuition assistance provided under section 2007 of title 10, United States Code;

(V) assistance provided under section 1784a of title 10, United States Code; and

(VI) Federal education assistance not described in subclauses (I) through (V);

(iii) the percentage of the total amount of Federal education assistance provided to institutions of higher education (as defined in section 102 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1002)) for such previous academic year for each of the programs described in subclauses (I) through (V) of clause (ii) that reflects such total amount of Federal education assistance provided to proprietary institutions of higher education for such previous academic year for each of such programs;

(iv) the average retention and graduation rates for students pursuing a degree at proprietary institutions of higher education;

(v) the average cohort default rate (as defined in section 435(m) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1085(m)) for proprietary institutions of higher education, and an annual list of cohort default rates (as defined in such section) for all proprietary institutions of higher education;

(vi) for careers requiring the passage of a licensing examination—

(I) the passage rate of individuals who attended a proprietary institution of higher education taking such examination to pursue such a career; and

(II) the passage rate of all individuals taking such exam to pursue such a career; and

(vii) the use of private education loans at proprietary institutions of higher education that includes—

(I) an estimate of the total number of such loans; and

(II) information on the average debt, default rate, and interest rate of such loans.

(B) DATA ON PUBLICLY TRADED CORPORATIONS.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—The report shall include data on proprietary institutions of higher education that are publicly traded corporations, consisting of information on—

(I) any pre-tax profit of such proprietary institutions of higher education—

(aa) reported as a total amount and an average percent of revenue for all such proprietary institutions of higher education; and

(bb) reported for each such proprietary institution of higher education;

(II) revenue for such proprietary institutions of higher education spent on recruiting and marketing activities, student instruction, and student support services, reported—

(aa) as a total amount and an average percent of revenue for all such proprietary institutions of higher education; and

(bb) for each such proprietary institution of higher education;

(III) total compensation packages of the executive officers of each such proprietary institution of higher education;

(IV) a list of institutional loan programs offered by each such proprietary institution of higher education that includes information on the default and interest rates of such programs; and

(V) the data described in clauses (ii) and (iii).

(ii) DISAGGREGATED BY OWNERSHIP.—The report shall include data on proprietary institutions of higher education that are publicly traded corporations, disaggregated by corporate or parent entity, brand name, and campus, consisting of—

(I) the total cost of attendance for each program at each such proprietary institution of higher education, and information comparing such total cost for each such program to—

(aa) the total cost of attendance for each program at each public institution of higher education; and

(bb) the average total cost of attendance for each program at all institutions of higher education, including such institutions that are public and such institutions that are private;

(II) total enrollment, disaggregated by—

(aa) individuals enrolled in programs taken online; and

(bb) individuals enrolled in programs that are not taken online;

(III) the average retention and graduation rates for students pursuing a degree at such proprietary institutions of higher education;

(IV) the percentage of students enrolled in such proprietary institutions of higher education who complete a program of such an institution within—

(aa) the standard period of completion for such program; and

(bb) a period that is 150 percent of such standard period of completion;

(V) the total cost of attendance for each program at such proprietary institutions of higher education;

(VI) the average cohort default rate, as defined in section 435(m) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1085(m)), for such proprietary institutions of higher education, and an annual list of cohort default rates (as defined in such section) for all proprietary institutions of higher education;

(VII) the median educational debt incurred by students who complete a program at such a proprietary institution of higher education;

(VIII) the median educational debt incurred by students who start but do not complete a program at such a proprietary institution of higher education;

(IX) the job placement rate for students who complete a program at such a proprietary institution of higher education and the type of employment obtained by such students;

(X) for careers requiring the passage of a licensing examination, the rate of individuals who attended such a proprietary institution of higher education and passed such an examination; and

(XI) the number of complaints from students enrolled in such proprietary institutions of higher education who have submitted a complaint to any member entity of the Committee.

(iii) DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE AND VETERANS AFFAIRS ASSISTANCE.—

(I) IN GENERAL.—To the extent practicable, the report shall provide information on the data described in clause (ii) for individuals using, to pay for the costs of attending such a proprietary institution of higher education, Federal education assistance provided under—

(aa) chapter 33 of title 38, United States Code;

(bb) section 2007 of title 10, United States Code; and

(cc) section 1784a of title 10, United States Code.

(II) REVENUE.—The report shall provide information on the revenue of proprietary institutions of higher education that are publicly traded corporations that is derived from the Federal education assistance described in subclause (I).

(C) COMPARISON DATA.—To the extent practicable, the report shall provide information comparing the data described in subparagraph (B) for proprietary institutions of higher education that are publicly traded corporations with such data for public institutions of higher education disaggregated by State.

(3) ACCOUNTING OF ANY ACTION.—For the purposes of paragraph (1)(A), the term ''any action'' shall include—

(A) a complaint filed by a Federal or State agency in a local, State, Federal, or tribal court;

(B) an administrative proceeding by a Federal or State agency involving noncompliance of any applicable law or regulation; or

(C) any other review, audit, or administrative process by any Federal or State agency that results in a penalty, suspension, or termination from any Federal or State program.

SEC. 6. FOR-PROFIT COLLEGE WARNING LIST FOR PARENTS AND STUDENTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Each academic year, the Committee shall publish a list to be known as the ''For-Profit College Warning List for Parents and Students'' to be comprised of proprietary institutions of higher education—

(1) that have engaged in illegal activity during the previous academic year as determined by a Federal or State court;

(2) that have entered into a settlement resulting in a monetary payment;

(3) that have had any higher education program withdrawn or suspended; or

(4) for which the Committee has sufficient evidence of widespread or systemic unfair, deceptive, abusive, unethical, fraudulent, or predatory practices, policies, or procedures that pose a threat to the academic success, financial security, or general best interest of students.

(b) DETERMINATIONS.—In making a determination pursuant to subsection (a)(4), the Committee may consider evidence that includes the following:

(1) Any consumer complaint collected by any member entity of the Committee.

(2) Any complaint filed by a Federal or State agency in a Federal, State, local, or tribal court.

(3) Any administrative proceeding by a Federal or State agency involving noncompliance of any applicable law or regulation.

(4) Any other review, audit, or administrative process by any Federal or State agency that results in a penalty, suspension, or termination from any Federal or State program.

(5) Data or information submitted by a proprietary institution of higher education to any accrediting agency or association recognized by the Secretary of Education pursuant to section 496 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1099b) or the findings or adverse actions of any such accrediting agency or association.

(6) Information submitted by a proprietary institution of higher education to any member entity of the Committee.

(7) Any other evidence that the Committee determines relevant in making a determination pursuant to subsection (a)(4).

(c) PUBLICATION.—Not later than July 1 of each fiscal year, the Committee shall publish the list described in subsection (a) prominently and in a manner that is easily accessible to parents, students, and other stakeholders in accordance with any best practices developed under section 3(b)(5).

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Ms. HEITKAMP):

S. 2210. A bill to amend the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act to require the Secretary of Agriculture to make loan guarantees and grants to finance certain improvements to school lunch facilities, to train school food service personnel, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I am pleased today to join my friend from North Dakota, Senator HEITKAMP, in introducing the School Food Modernization Act to assist schools in providing healthier meals to students throughout the country.

School meals play a vital role in the lives of our young people. More than 30 million children participate in the National School Lunch Program every schoolday. In Maine, 40 percent of children qualify for free or reduced-price meals based on household income.

The food served to these children has a demonstrable effect on their health and well-being. Many children consume up to half their daily caloric intake at school. In fact, children often get their most nutritious meal of the day at school instead of at home.

At the same time, too many of our children are at risk of serious disease. One-third of the children in this country are overweight or obese, which increases their risk for heart disease, high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes and other chronic diseases. These ailments may have a lifelong effect on their health as they grow to adulthood.

Given the concerns about the health of our children, the U.S. Department of Agriculture has issued updated school

meal nutrition standards that call for increased servings of fruit, vegetables, low-fat products, and whole grains while limiting the intake of fats, sugar, salt, and excess calories.

In response, our schools have stepped up to the plate. Nationwide, schools are working diligently to meet the standards and serve healthier meals. For example, in the New Sweden Consolidated School in Aroostook County, ME, food service manager Melanie Lagasse prepares meals from scratch instead of opening cans or pushing a defrost button. The school's 64 students, ranging from preschool to eighth grade, have grown to relish the chicken stew, baked fish, and whole grain pasta and meatloaf that she makes fresh every day.

Many schools, however, lack the right tools for preparing meals rich in fresh ingredients and must rely on workarounds that are expensive, inefficient, and unsustainable. Schools built decades ago lack the tools and the infrastructure necessary to comply fully with the new USDA guidelines. In fact, many lack any capacity beyond reheating and holding food for meal service.

To serve healthier meals to their students, 99 percent of Maine school districts need at least one piece of equipment and almost half—48 percent—of districts need kitchen infrastructure upgrades. While some of the needs appear quite simple—food processors, knives, serving-portion utensils, scales, utility carts—there is still a cost. The median equipment need per school is $45,000.

Even more costly would be making the required changes to infrastructure. Forty-eight percent of Maine schools need some kind of infrastructure change to serve healthy meals. For example, 41 percent of schools need more physical space, 22 percent need more electrical capacity, 21 percent need more plumbing capacity, and 19 percent need more ventilation. In addition, for Maine, 82 percent of school districts are in areas defined as rural.

Add the equipment costs together with the infrastructure costs and it is estimated that overall, $58.8 million would be needed just in Maine to serve healthy meals to all of our students. That far exceeds the $74,000 grant the USDA awarded Maine in March for new equipment.

Our bill aims to make better use of current resources by authorizing loan guarantee assistance and grants for school equipment and infrastructure improvements and by helping food service personnel meet the updated nutrition standards. First, it would establish a loan guarantee assistance program within USDA to help schools acquire new equipment to prepare and serve healthier, more nutritious meals to students. School administrators and other eligible borrowers could obtain Federal guarantees for 80 percent of the loan value needed to construct, remodel, or expand their kitchens, dining, or food storage infrastructure.

Second, it would provide targeted grant assistance to give school administrators and food service directors the seed funding needed to upgrade kitchen infrastructure or to purchase high-quality, durable kitchen equipment such as commercial ovens, steamers, and stoves.

Finally, to aid school food service personnel in meeting the updated nutrition guidelines, the legislation would strengthen training and provide technical assistance by authorizing USDA to provide support on a competitive basis to highly qualified third-party trainers to develop and administer training and technical assistance.

We need to start our schoolchildren off on the right food every day. If they are going to compete in the global arena, they need to be healthy and their minds and bodies fully nourished. This bill will help us achieve that goal.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 410—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE REGARDING THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself and Mr. KIRK) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 410

Whereas the Armenian Genocide was conceived and carried out by the Ottoman Empire from 1915 to 1923, resulting in the deportation of nearly 2,000,000 Armenians, of whom 1,500,000 men, women, and children were killed and 500,000 survivors were expelled from their homes, and the elimination of the over 2,500-year presence of Armenians in their historic homeland;

Whereas, on May 24, 1915, the Allied Powers of England, France, and Russia jointly issued a statement explicitly charging for the first time ever another government of committing crimes ''against humanity and civilization'';

Whereas Raphael Lemkin, who coined the term ''genocide'', and whose draft resolution for a genocide convention treaty became the framework for the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, recognized the Armenian Genocide as the type of crime the United Nations should prevent and punish through the setting of international standards;

Whereas Senate Concurrent Resolution 12, 64th Congress, agreed to February 9, 1916, resolved that ''the President of the United States be respectfully asked to designate a day on which the citizens of this country may give expression to their sympathy by contributing funds now being raised for the relief of the Armenians'', who at the time were enduring ''starvation, disease, and untold suffering'';

Whereas Senate Resolution 359, 66th Congress, agreed to May 11, 1920, stated that ''the testimony adduced at the hearings conducted by the subcommittee of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations have clearly established the truth of the reported massacres and other atrocities from which the Armenian people have suffered'';

Whereas House Joint Resolution 148, 94th Congress, agreed to April 8, 1975, resolved, ''That April 24, 1975, is hereby designated as 'National Day of Remembrance of Man's Inhumanity to Man', and the President of the United States is authorized and requested to issue a proclamation calling upon the people of the United States to observe such day as a day of remembrance for all the victims of genocide, especially those of Armenian ancestry . . .'';

Whereas House Joint Resolution 247, 98th Congress, agreed to September 10, 1984, resolved, ''That April 24, 1985, is hereby designated as 'National Day of Remembrance of Man's Inhumanity to Man', and the President of the United States is authorized and requested to issue a proclamation calling upon the people of the United States to observe such day as a day of remembrance for all the victims of genocide, especially the one and one-half million people of Armenian ancestry. . .'';

Whereas the United States Holocaust Memorial Council, an independent Federal agency, unanimously resolved on April 30, 1981, that the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum would document the Armenian Genocide in the Museum, and has done so through a public examination of the historic record, including lectures and the maintenance of books, records, and photographs about the Genocide;

Whereas the Government of the Republic of Turkey has continued its international campaign of Armenian Genocide denial, maintained a blockade of Armenia, and continues to pressure the small but growing Turkish civil society movement for acknowledging the Armenian Genocide;

Whereas, in April 2011, the month of remembrance of the Armenian Genocide, the Government of the Republic of Turkey demolished a 100-foot-high statue in the city of Kars which was erected to promote reconciliation with Armenia;

Whereas the denial of the Armenian Genocide by the Government of the Republic of Turkey has prevented the meaningful advancement of a constructive political, economic, and security relationship between Armenia and Turkey; and

Whereas the teaching, recognition, and commemoration of acts of genocide and other crimes against humanity is essential to preventing the re-occurrence of similar atrocities: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the Senate—

(1) to remember and observe the anniversary of the Armenian Genocide on April 24, 2014;

(2) that the President should work toward an equitable, constructive, stable, and durable Armenian-Turkish relationship that includes the full acknowledgment by the Government of the Republic of Turkey of the facts about the Armenian Genocide; and

(3) that the President should ensure that the foreign policy of the United States reflects appropriate understanding and sensitivity concerning issues related to human rights, crimes against humanity, ethnic cleansing, and genocide documented in the United States record relating to the Armenian Genocide.

SENATE RESOLUTION 411—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE WITH RESPECT TO THE TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY AND SOVEREIGNTY OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

Mr. INHOFE (for himself, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. COBURN, Mr. KIRK, Mr. JOHNSON of Wisconsin, Mr. CHAMBLISS, and Mr.

RUBIO) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 411

Whereas, since 1992, the Republic of Moldova has been recognized by the international community and the United Nations;

Whereas, on March 3, 2014, the United States Government ''reaffirmed the United States' strong support for Moldovan sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders'';

Whereas the annexation of Crimea and violation of Ukrainian territorial integrity by the Russian Federation on the false premise of defending Russians and Russian speakers abroad violates the principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity;

Whereas the Government of the Russian Federation has threatened to use its supply of energy resources as a means of intimidation in order to influence the Government of Moldova;

Whereas the Government of the Russian Federation has been actively issuing Russian passports to the residents of Transnistria;

Whereas the Government of the Russian Federation maintains a contingent of Russian troops and a stockpile of Russian military equipment and ammunition within the Moldovan territory of Transnistria;

Whereas the Council of Europe, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and the Government of Moldova have called upon the Government of the Russian Federation to remove its troops from the territory of Moldova;

Whereas, at the 1999 Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe Summit in Istanbul, Turkey, the Russian Federation committed to complete withdrawal of its military forces from the territory of the Republic of Moldova;

Whereas Moldova has been a participant in NATO's Partnership for Peace Program and has deployed military personnel in support of the NATO-led mission in Kosovo; and

Whereas the stability and economic vitality of the Eastern European region is in the national interest of the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) affirms that it is the policy of the United States to support the sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova and the inviolability of its borders;

(2) calls upon the Government of the Russian Federation to take steps to remove its military forces and materiel from within the internationally recognized territory of the Republic of Moldova;

(3) supports constructive engagement and confidence-building measures between the Government of Moldova and the authorities in Transnistria in order to secure a peaceful resolution to the conflict;

(4) expresses its belief that finding a lasting resolution to the Transnistria issue can only be accomplished by ensuring the freedom of the Government and the people of Moldova to determine their own future without external pressure or coercion;

(5) urges the President to consider increasing security and intelligence cooperation with the Government of Moldova; and

(6) affirms that lasting stability in Europe is a key priority for the United States and that it can only be achieved if the territorial integrity and sovereignty of all parties is respected.

NOTICES OF HEARINGS

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I wish to announce that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions will to meet on April 9, 2014, at 10 a.m., in room SD–430 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled ''Addressing Primary Care Access and Workforce Challenges: Voices from the Field.''

For further information regarding this meeting, please contact Bill Gendel of the committee staff on (202) 224–5480.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I wish to announce that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions will to meet on April 10, 2014, at 10 a.m., in room SD–430 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled ''Expanding Access to Quality Early Learning: the Strong Start for America's Children Act.''

For further information regarding this meeting, please contact Aissa Canchola of the committee staff on (202) 224–5363.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be auhorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 3, 2014, at 9:30 a.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Environment and Public Works be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 3, 2014, at 10 a.m., in room SD-406 of the Dirsken Senate office building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Finance be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 3, 2014, at 10 a.m., in room SD–215 of the Dirksen Sente Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 3, 2014, at 10 a.m., to hold an East Asia and Pacific Affairs subcommittee hearing entitled ''Evaluating U.S. Policy on Taiwan on the 35th Anniversary of the Taiwan Relations Act (TRA).''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 3, 2014, at 2 p.m. to conduct a hearing entitled, ''Closed/TS/SCI: Russia Briefing.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mr. REID. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 3, 2014, at 10 a.m., in SD–226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct an executive business meeting.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Mr. REID. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 3, 2014, at 2:30 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Senator BEGICH's NOAA fellow, Bill Mowitt, be granted floor privileges for the remainder of the 113th Congress.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SYRIA HUMANITARIAN CRISIS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 346.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 384) expressing the sense of the Senate concerning the humanitarian crisis in Syria and neighboring countries, resulting in humanitarian and development challenges, and the urgent need for a political solution to the crisis.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 384) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of March 13, 2014, under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

GOLD STAR WIVES DAY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Judiciary Committee be charged from further consideration and the Senate now proceed to S. Res. 394.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 394) designating April 5, 2014, as ''Gold Star Wives Day.''

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 394) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of March 24, 2014, under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

GREATER WASHINGTON SOAP BOX DERBY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to H. Con. Res. 88, which was received from the House and is at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the concurrent resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 88) authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the Greater Washington Soap Box Derby.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the concurrent resolution.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent the concurrent resolution be agreed to, and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 88) was agreed to.

(The concurrent resolution is printed in the RECORD of February 25, 2014, under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

APPOINTMENTS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair announces on behalf of the Committee on Finance, pursuant to section 8002 of title 26, U.S. Code, the designation of the following Senators as members of the Joint Committee on Taxation: the Senator from Oregon, Mr. WYDEN; the Senator from West Virginia, Mr. ROCKEFELLER; the Senator from Michigan, Ms. STABENOW; the Senator from Utah, Mr. HATCH; and the Senator from Iowa, Mr. GRASSLEY.

ORDERS FOR MONDAY, APRIL 7, 2014

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 2 p.m., Monday, April 7, 2014; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; that following any leader remarks, the Senate be in a period of morning business until 5 p.m. with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each; and that following morning business, the Senate resume consideration of H.R. 3979, the vehicle for the unemployment insurance extension, postcloture, with the time until 5:30 p.m. equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees prior to the vote on passage of H.R. 3979, as amended, as provided for under the previous order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PROGRAM

Mr. REID. There will be a rollcall vote on passage of the unemployment insurance bill, which takes a simple majority, at 5:30 p.m. on Monday.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL MONDAY, APRIL 7, 2014, AT 2 P.M.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent it adjourn under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 5:37 p.m., adjourned until Monday, April 7, 2014, at 2 p.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

THE JUDICIARY

ANDRE BIROTTE, JR., OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA, VICE GARY ALLEN FEESS, RETIRED.

RANDOLPH D. MOSS, OF MARYLAND, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, VICE ROBERT LEON WILKINS, ELEVATED.

IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be rear admiral

REAR ADM. (LH) RAQUEL C. BONO

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

REMEMBERING BOB CASALE OF DEVO

HON. TIM RYAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 3, 2014

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the remarkable life of Bob Casale, who passed away on February 17, 2014, at the age of sixty-one. Bob was raised in Akron, Ohio. He led an exemplary life while in pursuit of his dream of writing, producing, and performing music. Bob helped create a body of work with his band Devo that put the ''new'' in new wave music. He ultimately changed the way a lot of people viewed both music and culture at the time.

As one of the original members of the band Devo, Bob came of age in the middle of a huge cultural war in Akron, Ohio. There, Bob and his fellow band members Mark Mothersbaugh, Bob Mothersbaugh, Alan Myers, and his brother Gerald Casale were inspired to form Devo after witnessing the Kent State massacre in 1970.

In remembrance of his late brother, Gerald stated that, ''as an original member of Devo, Bob Casale was there in the trenches with me from the beginning. He was my level-headed brother, a solid performer and talented audio engineer, always giving more than he got.''

In more recent years, Devo actively toured around the country and performed at the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver, Canada. ''He was excited about the possibility of Mark Mothersbaugh allowing Devo to play shows again,'' stated Gerald. ''His sudden death from conditions that led to heart failure came as a total shock to us all.''

In addition to performing with Devo, Bob Casale worked for twenty years at Mutato creating and developing the sounds on various films and television shows. Prior to Bob's passing, he and his brother Gerald were working on what Gerald calls a ''Devo online school.'' The trade school project would teach participants how to write music with digital tools or how to score a commercial. The school would be taught by professionals who work in the field and have a track record of success, including former band member Mark Mothersbaugh. Though Bob is no longer around to see the project through, his family and friends will continue to spearhead the project in his name.

Bob Casale was an extraordinary man with a great set of values who will live on in the hearts and minds of his friends, family, and fans. Bob is survived by his son Alex, his daughter Samantha, and his wife, Lisa. His long and productive life set an example to all of us and all who knew him. Bob's memory will continue to live on through the revolutionary music he left behind. Whip it!

HONORING MR. NICHOLAS P. DiNAPOLI

HON. STEVE ISRAEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 3, 2014

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Nicholas P. DiNapoli, an esteemed citizen of my congressional district who holds the distinction of being a lifelong resident of the Town of North Hempstead. Mr. DiNapoli was born on April 6, 1924, to Pete and Jeanette DiNapoli in Roslyn Heights, New York, and has resided in Albertson, New York since 1953. He is a New Yorker, born and bred.

After graduating from Roslyn public schools, Nicholas served our country in World War II as a member of the Army Air Force. I thank him for his service during this historic time and for his contribution to a United States victory.

When he returned home, he built a model life for himself and his family. He married Adeline, his late wife of 43 years, and raised two sons, Thomas and James. As the years passed, he has also been able to enjoy spending time with his two grandchildren, Victoria and Nicholas. Mr. DiNapoli served a forty year career at the New York Telephone Company, where his hard work enabled him to rise all the way from a splicer's helper to foreman.

What is truly inspirational is Mr. DiNapoli's devotion to his community. Over the years, he has served as a volunteer firefighter with the Roslyn Highlands Fire Department, and has been involved with the American Legion, Albertson Little League, Boy Scouts of America Troop 481 and St. Aidan's Parish.

Mr. DiNapoli will turn 90 on April 6, 2014, and his positivity, independence and generosity has cemented his legacy as a devoted and loving family man, and as a strong role model for his children and grandchildren. I am honored to be able to represent him here in Congress.

TRIMBLE NAVIGATION

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 3, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Trimble Navigation for being honored with the Business Recognition Award given by the Jefferson County Economic Development Corporation.

The Business Recognition Award is given to a Jefferson County company which shows growth in employment, sales and capital investment in the last year.

Trimble Navigation is a leading provider of advanced location based solutions found in everyday products from commercial vehicles, construction equipment to cell phones. Their products reach over 150 countries around the world. Trimble Navigation recently invested in a $22 million 125,000 square foot campus in Westminster, Colorado, creating an additional 100 high paying jobs.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Trimble Navigation for receiving the Business Recognition Award from the Jefferson County Economic Development Corporation. I thank you for your commitment to innovation, high standards and quality products.

NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 3, 2014

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker,

Ev'ry day we say our prayer, Will they change the bill of fare, Still we get the same old gru . . . el, There's not a crust, not a crumb can we find, Can we beg, can we borrow, or cadge, But there's nothing to stop us from getting a thrill, When we all close our eyes and imag . . . ine, Food, glorious food!

There is no limit to how far the federal government arms can reach.

''Please, sir, I want some more,'' is not just a quote from the movie Oliver, but a phrase that I am sure has been heard throughout schools by students from 2012 till just recently.

Through the Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, the federal government's arms have become stronger and longer, allowing them to snatch kids' lunch bags and replace it with what they believe our kids should be eating.

So long gone are the days of parenting, we have the government to do it for us.

Now it's the USDA who teaches our children about what they should and should not be eating.

Children are more likely to choose a peanut butter and jelly sandwich over a salad or vegetables, but the USDA determined that the best way to have the kids make the ''healthy'' choice is to eliminate their options altogether.

Although the USDA recently eliminated the grain and protein limits under the National School Lunch Program, they should have never had that kind of power to begin with.

The federal government may have decided to stop telling our children whether to have a whole or half sandwich, but its influence is still strong.

The feds force our children to pick 1/2 cup serving of fruits or vegetables with their breakfast or lunch—whether they eat it or not.

In their attempts to make our young students healthier, the USDA has unmasked the myth that drinking whole and 2% milk is bad because of the vitamins and nutrients.

Apparently it is so bad that USDA has removed them from being available at schools altogether.

Even though the USDA believes the National School Lunch Program changes are sensible, they ignore the additional costs on schools and disregard concerns that the mandated fruit and vegetables serving will go to waste.

There goes common sense right out of the window.

But then again what does the state, local school boards, individual schools, or parents know?

The federal government knows best or at least that's what they think.

Time to let local schools and parents decide what children should eat—not Washington, DC bureaucrats.

And that's just the way it is.

IN HONOR OF DR. MAURICE WATSON

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 3, 2014

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to an outstanding Man of God, Dr. Maurice Watson, who will celebrate his 10th anniversary as the distinguished pastor of Beulahland Bible Church as well as thirty-seven remarkable years in the gospel ministry. A celebration will be held on Thursday, April 3 at 6:30 p.m. at Beulahland Bible Church in Macon, Georgia.

On July 21, 1960, Dr. Watson was born the seventh of eight children to Ulysses and Juanita Watson in Little Rock, Arkansas. He accepted the call to preach the Word of the Lord at the young age of sixteen and two years later, he was ordained.

Dr. Watson earned a Bachelor's Degree in Education from Philander Smith College in Little Rock, where he was Valedictorian of his class. He earned a Master's in Theology from Creighton University in Omaha, Nebraska and a Doctor of Ministry Degree from Beeson Divinity School in Birmingham, Alabama.

Dr. Watson's first pastorate was at St. Mark Baptist Church in Little Rock, where he served for seven years. In November 1988, Dr. Watson was called to pastor the Salem Baptist Church in Omaha, Nebraska, where he served for fifteen and a half years. During his tenure, the church's membership almost tripled from 1,200 to 3,500 souls.

Middle Georgia gained an extraordinary leader when Dr. Watson accepted the senior pastorate of Beulahland Bible Church in early 2004. With the vision of ''Changing the World from Middle Georgia,'' Beulahland opened a second location of worship in Warner Robins, Georgia in February 2005 under Dr. Watson's leadership. The church also constructed a second worship facility on its Macon campus. The congregation now enjoys a state-of-the-art 3,000 seat sanctuary in which to rejoice the Word of the Lord. Using Dr. Watson as a vessel, God has reached into the hearts of many so that Beulahland has welcomed thousands of souls to this prolific ministry.

Dr. Watson's vision of ''Faith on the Fast Track'' has taken Beulahland Bible Church to greater heights than ever before. A dynamic and ever faithful pastor, his ministry has stretched across the globe. As one of the premier preachers of our generation, Dr. Watson is well-known and sought after for his anointed sound and understandable proclamation of God's Word. He is motivated by his love for people, his love for preaching, and his belief that no one is beyond God's reach.

Dr. Watson has achieved numerous successes in his life, but none of this would have been possible without the grace of God and his loving wife, Janice, and their two beautiful daughters.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today in thanking Dr. Maurice Watson for ten wonderful years of changing Middle Georgia for the better, thirty-seven remarkable years of ministry, and a lifetime of selfless service to God, the church and to humankind.

TRIBUTE TO BEVERLY D. BUSH

HON. TODD ROKITA

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 3, 2014

Mr. ROKITA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and salute a remarkable Hoosier, Beverly D. Bush, who passed away on Saturday, March 29, 2014. I wish to express my heartfelt gratitude and appreciation for her leadership and service to our community, state, and country.

Mrs. Bush was a lifelong Hoosier and she served as the Clinton County Republican Chairwoman from 1994 to 2009 and served as Vice Chair of the party for eight years. She served as a Delegate to the Republican State Convention from 2002–2012 and was a 2004 Delegate to the Republican National Convention. She received the honor of being an elector for the 2012 Presidential and Vice Presidential election. Mrs. Bush, also known by her friends and fellow party members as ''Mrs. Republican'' mentored several people in party politics. Mrs. Bush also served as the Kirkland Precinct Committeeman for many years and was past treasurer of the Indiana Federation of Republican Women. She also attended the inaugurations of Presidents Ronald Reagan and George H. W. Bush.

Mrs. Bush was one of the first people I met in politics. As a friend of my mentor, Sue Anne Gilroy, Mrs. Bush was always helpful and willing to share her gentle wisdom to this young inexperienced candidate. Even after many years of public service, she still was able to teach me a thing or two about the business and life.

Mrs. Bush will be greatly missed by the Clinton County Republican Party, the entire Clinton County community, and many leaders across the state both past and present. Mrs. Bush was a kind and caring woman. She was someone who would do whatever she could to help a friend or stranger in need and she volunteered as a member of the St. Vincent Hospital Pink Ladies organization.

Mrs. Bush leaves her loving husband, Dr. Charles Bush, children, grandchildren and great grandchildren and her extended Clinton County Republican family. Her legacy is one that will be remembered and honored by those who knew and loved her. Rest in peace my friend, and thank you for your leadership and service.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 3, 2014

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was $10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is $17,578,141,920,035.68. We've added $6,951,264,871,122.60 to our debt in 5 years. This is over $6.9 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

HONORING DON GEAN FOR HIS SERVICE TO THE PEOPLE OF MAINE

HON. CHELLIE PINGREE

OF MAINE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 3, 2014

Ms. PINGREE of Maine. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize a tireless and visionary leader in my state who is retiring after several decades of working to improve the lives of homeless Mainers.

In 1985, Don Gean took over as director of the York County Alcoholism Center, which was housed in a crumbling former jail. Today, that organization is called the York County Shelter Programs, an innovative network of facilities and services that serves 400 clients. Among its facilities are a bakery where clients learn vocational skills while preparing the food served at several shelter sites; a working farm that produces eggs for the bakery and houses one of the largest solar arrays in the state; and 36 residences for transitional housing. Under Don's leadership, the organization has come a long way from a condemned jail.

Early on in his tenure, Don resolved that his organization needed to do more than provide beds and meals if it was going to make a lasting impact on its clients. To that end, he developed a range of vocational, medical, mental health and substance abuse programs to give people the support, tools, and self-confidence they needed to turn their lives around. Today, the shelter's recidivism rate is an astonishingly low 5.3 percent. It has become a model program for dealing with the challenges of homelessness.

But the best way to mark Don's legacy is in the words of the people he served. One man who first came to the shelter in 2007 now owns his own home and regularly volunteers for the organization. ''This is a lifesaving organization,'' he said. ''Don is a big part of saving people's lives, but he won't tell you that. He'll take no credit.''

I had the pleasure of serving with Don in the Maine State Legislature in the early 1990s, where he became a statewide leader on the issue of homelessness. He was then and continues to be a practical, shrewd, and effective advocate, but above all a kind, good-hearted person who reminds us that no one in our society should ever be written off.

I wish Don all the best in his retirement and thank him wholeheartedly for his incredible work.

IN RECOGNITION OF LIEUTENANT COLONEL KEVIN S. COCHIE

HON. DUNCAN HUNTER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 3, 2014

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the service of Lieutenant Colonel Kevin S. Cochie, a true gentleman, a Soldier's Soldier, and friend. Lieutenant Colonel Cochie retires from the US Army on June 31st after serving the US Army in uniform for over 20 years. A veteran of Afghanistan and Iraq, he faithfully served the Special Operations community and the Secretary of the Army with distinction.

Kevin served as a Special Operations helicopter pilot in the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment, the Night Stalkers. His operational experience served as the catalyst for a successful acquisition career. Because of his efforts, highly advanced and specially modified helicopters were made even better, resulting in life saving survivability improvements and mission essential improvements that directly contributed to the removal of multiple high value enemy targets from the battlefield.

LTC Cochie's career culminated with an assignment serving the Secretary of the Army as a Legislative Liaison, advocating for Army Aviation. He quickly rose to the status of ''Master Jedi Knight'' among all Defense Department legislative liaisons. His ability to socialize to Congress program details and urgent requirements was nothing short of impressive. For years to come, Kevin's example of how to engage Congress will serve as a benchmark for other legislative liaisons to follow.

In conclusion, God bless Kevin, his wife Sara, and daughter Madison for their service to the Army, the Defense Department, and our great Nation.

HONORING ROBERT HARBULA

HON. MICHAEL F. DOYLE

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 3, 2014

Mr. DOYLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to one of my constituents who is truly an American hero.

Mr. Robert Harbula of West Mifflin, Pennsylvania, fought bravely as a U.S. Marine in the Korean War—including the Battle of Chosin Reservoir. Private First Class Harbula served in G Company of the Third Battalion of the First Marine Regiment, part of the First Marine Division, in the Korean War. His unit was referred to initially as ''George Company'' and then, later, after Chosin Reservoir, as ''Bloody George.''

Private First Class Bob Harbula was assigned to the Marine unit guarding Camp David, the Presidential retreat, when he served as an usher for the Washington, DC, premiere of ''Sands of Iwo Jima'' in January of 1950. After seeing the movie, he decided that he ought to get a more dangerous posting, so he volunteered for a marine raider unit several months later. Soon thereafter, he ended up in Camp Pendleton as part of the First Marine Division—and in August 1950, he found himself on a troopship headed for Japan with the First Marines as one of the early reinforcements for the hard-pressed UN forces in Korea. Mr. Harbula was part of the machine gun squad attached to G Company's First Platoon.

Korea had been occupied for 35 years by Japan until the end of World War II, at which point it was partitioned at the 38th Parallel. South Korea was occupied and protected by US forces. North Korea was occupied by the Soviet Union. UN plans to hold elections and unify the country were rejected by the Soviets, and a communist dictatorship was established in the north.

On June 25th, North Korean troops crossed the boundary separating North and South Korea, taking the ill-prepared South Korean Army by surprise and overwhelming it. Three days later, the North Korean army occupied Seoul, the South Korean capital. US troops from the Eighth Army based in Japan rushed to aid the South Koreans. They were thrown into battle piecemeal in a desperate effort to gain time for more reinforcements to arrive. South Korean troops and the US 24th Infantry Division fought the North Korean troops relentlessly, inflicting substantial casualties, but they were repeatedly defeated by superior numbers and forced to retreat. By August, US and South Korean forces had been pushed back to a fragile perimeter around the port city of Pusan in the southwest corner of the Korean peninsula. Despite repeated North Korean attacks, the Pusan Perimeter held and bled the North Koreans dry.

General Douglas MacArthur, commander of US forces in the region, decided to launch a major amphibious landing deep in the North Korean army's rear at the port city of Inchon on Korea's west coast. Mr. Harbula's unit was in the first wave of the assault craft, which landed under heavy fire on September 15th. From that moment on, George Company was in nearly constant combat as US forces captured Inchon and fought their way into Seoul, where the fighting often deteriorated into vicious house-to-house combat. On the night of September 25th, George Company—heavily outnumbered—stopped a major North Korean counterattack by tanks, self-propelled artillery, and hundreds of men along Seoul's Ma Po Boulevard. Mr. Harbula and his section did what they could, firing a machine gun nonstop at the lead tank. With artillery support, George Company withstood and repelled the attack—but at a terrible cost.

The Inchon landing and the liberation of Seoul caused the weakened and over-extended North Korean forces in the south to collapse and beat a panicked retreat northward. The US Eighth Army began pressing northward in aggressive pursuit along Korea's west coast. The X Corps, which included the First Marine Division, was pulled out of the line and loaded onto amphibious transport ships. They sailed around the Korean Peninsula and disembarked at the end of October in the port of Wonsan on North Korea's southeastern coast, which had already been secured by South Korean units.

George Company's first assignment after landing at Wonsan was holding a village called Majon-ni several miles inland at the junction of roads leading to Seoul, Wonsan, and Pyongyang. On November 2nd, PFC Harbula's machine gun squad was helping to escort a re-supply convoy through a treacherous mountain gorge when it was ambushed. Bob Harbula provided cover, firing a .30 caliber machine gun from the hip, while the surviving trucks were carefully turned around on the one-lane, cliff-edged road and driven out of the ambush to Wonsan, where they reported to headquarters and requested a rescue mission for the remaining survivors.

George Company garrisoned Majon-ni for several weeks after the ambush. PFC Harbula took command of his 10-man machine gun squad after the sergeant who had been in charge was seriously wounded in the ambush. On November 14th, George Company moved north to the Hungnam-Chigyong region. That same day, a cold front moved into the region from Siberia, sending temperatures as low as −35 degrees each night. Such brutal weather would continue for the next two weeks, making weapons and equipment inoperable and causing thousands of injuries and deaths from frostbite and exposure over the course of the battle.

The rugged Taebaek Mountains that ran up the middle of the Korean peninsula divided the Eighth Army from X Corps as each force pushed north. On November 24th, MacArthur ordered the ''Home by Christmas'' offensive to conquer all of North Korea up to the Yalu River, which formed the boundary between North Korea and China. The Eighth Army was to push north, while the First Marine Division was to push west from the Chosin Reservoir, cut off a North Korean major supply line, and link up with the Eighth Army.

Unbeknownst to General MacArthur and his advisors, hundreds of thousands of Chinese troops had begun infiltrating into North Korea in mid-October. The General and his staff thought that there were only a few small Chinese units fighting in North Korea. In fact, Chinese troops were massing for attacks in both the east and west. In the east, the 9th Army Group of the Chinese ''People's Volunteer Army'' had encircled most of the Chosin Reservoir, a large man-made lake north of Wonsan and 65 miles northwest of the port city of Hungnam.

On November 25th, nearly two hundred thousand Chinese troops launched a surprise attack on the Eighth Army, defeating it resoundingly in the Battle of the Ch'ongchion River and sending it retreating southward in what came to be called ''the Big Bug-out.''

On November 27th, however, the First Marine Division's orders were still to attack northwestward. Most of the Division's combat troops, primarily thousands of Marines from the First Marine Division's 5th and 7th Regiments, were positioned around the village of Yudam-ni west of the reservoir. An understrength regimental combat team from the 7th Infantry Division held territory on the east side of the reservoir up through the village of Hudong-ni to Sinhung-ni. A winding narrow road led through the mountainous terrain from each village to the bottom of the lake, where they met in the village of Hagaru-ri, which was lightly defended by a hodgepodge of units from the First Marine Division, including a number of companies from George Company's First Marine Regiment. Essential supplies had been stockpiled at Hagaru-ri, and engineers were desperately trying to build a small airstrip when they weren't fighting off enemy attacks.

It was 14 miles of treacherous terrain from Yudam-ni to Hagaru-ni. To the east of the reservoir, it was a similar distance from Sinhung-

ni to Hagaru-ri. From there, the road wound 11 miles through more mountainous terrain to the town of Koto-ri, where the 1st Marine Regiment's headquarters was located—defended by the Regiment's Second Battalion—and then another 10 miles to Chinhung-ni, defended by First Battalion, First Marine Regiment. From there, it was another 37 miles to the port city of Hungnam. That one narrow road was the only way First Marine Division and the other units from X Corps could get out of the mountains and back to the coast.

Meanwhile, George Company was stuck somewhere in the rear echelons for lack of transportation.

On the night of November 27th, all hell broke loose. The 9th Army Group of the People's Volunteer Army attacked the X Corps forces on either side of the Chosin Reservoir and at various points along the road as far south as Koto-ri. Tens of thousands of Chinese soldiers attacked the outnumbered Americans' positions. The Marines at Yudam-ni were surrounded and cut off, as were the soldiers of the 7th Infantry's Regimental Combat Team 31 on the east side of the reservoir—and the Divisional headquarters and elements of the 1st Marine Regiment at Hagaru-ri.

On the morning of November 28th, George Company finally got some wheels. They were ordered into trucks and headed north, arriving in Koto-ri at nighfall.

That night, the Chinese launched a massive attack on Hagaru-ri. They almost succeeded in overwhelming the outnumbered Marines, who had thrown every able-bodied man who could fire a rifle into the front line—down to, and including, the cooks and truck drivers. When dawn came, the defenses had held, but Chinese forces occupied the strategic high ground—East Hill—and unless reinforcements arrived, it seemed inevitable that Hagaru-ri would fall and the units around the Chosin Reservoir would be doomed.

George Company's 200 men formed part of the 900-man ''Task Force Drysdale'' that was rapidly thrown together on the morning of November 29th in Koto-ri to reinforce Hagaru-ri. It took the column all day to fight their way up the 11 miles of road between Koto-ri and Hagaru-ri. They had to stop repeatedly to clear enemy roadblocks, and they were under fire the whole time from thousands of Chinese soldiers dug in on either side of the road. The route was subsequently given the name ''Hell Fire Valley.''

Late in the day, the rear of the convoy was stopped by a burning truck and surrounded by Chinese troops. Fighting through the night until their ammunition was nearly all gone, the surviving soldiers finally had no choice but to surrender.

The front of the column, consisting of the surviving tanks, George Company, and some of the Royal Marines pushed on and finally broke through to Hagaru-ri. Only a third of the men who set out that morning in Task Force Drysdale made it to Hagaru-ri, but the 300 soldiers and the tanks that made it through Hell Fire Valley at such a terrible cost significantly bolstered the town's defenses.

The next morning, November 30th, George Company was given the daunting mission of retaking East Hill. They slowly advanced up the hill, slipping and falling repeatedly on the ice and taking heavy rifle and machine gun fire. By the end of the day, they held the south end of the ridge, but the Chinese still held the center. George Company dug in as best they could, but the temperature that night dropped below −20 degrees and the ground was frozen hard. Private Harbula was forced to resort to piling dead Chinese soldiers around his machine gun like sand bags.

Once it was dark, Chinese forces counterattacked, charging down the hill several thousand strong. The men of George Company fought bravely—eventually hand-to-hand. Private Harbula's machine gun jammed, and his position was overrun by the enemy. An officer ordered the men to pull back. He remembers hitting one Chinese Soldier in the face with his helmet and firing his pistol at several others. As he slipped and slid back down the hill, he fell into a shell crater. In the crater, he found several dead Americans and one of his comrades, Richard Haller, still alive but wounded in both legs. Private Harbula carried Haller down the hill to safety, but he ruptured his Achilles tendon in the process. Private Harbula was out of the fight, but the surviving members of George Company fought on. Finally, near dawn on December 1st, the Chinese attack petered out.

December lst was something of a turning point. That day, the Marines in Yudam-ni began a break-out to the south. By nightfall, they had fought their way to Toktong Pass, halfway to Hagaru-ri. In addition, the engineers who had been working on the airstrip completed enough of the runway that C–47 transport planes could use it. That afternoon, planes started bringing in supplies and reinforcements and flying out the wounded.

There was bad news on December 1st as well, however. With half of the men in Regimental Combat Team 31 dead or wounded, its commander, Lieutenant Colonel Don Carlos Faith, ordered his troops to destroy any equipment they couldn't carry and attempt to break through to Hagaru-ri. As the column advanced, it was attacked constantly by thousands of Chinese soldiers on each side of the road to Hagaru-ri. As night fell, Lieutenant Colonel Faith was killed trying to take a roadblock and the column disintegrated. Many small groups of soldiers fled through the night and made it to the Hagaru-ri perimeter alive, but everyone who stayed with the convoy was killed.

Most of the First Division was now reunited in Hagaru-ri. The remaining able-bodied but exhausted members of George Company continued to defend the perimeter, moving to one end of the runway on December 5th and repulsing another large Chinese attack.

On December 6th, the First Marine Division began its breakout effort—or as its commanding officer General O.P. Smith put it, not so much retreating as attacking in a different direction. George Company fought its way back down Hell Fire Valley—but this time as part of a unit powerful enough to defend itself. They reached Koto-ri by the end of the next day. The retreat continued the following day with the 5th and 7th Regiments pushing ahead and the 1st Regiment and George Company acting as a rear guard. Finally, they reached the port of Hungnam, where an armada of ships evacuated a quarter of a million soldiers and civilians, as well as a great deal of equipment.

The ''advance in a different direction'' by the ''Chosin Few'' has become a legendary example of heroism, sacrifice, endurance, and suffering. Thousands of American soldiers rebuffed surprise attacks by overwhelming numbers of enemy forces and then conducted a 70-mile fighting retreat through treacherous mountain terrain in subfreezing weather.

George Company, now ''Bloody George,'' did their part, fighting their way into Hagaru-ri, up East Hill, and then—outnumbered 10 to 1—holding their perimeter against determined enemy counterattack. Private First Class Bob Harbula served bravely in the Battle of Chosin Reservoir until he was injured.

Remarkably, several months later, Bob's brother, John, who was a Marine stationed in Norfolk, saw a Marine on crutches hitchhiking. John picked him up and they got to talking, and the Marine mentioned that he was at the Chosin Reservoir with G–3–1. John told his passenger that he had a brother who had also fought there with G–3–1. The hitchhiker asked John what his brother's name was, and when John told him that it was Bob Harbula, the Marine's face turned white and he said, ''that's the SOB that saved my life!'' John had given a lift to Richard Haller!

Chosin Reservoir didn't mark the end of Bloody George's or Bob Harbula's combat action in Korea by any means. Soon after, he was back in combat. On April 15th, 1951, he was promoted to Corporal and put in charge of 2 machine guns and 20 men at the start of Operation Ripper. He fought again with G Company in North Korea at the Hwachon Reservoir, where the First Marine Division was awarded its third Presidential Unit Citation for action on Hill 902. He was finally rotated home on June 6, 1951.

Mr. Harbula was recently quoted in the McKeesport Daily News as saying, ''I don't consider myself a hero.'' Well, I think it's safe to say that the rest of us do. I am grateful to U.S. Marine Corporal Robert Harbula for his heroic service to our country, and I am very proud to represent him in the House of Representatives.

Mr. Harbula may not consider himself a hero, but he believes deeply that his comrades in George Company, especially those who gave their lives for this country, are heroes who never got the recognition they deserved. He has endeavored for years to educate the American public about the critical role George Company played in reinforcing and defending Hagaru-ri and holding it until the 5th and 7th Marine Regiments could reach it and the First Marine Division could carry out its legendary fighting withdrawal.

That may finally be happening some 60-odd years after the fact. In 2010, a writer named Patrick K. O'Donnell published ''Give Me Tomorrow: The Korean War's Greatest Untold Story—the Epic Stand of the Marines of George Company.'' The book is based on extensive interviews with the surviving members of G Company. In addition, earlier this week, the story of George Company's actions in the Battle of Chosin Reservoir was the subject of an episode of ''Against All Odds''—a six-part series about battlefield heroism on the American Heroes Channel—which until recently was known as the Military Channel.

Mr. Speaker, all Americans can be proud of the fact that in the course of our nation's history, there have been many inspiring, often heartbreaking stories of heroes who have given their lives for this country. There are many, many more Americans who have served this country who have risked their lives

for this country. Many have come home wounded and disabled. We owe them all a debt we can never begin to repay. It's my belief, though, that we should remember them and honor them as best we can for what they've done. That's why, when I learned about Bob Harbula and George Company's service in the Korean War, I felt it was only right that I share their story with you and have it included in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

Mr. Harbula has spent much of his life trying to call attention to his brothers in arms—the Chosin Few—so I urge my colleagues to join me in recognizing the bravery and tremendous sacrifices of Bob Harbula and the men of Company G, Third Battalion, First Marine Regiment for their heroic service in the Korean War. God bless them, and God bless everyone who serves or has served our nation in its armed forces.

SAVE AMERICAN WORKERS ACT OF 2014

SPEECH OF

HON. PETER A. DeFAZIO

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 2, 2014

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, as I have said since the law was passed, parts of the Affordable Care Act need to be improved or fixed. The employer mandate is no exception. For example employers in many sectors, from farmers to municipalities, face unacceptable uncertainty surrounding the definition of seasonal and part time workers. The federal government needs to provide clear guidance to these employers. As some Senators have proposed, I also support giving businesses with between 50 and 100 full time employees the option to either provide employer sponsored insurance or have their employees buy plans on the individual exchange. Instead of focusing on reasonable reforms like these, Republican House leadership today brought up H.R. 2575, a bill that the President has already promised to veto.

H.R. 2575 would not provide any more certainty to employers with seasonal workers. It would not give businesses with between 50 and 100 full time employees any more flexibility with regard to how their employees get insurance. What it would do, according to the Congressional Budget Office, is increase the deficit by $73 billion. It would also increase the number of uninsured Americans. For these reasons, I voted against the bill. I look forward to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to pass real fixes to the ACA that will make the law work better for consumers and employers alike.

YETI CYCLES

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 3, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Yeti Cycles for being honored with the Innovative Technology Award given by the Jefferson County Economic Development Corporation.

The Innovative Technology Award is given to a Jefferson County company that is on the forefront of new and advanced technologies.

Yeti Cycles, headquartered in Golden Colorado, is a leading mountain bike manufacturer with decades of experience in product development. The company created many patented technologies and consistently pushes development to the next level.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Yeti Cycles for receiving this prestigious award from the Jefferson County Economic Development Corporation. I thank you for your innovation, high standards and quality products.

HONORING THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF WORKFORCE BOARDS W.O. LAWTON BUSINESS LEADERSHIP AWARD WINNER AND HONOREES

HON. JOHN KLINE

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 3, 2014

Mr. KLINE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate this year's National Association of Workforce Boards W.O. Lawton Business Leadership Award winner and honorees.

The 2014 winner, Michigan Works! The Job Force Board, and honorees ExxonMobil Chemical Company and Qualcomm deserve recognition for their commitment of time, resources, and leadership to better their communities' workforce and economy.

NAWB established the W.O. Lawton Business Leadership Award to annually honor forward-looking businesses and public partners, such as economic development organizations, education providers, and community and faith-based organizations.

Mr. Speaker, at a time when businesses and organizations across the country are still coping with an extraordinarily slow economic recovery, these groups should be commended for taking the initiative to train today's workers for the jobs of the future. Their efforts to establish partnerships between workforce boards, community colleges, businesses, and other area economic and workforce development leaders has garnered real results for their communities.

Michigan Works! The Job Force Board, ExxonMobil Chemical Company, and Qualcomm have implemented policies similar to those promoted by policymakers in the House and Senate to support a highly-trained workforce and stronger economy. As Chairman of the Committee on Education and the Workforce, I recognize the critical need to improve our nation's workforce development system, and appreciate the important role these organizations play in helping achieve this shared goal.

Once again, I congratulate these organizations and salute their diligent work to improve their communities and local economies.

OPPOSITION TO NATIONAL GUARD SPENDING CUTS

HON. BRUCE L. BRALEY

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 3, 2014

Mr. BRALEY of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, the following in individuals indicated that they do not support the Pentagon making cuts to the National Guard to reduce spending:

DOUG BETTS—ALBION, IA

I am not in favor of cutting funding for our military at all. I believe we should keep a strong defense, but also keep that defense close to home and only on foreign soils when needed to protect US citizens and strategic interests. Specifically, I'm not in favor of deploying large numbers of our Iowa Guard troops overseas, as then they are not here to help in case of an emergency like a natural disaster.

If defense must be cut, down-sizing bases in foreign countries and other foreign aid should be the first consideration.

KEN WILLOUGHBY—MELCHER DALLAS, IA

No way! With climatic events etc., etc. it's the last place they should cut. There are dozens of areas to make cuts other than the guard.

After using the guard for overseas wartime service then making cuts after all they've sacrificed is ridiculous!!

JOHN IRWIN—GRINNELL, IA

I don't think we should cut any defense spending other than the gaft industries charge for items purchased by the govt.

FRANKLIN CURTIS—IOWA FALLS, IA

The guard is needed as a backup to local emergency and national disaster assistance to law enforcement and first responders. Reduction in some active duty and equipment storage of un-needed aircraft is a better plan.

BETTY REYNOLDS—LE GRAND, IA

This country has been depending on the National Guard to fight in the war. My son has been over twice. Some families may depend on the extra income from the Guard also. Thank you for sticking up for them.

DEBRA DOWNS—MARSHALLTOWN, IA

Cut the waste—not the people.

SANDRA PATTERSON—MARSHALLTOWN, IA

How about cutting government corruption instead?

ROGER LAKEY—MARSHALLTOWN, IA

States needs the Guard for natural disasters and state functions. Like the floods of 2008 in Iowa; who would be called up for duty if we were to cut the Guard? Iowa has no active duty base or fort in the state so the Guard is our only state military asset.

PEDRO AQUERO—MARSHALLTOWN, IA

We need the troops to keep our DEMOCRACY safe. If you need more comments and exact comments I can explain.

STEVEN AIKIN—RHODES, IA

I was in the Guard and Guard units are essential in deployments.

DIANNA BUTCHER—STATE CENTER, IA

I do believe it is wrong to cut funding for the National Guard. I would rather see our troops brought home and the money used to keep our national borders secured. We need the young men and women to assist in times of disaster within our own State... Maybe it is time that monetary support for the Iowa National Guard comes from the Iowa state budget to keep them available. In any event we need to maintain our National defenses, not lessen them.

PHYLLIS STADTLANDER—WAUKEE, IA

Please use my tax dollars to preserve the National Guard. It is a safety net for the safety for my family. Thank you very much for your work on our behalf.

MIKE VANDELUNE—URBANDALE, IA

The military needs to be treated as a business. You have a workforce (active duty) for your basic manufacturing or business needs. Then when you have a unexpected need, you bring on the part-time (National Guard) workforce. The last thing you want is to not have what you need for a workforce when there is an emergency.

JIM MAYLAND—BUFFALO CENTER, IA

I am commander of the local VFW Post. I have seen some waste in the military and I think that is where the cuts should come not in reducing the National Guard.

ROSS KUPER—OSAGE, IA

Do not make cuts to the military in any way shape. They need to have the best care provided to the service person and their families. We need the best military in the world.

RANDY MARTIN—ROCKWELL CITY, IA

I do not want to see the country go back to the era where our military was cut so low that we were open to terrorist attacks. Remind them of 911.

ANNA FREMONT—CEDAR FALLS, IA

Besides we all know we will need the guard in active duty when all this snow melts and we are flooded again. Then what?

DIANE SIEBEL—CEDAR FALLS, IA

Absolutely not!

KATHY DOYLE—CEDAR FALLS, IA

My husband is active duty National Guard/Army. He would lose his position and now he's currently at the Arizona border patrol as a pilot. If we lose that we lose our careers our income and insurance and that would mean that the unemployment rate will go sky high. I am totally against this and not happy about it either.

RALPH PRUNTY—CEDAR FALLS, IA

Redefine and reduce the scope of the NSC and Keep the National Guard.

CARL MEYER—CEDAR FALLS, IA

The National Guard is not only capable of being deployed to places like Afghanistan but also is used for all kinds of national disasters. The Guard numbers are right where we need them.

ROBERT YUSKA—HUDSON, IA

They protect our state in disasters as well as protecting our nation in emergencies.

DEBRA NOESEN—INDEPENDENCE, IA

I'm sick & tired of hearing about cuts to our military when the cuts should be made in our Congress & Senate, that's where the waste is. By the time Congress gets done with this, we will have no security in this country. I served in the US Women's Army Corp and am still extremely proud of my service but I'm fed up with the way the military and veterans are treated in this country.

DAN CALLAHAN—INDEPENDENCE, IA

Our aviation assets are better than the Army's. Our soldiers bring a wealth of experience from their civilian jobs that make our units far more flexible than active units. Paying so much for weapons systems that don't work and being unable to retain and train our soldiers is silly. Active duty generals and lobbyists are frightened by how effective our Guard units are at a much lower cost than a similar active unit. They worry about protecting their jobs, not the effectiveness of the fighting force.

TED LANSKE—WAVERLY, IA

The last time we had troop cuts this low was right after WWII and for the same reason. Guess what, Korean conflict came along. We are about to make the same stupid political mistake and history will repeat itself. Drones cannot fight hill to hill, valley to valley, nor door to door.

KATHLEEN SCHUHMACHER—WAVERLY, IA

We are weakening our defense system in the United States. Please do what you can to maintain (at least) what we already have in place.

JOSEPH SEITZ—WATERLOO, IA

As you say, they could make cuts to military weapon development and to cut waste. It's nice that the Secretary of Defense wants to make cuts but maybe the cuts need to be toward that first before reducing our National Guard.

CHIP WOOD—WATERLOO, IA

Much more savings achieved cutting regular forces.

ANGIE GILBERT—WATERLOO, IA

My husband is in the Iowa National Guard and was deployed to Afghanistan in 2010. He works very hard to do a great job at any task he is appointed to and is always ready to do whatever he is asked to serve our state and our country. These men and women do a great service and deserve great respect. I believe budget cuts could be made elsewhere.

BRENDA DOUGLASS—WATERLOO, IA

My son is a member of the Iowa National Guard. He takes his job as an Army National Guard soldier very seriously and has great pride in being ready to serve his country when needed.

NANCY STIRM—WATERLOO, IA

Our National Guard does so much more than protect our country. Let's keep them available to all needs of the state and country.

CINDY BENGSTON—WATERLOO, IA

Thank you Rep. Braley!

SANDIE DEAHL—WATERLOO, IA

I believe funding within the Iowa National Guard should be redistributed. Outdated or mostly vacant posts should be closed or sold. Funding previously spent on maintenance should be used for recruitment/training of recruits. Please give Tim Orr a call, he represents the National Guard well and has quite a few good ideas about future direction(s) of the guard.

TIONA JOHNSTON—WATERLOO, IA

I do not believe that we should cut any of our military. My oldest son is in the Reserves. I also believe that someone should be FIGHTING for our Veterans' rights.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE ST. PAUL, ST. CLARE CRUSADERS BASKETBALL TEAM

HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 3, 2014

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor the St. Paul, St. Clare Crusaders 8th Grade Boys' Basketball Team, who ended a great season Friday, March 28, 2014. For the seventh year in a row, the Crusaders went undefeated as champions of the Luzerne, Lackawanna League and went on to compete in the Pennsylvania CYO Championship at Chestnut Hill College in Philadelphia, where they faced the best teams that the state's eight Dioceses had to offer. Under the leadership of Mike Brown, and assistant coaches John Murray, Patrick Sweeney, and Jamie Dempsey, the team of 20 ranked 6th in the entire state with an overall 36–2 record.

It is with great pride that I honor the team and the coaching staff of St. Paul, St. Clare. The sportsmanship, althleticism, and teamwork that these young people displayed on the court brought their community together. I congratulate the Crusaders on their hard work and success, and I thank them for inspiring us all.

COMMEMORATING PATRICIA ''PATTY'' LYONS

HON. MICHAEL G. FITZPATRICK

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 3, 2014

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the life of Patricia ''Patty'' Lyons. Patty passed away on March 26, 2014 after a long courageous and hard fought battle with cancer.

Patty was a dedicated nurse in Bucks County for 35 years. It has been said of nurses, that with each patient and family they work with over the years, they give a little piece of themselves and each of those threads, make up the beautiful tapestry that is the career of nursing. Patty's career and life was indeed a beautiful tapestry. She dedicated her life to improving the care of older Americans particularly those in home care and hospice. She established and operated Bucks County Special Care for 28 years. Patty worked tirelessly advocating for legislation requiring non-medical home cares to be licensed and direct care workers to pass criminal background checks, which ultimately became law.

Patty was very generous with her time and dedicated hours of service to numerous boards, community organizations and commissions including the Long Term Care Advisory Panel serving the 8th Congressional District. I had the honor and pleasure of knowing Patty. She left a lasting impression on those she touched and she will be dearly missed and fondly remembered.

TRIBUTE TO LIEUTENANT GENERAL WILLIAM N. PHILLIPS

HON. JOHN R. CARTER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 3, 2014

Mr. CARTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Lieutenant General William N. Phillips, United States Army for his extraordinary dedication to duty and selfless service to our nation as the Military Deputy Director to the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics and Technology. Lieutenant General Phillips will retire after 38 dedicated years and exceptional service to this Nation.

Mr. Speaker, let me be the first to say that there is no mission too great for this incredible individual. Bill's tremendous vision, leadership, and dedication to excellence has ensured our beloved Soldiers fighting on behalf of the Nation have always had and will continue to have well into the future, the most technologically advanced and reliable equipment whenever

and wherever they need it most. A true champion for Soldier's and their Families, his efforts have proven to be exponential and his example unwavering.

Lieutenant General Phillips earned his commission as a Field Artillery Officer in the United States Army from Middle Tennessee State University and was commissioned a Second Lieutenant on the first of July, 1976. Excelling in a multitude of positions spanning from Army aviator to defense procurement and contracting expert, Lieutenant General Phillips has performed at an elite level in business, academia, and combat. He humbly served with great pride as a warrior and scholar.

Lieutenant General Phillips' assignments have been some of the most challenging and diverse his profession has to offer. He served impeccably in positions to include but not limited to: the Commanding General, Joint Contracting Command-Iraq/Afghanistan in Baghdad, Iraq, the Commanding General of Picatinny Arsenal in the great State of New Jersey, as well as the Program Executive Officer for Army Ammunition, and the Deputy Program Executive Officer for Army Aviation.

Mr. Speaker it is my honor to recognize the selfless service of Lieutenant General William "Bill" N. Phillips as he proceeds into the next chapter of his life. Bill is leaving a legacy that will be remembered for the years to come. On behalf of a grateful Nation, I join my colleagues today in recognizing and commending Lieutenant General William N. Phillips for almost four decades of tremendous Service to his Country in the United States Army. I wish Bill and his loving and dedicated wife Marilyn Phillips, the very best as they begin their new journey that is sure to be filled with continued success and adventure.

SAVE AMERICAN WORKERS ACT OF 2014

SPEECH OF

HON. GENE GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 2, 2014

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my opposition to H.R. 2575, the Save American Workers Act. This bill is not only our 52nd repeal vote and another effort to undermine the Affordable Care Act, it actually worsens the problem it purports to fix.

Raising the threshold for full-time employees from 30 hours per week to 40 hours will result in lost work hours for 6.5 million people and essentially eviscerate the employer responsibility requirement.

According to the Congressional Budget Office and Joint Committee on Taxation, H.R. 2575 will cause a million people to lose their employer-based health insurance coverage, increase the number of uninsured Americans by 500,000, and add $74 billion to the deficit over 10 years.

This bill will make a shift towards part-time employment much more likely, not less so.

I urge my colleagues to protect American workers and vote against H.R. 2575.

HONORING CAPTAIN MARK E. CEDRUN

HON. HENRY A. WAXMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 3, 2014

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize Captain Mark E. Cedrun as he retires from the United States Navy after 31 remarkable years of service.

In 1979 as a young constituent of California's 24th Congressional District, then high school senior Mark Cedrun came to me seeking a nomination to the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland. I was thoroughly impressed with Mark's intellect, maturity, and enthusiasm. He stood out among an extremely competitive candidate pool. I was delighted to grant Mark the nomination. At that time, Mark was accepted to the United States Military Academy Preparatory School in Ft. Monmouth, New Jersey. After one year, I was honored to once again nominate Mark for the Naval Academy in Annapolis where he was ultimately commissioned as an ensign in 1984.

Mark went on to have an exemplary naval career, serving multiple sea assignments. He was deployed to the Arabian Gulf in early 2003 in support of Operations Enduring and Iraqi Freedom and most recently served as the Assistant Chief of Staff for Commander, Naval Surface Forces, U.S. Pacific Fleet. Throughout his long career Mark has received numerous awards, including the Defense Superior Service Medal, the Legion of Merit, the Bronze Star Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal, the Navy Marine Corps Commendation Medal, and the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal.

I am honored to have played a small part in such an impressive and honorable naval career. I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating the remarkable accomplishments of Captain Mark Cedrun and wishing him all the best for the future.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE ALEX G. SPANOS HEART AND VASCULAR CENTER AT MERCY GENERAL HOSPITAL

HON. DORIS O. MATSUI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 3, 2014

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the opening of the Alex G. Spanos Heart and Vascular Center at Mercy General Hospital in Sacramento. The Alex G. Spanos Heart and Vascular Center builds upon the foundation of excellence that has made Mercy General Hospital a proven leader in cardiovascular care. I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Mercy Hospital's Alex G. Spanos Heart and Vascular Center and all who have made the Center a reality, as they commemorate this important milestone.

Mercy General Hospital is home to the highest-volume heart surgery program in California, and the Alex G. Spanos Heart and Vascular Center was created to help meet the needs of those with cardiovascular diseases. This center will grant patients access to a state-of-the-art diagnostic cardiopulmonary care area, a cardiac and pulmonary rehabilitation center, and four cardiac surgery operating rooms, including an innovative hybrid operating room. The new facility will be of great value to the entire Northern California region, with its cutting edge technology and highly advanced procedures.

With the renovations and additions, the Center will now allow for more rooms to be available for both scheduled and emergency cardiovascular procedures. This allows patients to have access to world class technology, and an integrated care model, creating greater efficiencies and a continuum of care. I am confident that the Center's impact will be felt across California and not just in Sacramento.

Mr. Speaker, as the Spanos family, who made this Center possible, Mercy General staff and community supporters gather for the blessing of this building, I ask my colleagues to join me in wishing them the best of luck moving forward.

RECOGNIZING PARKLAND HEALTH AND HOSPITAL SYSTEM'S STROKE PROGRAM

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 3, 2014

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Parkland Health and Hospital System's stroke program. Parkland recently received the Get With The Guidelines-Stroke Gold-Plus Achievement Award and the Target: Stroke Honor Roll for its implementation of quality improvements laid out by the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association.

Parkland is Dallas County's public hospital and serves as one of the area's three Level 1 Trauma Centers and the primary care center for the county. Parkland is also one of the largest providers of uncompensated care in Texas. However, Parkland's dedication to community health programs remains unwavering.

Parkland's commitment to improving stroke care means that patients receive personalized care based on clinical guidelines. The American Heart Association/American Stroke Association note that hospitals that follow the Get With The Guidelines-Stroke see a reduction in length of stay and readmission rates for stroke patients, ultimately reducing disparity gaps in care.

Landing on the Target: Stroke Honor Roll demonstrates Parkland's commitment to reducing the time between hospital arrival and treatment. People who suffer a stroke and receive the clot-buster tPA, the only approved drug to treat ischemic stroke, within three hours may recover more quickly and are less likely to suffer from a stroke-related disability.

Parkland Health and Hospital System has worked diligently to implement guidelines from the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association. On average, someone suffers a stroke every 40 seconds. I encourage hospitals nationwide to use these internationally respected clinical guidelines. It is imperative that we use the medications and risk-reduction therapies aimed at the reduction of death and disability in stroke patients. I urge

my colleagues to support the hospitals in each district in this country by helping stroke patients and spreading awareness about stroke risk factors and treatment.

WADSWORTH CONTROL SYSTEMS

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 3, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Wadsworth Control Systems for being honored with the Business Recognition Award given by the Jefferson County Economic Development Corporation.

The Business Recognition Award is given to a Jefferson County company which shows growth in employment, sales and capital investment in the last year.

Wadsworth Control Systems is a family owned and operated company and is one of the oldest and reliable environmental control companies in North America. The company manufactures climate controls, energy curtains and vent automation for greenhouses around the world. Wadsworth Control Systems is constantly innovating to produce the best product for their customers.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Wadsworth Control Systems for being honored with the Business Recognition Award from the Jefferson County Economic Development Corporation. I thank you for your commitment to high standards, innovation and quality products.

TRIBUTE TO TONY COLLINS

HON. TOM LATHAM

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 3, 2014

Mr. LATHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor Clive Assistant Fire Chief Tony Collins of Dallas Center, Iowa, for his lifesaving efforts on March 14, 2014.

Don Roese, an 83-year-old Pomeroy resident, was enjoying a Friday night with his daughter-in-law at a Waukee establishment when tragedy struck. Near midnight, Don fell to the ground unconscious after experiencing a severe heart attack caused by complete blockage in two major arteries. As the bar patrons' mood shifted from relaxed to panic, it was Mr. Tony Collins, at the bar celebrating his 53rd birthday, who took the situation into his own hands.

Mr. Collins immediately began mouth-to-mouth resuscitation while directing four other customers to check for vital signs and perform chest compressions. For nearly fifteen minutes, Tony and his team continued to work on resuscitating Mr. Roese with no signs of hope. Finally, Don regained his pulse and began breathing again, ultimately conscious and alert by the time the ambulance arrived. There is no doubt that Tony's quick thinking and heroic actions saved Mr. Roese's life that night.

Mr. Speaker, Assistant Fire Chief Collins' instinct and brave actions to save a fellow Iowan's life embody the selfless attributes we all should strive for. His extraordinary response to this life-threatening situation should give us all pause as we offer gratitude to our local heroes. It is a great honor to represent Tony in the United States Congress, and I invite my colleagues in the House to join me in congratulating and thanking him for his outstanding performance and commitment when it truly mattered most.

SAVE AMERICAN WORKERS ACT OF 2014

SPEECH OF

HON. JOHN D. DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 2, 2014

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H.R. 2575, the so-called Save American Workers Act. This is yet another attempt to chip away at the Affordable Care Act and it should be rejected. Just this week we saw 7.1 million people enroll in a health plan through the marketplaces, which met the goal set by the Obama Administration. For many people, this is the first time they have had access to quality, affordable health insurance. We should be building on the successes of the law, rather than working to turn back the clock.

There is much misinformation regarding the responsibilities of employers under the ACA. The law requires most employers to offer health insurance to employees who work more than 30 hours a week, and they must pay a penalty if one of these workers gets a subsidy through the marketplace. The threshold was set at this level because a large share of companies employ their workers for much more than 30 hours a week, and they would have to significantly restructure their business model and drastically reduce their hours to avoid their responsibility under the law. According to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, eight percent of employees work between 30 and 34 hours per week, but 43 percent of employees work 40 hours per week. Therefore, CBPP concludes that five times as many workers are at risk of having their hours cut if this legislation was signed into law.

The Congressional Budget Office projects H.R. 2575 would reduce the number of people receiving employer based coverage by 1 million, and would increase the number of uninsured by 500,000. This would be a drastic step backward from the progress we have seen enrolling millions of Americans in health coverage. Another claim made by my friends on the other side of the aisle is that this provision of ACA is leading to an increase in part-time work, when nothing is further from the truth. In fact, CBO concluded in February that "there is no compelling evidence that part-time employment has increased as a result of ACA."

This bill would cause more problems than it purports to solve. I urge my colleagues to vote down this misguided legislation.

RECOGNIZING INDIANA LEGISLATORS: SENATORS ALLEN PAUL AND JOHNNY NUGENT

HON. LUKE MESSER

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 3, 2014

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the careers of two extraordinary Indiana legislators: Senators Allen Paul and Johnny Nugent. These two friends have served the state of Indiana for decades, and I want to personally thank them for all of their hard work and recognize them for their many accomplishments.

Let me tell you a little bit about Senator Allen Paul. Allen volunteered for the U.S. army in 1967 and is a decorated Vietnam Veteran. He was awarded the Bronze Star for saving a man's life and also earned a Combat Infantry Badge and four Air Medals. After being honorably discharged from the Army, Allen was elected to the State Senate in 1986 where he was a tireless advocate for military members and their families. He passed important legislation to help veterans receive a college degree and supported legislation to offer in-state tuition for veterans.

Senator Paul has the distinction of being the first legislator from Eastern Indiana to serve in a leadership position within the caucus. During his 28 year tenure in the Senate, He served as Majority Whip, Chairman of the Insurance Committee and Chair of the Financial Institutions Committee. His political savvy and institutional knowledge will certainly be missed by his colleagues in the State Legislature.

Senator Paul's dear friend Senator Johnny Nugent has also decided to retire after more than 30 years in office. He too is a veteran of the U.S. Army and Army Reserve. At the age of 26, Johnny was elected Dearborn County Commissioner—the youngest commissioner ever elected in Indiana. As a State Senator, Johnny held numerous leadership positions including Majority Floor Leader, Chair of the Agriculture and Small Business committee and ranking member of the Insurance and Financial Institutions Committee.

Senator Nugent has been a tireless defender of the 2nd Amendment and served two-terms on the NRA's Board of Directors. The only individual in Indiana to serve on the board. During his tenure in the Senate, he successfully sponsored Indiana's "Castle Doctrine," as well as the nation's first lifetime concealed carry permit. Senator Nugent is also known for his involvement in his local community. He is a member of the Dearborn County Chamber of Commerce and the Southeastern Indiana Shrine Club. He is a successful small business owner and ran Nugent Tractor sales of Lawrenceburg for decades.

Both Allen Paul and Johnny Nugent serve as shining examples of what it means to be a public servant. I ask the entire 6th Congressional district to join me in recognizing these two outstanding Hoosier legislators. I have no doubt these great men will bring the same commitment, dedication, and enthusiasm they had for serving their constituents and their communities to the next chapter of their lives.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MICHAEL E. CAPUANO

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 3, 2014

Mr. CAPUANO. Mr. Speaker, I missed several votes this week to attend some services for Lieutenant Walsh and Firefighter Kennedy. I wish to state how I would have voted had I been present: rollcall No. 149—''yes''; rollcall No. 150 ''yes''; rollcall No. 152 ''no''; rollcall No. 153 ''no''.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ADAM SMITH

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 3, 2014

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, May 8, 2012, I recorded an erroneous vote on the vote to approve the resolution H. Res. 530. I intended to vote ''no'' on rollcall vote No. 153, on agreeing to resolution H. Res. 530.

A REAL TASTE OF TEXAS

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 3, 2014

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, every morning for the past fifteen years, Southeast Texans have turned on their radios to AM 700 on their morning drive and heard my good friend, Edd Hendee. On his show, Edd talks about everything from hot political topics to the Texans. It's hard to believe that his time on Houston radio will soon come to an end. Edd will be missed on the airwaves, but I have no doubt that he will continue to impact Houston.

Edd is a fourth generation Texan, skilled entrepreneur, brilliant business owner, patriot and Texan to the bone. Edd Hendee and his wife, Nina, operate the best steak restaurant in Texas, the Taste of Texas. The Hendees opened the doors of the Taste of Texas in 1977. Today, over three decades later, the Taste of Texas is a Houston landmark. The restaurant is known not only for its outstanding, high quality food but also its first rate service and superb wait staff of mostly young Texans.

The Hendees are remarkable business owners who know that a hard working staff is key in the hospitality business. Since the restaurant first opened, the Hendees have employed more than 10,000 people—young adults—at their restaurant. Over the years, the Hendees have learned some valuable lessons on management and mentoring. They don't just treat their staff like employees; they treat them like family. But, then again, Edd and Nina are not your average employers. They treat their employees well but require that their employees live their lives to certain standards: be polite, be punctual, study and prepare for school, work hard and stay away from drugs. Edd and Nina serve as mentors for their employees, requiring them to make certain grades and helping them stay on track in school. They also hold their employees accountable, drug testing them regularly. The Hendees not only teach their employees how to work in a professional setting, but they also teach them how to succeed in life through hard work and dedication. It is certainly remarkable and rare for employers to care that much about their excellent employees. The Hendees go above and beyond for their extended family.

I always enjoy the opportunity to visit with the Hendees at The Taste of Texas. In the kitchen, one can see where the magic happens. They have an impeccable, efficient operation that is built upon the finest quality beef, an abundant salad bar and friendly Texas service. It's name—the Taste of Texas—is well-suited because it really showcases Texas' finest.

As a Texas history lover, perhaps my favorite part about the Taste of Texas is its extensive collection of historical Texana documents and artifacts. Over the years, the Hendees have given almost daily tours to hundreds of thousands of young Texans, including many school children. Nina, a Texas Historian, also gives Texas history lessons almost every Saturday to different groups. Of course, it is a requirement for my staff to go hear one of Nina's Texas talks. A visit to the Taste of Texas is simply a journey through the long, glorious history of Texas highlighting Texas' 9 years as an Independent Nation. (Some say we are still an independent country).

I have always appreciated Edd's perspective and radio commentary because as a business owner, he has seen it all. In his fifteen years on the radio, he has spent each morning advocating for issues that are important to Texans. Like me, he often pontificates on issues, such as the Second Amendment, individual liberty, a secure border and a limited federal government. As an entrepreneur, he is a strong advocate for lower taxes and a smaller, more accountable government because he has seen firsthand how the government can stand in the way of business. And, as the husband of Nina, Edd's commentary often touches upon Texas history and explanations as to why things are the way they are. That's why Houston loves listening to Edd in the mornings.

Edd's voice will be greatly missed on the airwaves, but he and his wife's impact on Houston will continue because of their devotion to the community, their commitment to their employees and the well-deserved success of the Taste of Texas. As proud Texans who want to give back to their nation, I am also grateful that Edd and Nina serve on my Service Academy Advisory Board, helping to interview and nominate some of Houston's best and brightest to attend our nation's military academies. These are the people who will defend our nation in the future. I congratulate Edd on his fifteen years of on-air success and wish him all of the best in his next chapter of Texas History.

And that's just the way it is.

HONORING EXXONMOBIL FOR ITS RECOGNITION BY THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF WORKFORCE BOARDS FOR ITS ROLE IN JOB CREATION IN TEXAS

HON. KENNY MARCHANT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 3, 2014

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of the outstanding and proactive leadership in Texas by ExxonMobil and its recognition by the National Association of Workforce Boards (NAWB). NAWB works to create a relationship between businesses and Workforce Investment Boards to coordinate and maximize employment potential for employers and workers. ExxonMobil was recognized at the Annual Excellence Awards in Washington D.C. for creating training programs and high-paying careers for over 10,000 Texans.

This large job growth is made possible by the billions of dollars of capital investment in the Texas economy. ExxonMobil has established partnerships with local workforce boards to find unemployed workers that would be best suited for immediate employment or training. In line with training, they have also committed $500,000 to fund the Community College Petrochemical Initiative, expanding training programs to quickly recruit workers to long-term careers.

In addition to creating jobs, ExxonMobil has partnered with schools and other community collaborators to improve primary and secondary education in Texas. For instance, ''Introduce a Girl to Engineering'' provides 180 middle school girls with hands-on activities that help them learn about career opportunities in the Science Technology Engineering and Mathematical (STEM) fields. STEM education is important, as the number of job openings is expected to grow nearly twice as fast as the number of jobs in non-STEM sectors in the next 5 years. Another program, called the Advancement Via Individual Determination helps more than 400 students improve their academic and organizational skills, increasing their chances of attending college. ExxonMobil has also partnered with Lee College to provide paid internship opportunities. An impressive 100% of students that completed the internship program to date have been hired by ExxonMobil.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the 24th Congressional District of Texas, I ask all my distinguished colleagues to join me in honoring this recognition from the National Association of Workforce Boards.

THE REPUBLICAN FISCAL YEAR 2015 BUDGET

HON. JOYCE BEATTY

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 3, 2014

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to voice my strong opposition to the Republican budget for fiscal year 2015.

This Republican budget is yet another attack on America, especially our seniors, students, workers, and middle class families.

Yet again, this irrational budget guts federal investments in education, research, innovation, and infrastructure.

It would dramatically slash the social safety net by privatizing Medicare, turning Medicaid into a block grant program, and cutting SNAP benefits.

With cuts like these, Mr. Speaker, everyone gets left behind and our economy only gets weaker.

Instead, our budget should present a blueprint toward prosperity.

Our government should be investing in programs that strengthen our economy, grow our middle class, lift people out of poverty, and help more Americans achieve the American Dream. This budget fails on all these fronts and should be rejected.

AZERBAIJAN TRAGEDY

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 3, 2014

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring to the attention of my colleagues the tragic events that began on February 25, 1992 in the Azerbaijan town of Khojaly in the Nagarno Karabakh region.

On that fateful day Armenian forces began a brutal attack on the 7,000 Azerbaijani citizens of Khojaly. During the attack 613 Azeris were killed, 1,275 were taken hostage, and 487 were seriously injured. Of the dead 106 were women and 83 were children. Many of those killed were first brutally tortured.

In blatant disregard of four UN Resolutions calling for the withdrawal of Armenian forces from the occupied territories of Azerbaijan, Armenia continues to occupy Khojaly and surrounding territories. The occupied area constitutes twenty percent of Azerbaijan.

The Minsk Group, comprised of the United States, France and Russia, works with Armenia and Azerbaijan to reach a peaceful settlement to no avail. Nothing can change the tragedy that occurred at Khojaly but with a peaceful settlement and the withdrawal of Armenian forces from the occupied territories, what remains of the 900,000 Azeris displaced from the entire conflict can return to the land they call home and rebuild their lives.

I ask my colleagues to join me in remembering the victims of this tragedy and do all we can to further the Minsk Group's efforts so there is a peaceful resolution and the people of Nagorno Karabakh can return home.

INTRODUCTION OF THE ENERGIZE EMERGING OPPORTUNITIES ACT

HON. STEPHEN LEE FINCHER

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 3, 2014

Mr. FINCHER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss my bill, the Energize Emerging Opportunities Act. My legislation simply requires the Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC) to harmonize their rules for general solicitation and marketing with rules of the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC). The Jumpstart Our Business Startups Act, passed by the House and Senate and signed into law in 2012, directed the SEC to provide an exemption for general solicitation and marketing for companies. My legislation simply corrects an oversight and harmonizes the rules of the CFTC with the SEC.

This alignment will allow companies to provide information to the public and enhance opportunities to grow our economy.

Mr. Speaker, the U.S. economy is in a fragile state, any hurdle, fee, or foreign advantage, will cost the U.S. economy valuable jobs. It is time we act to remove barriers that hinder growth and unleash the economic engine in this country.

My legislation will clarify and harmonize the CFTC and SEC rules so emerging companies will have a clear understanding of the rules and the ability to fully participate in growing the economy.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues in the House (and Senate) to support me in passing the Energize Emerging Opportunities Act, in order to ensure clarity in the rules.

HONORING RAYFORD GUZARDO

HON. RANDY K. WEBER, SR.

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 3, 2014

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to recognize the 90th birthday of Mr. Rayford Guzardo of Nederland, Texas. Mr. Guzardo is a remarkable and respected member of our community on the Texas Gulf Coast. His life and career exemplify a selfless and tireless commitment to his family, community, and to our great nation. This weekend, Mr. Guzardo will gather with his wife, children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren to celebrate a life of what is rightly called a member of our greatest generation.

Rayford Guzardo was born on April 6, 1924 in Nederland, Texas. He enlisted in the United States Air Force after the start of World War II, after he served in Italy. He flew heroically as a tail gunner on a B–24 ''Liberator'', and bravely weathered a year's captivity as a prisoner of war when is plane crashed during a mission over Hungary. Upon returning home from his military service, he married his lovely wife, Virginia, in 1949. Together, they built a family and a business in Nederland. Never opposed to honest, hard work, Rayford labored long hours as the owner of the family business; a local feed store that supplies the Jefferson County community with everything from livestock feed and garden necessities, to knowledge and know-how which he offered with traditional southern hospitality. Rayford has dedicated his life to family, community and to the Lord, our God. He has spent the past 90 years setting an example of courage, honor, loyalty and kindness to which we can all aspire.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating Rayford Guzardo on this milestone. I thank him for his outstanding service to our nation. I am proud to join his friends and family in celebrating his 90th year, and I wish him continued health and happiness.

HONORING MASTER GUNNERY SERGEANT JOEL D. ROGERS

HON. LEE TERRY

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 3, 2014

Mr. TERRY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Master Gunnery Sergeant Joel D. Rogers, who will retire this year from the United States' Marine Corps after 28 years of outstanding service to our country.

Upon completing recruit training, Private First Class Rogers attended Marine Corps Engineer School specializing in the Journeyman Electrical Equipment Repair Course. He completed training before being assigned to the Selected Marine Corps Reserve at Engineer Maintenance Company in Omaha, NE.

In January 2003, Master Sergeant Rogers deployed to Iraq serving as the Maintenance Chief of Combat Service Support Company–146 during Operation Iraqi Freedom. Following his tour overseas, Master Sergeant Rogers was assigned to the Pentagon serving a vital role as a Congressional Liaison to the Marine Corps in Washington, D.C.

After serving at the Pentagon, Master Gunnery Sergeant Rogers returned to Omaha and Offutt Air Force Base as a Protocol Action Officer before later serving as a Legislative Liaison for U.S. Strategic Command. As a member of the legislative staff, Sergeant Rogers served a crucial role interacting directly with members of Congress.

As a civilian, Rogers finished 24 years with the State of Nebraska's Department of Health and Human Services before retiring in 2012 as an Administrator. He is an alumnus of Bellevue University where he holds a Bachelor's degree in Human Services Administration and a Master's in Organizational Leadership.

In November 2012, Master Gunnery Sergeant Rogers assumed his current role as Action Officer of Command Protocol. In this role, he coordinates and assists in visits for the command's various distinguished visitors including members of Congress, military and civilian leaders, as well as foreign government officials.

Rogers and his wife Felicia, who serves as my District Director, have seven children and live in Papillion, NE. Three of their sons have followed their dad's lead in serving our country by also enlisting in the U.S. Marine Corps. Rogers and his family are outstanding members of our community and this past November received the Community Service Award from Heartland Family Service, an award given to those exemplifying strong family life and community service in the Omaha area.

Master Gunnery Sergeant Rogers is the recipient of various personal decorations including the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, the Joint Services Commendation Medal, and the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating Master Gunnery Sergeant Rogers for his outstanding service to our country and in particular, Offut Air Force Base and STRATCOM.

TRIBUTE TO ADAM KADUCE

HON. TOM LATHAM

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 3, 2014

Mr. LATHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate and recognize Adam Kaduce for being named a 2014 Forty Under 40 honoree by the award-winning central Iowa publication, Business Record.

Since 2000, Business Record has undertaken an exhaustive annual review to identify a standout group of young leaders in the Greater Des Moines area who are making an impact in their communities and their careers. Each year, forty up-and-coming community and business leaders under 40 years of age are selected for this prestigious distinction, which is based on a combined criteria of community involvement and success in their chosen career field. The 2014 class of Forty Under 40 honorees join an impressive roster of nearly 600 business leaders and growing.

Adam Kaduce is a Greater Des Moines native through and through. Raised in Urbandale, Adam began making his mark on the area at just 13-years-old by starting a lawn care business with his brother, Michael. Mr. Kaduce's business sense, work ethic, and intuition have only grown from his humble beginnings as he has become a proud Drake Law School graduate working in his current role as a Commercial Real Estate Manager with R&R Realty Group. Outside of his professional career, Adam is an adjunct professor at Drake University and serves as a member of the Urbandale Economic Development Advisory Board, the Capitol City Connection, and the Urbandale Education Foundation. In all aspects of his life, Mr. Kaduce is an example of service, hard work, and Iowa values that our state can be proud of.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent leaders like Adam in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize and applaud Mr. Kaduce for utilizing his talents to better both his community and the great state of Iowa. I invite my colleagues in the House to join me in congratulating Adam on receiving this esteemed designation, thanking those at Business Record for their great work, and wishing each member of the 2014 Forty Under 40 class continued success.

SAVE AMERICAN WORKERS ACT OF 2014

SPEECH OF

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 2, 2014

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 2575, the Save American Workers Act. This bipartisan legislation is urgently needed to address yet another poorly-conceived provision of Obamacare that will harm American workers and further slow economic growth.

Under Obamacare, ''full-time'' work is defined as a 30-hour work week—a quarter less than the traditional 40 hour work week. Because the law imposes certain penalties on businesses based upon their number of full-time employees, many businesses are forced to move a number of their employees from full-time to part-time work. This is a dangerous and fundamental change that will result in less hours and lower paychecks, affecting millions of Americans who plan their budget around the traditional 40-hour work week.

We cannot continue down a path that disincentivizes full-time employment, yet this is exactly where we are headed. While part-time work is a great option for many, it should not be the norm for those who have the desire and ability to work full-time. There is a serious problem when the government creates a complicated regulatory maze that increases inefficiency and incentivizes businesses to reduce their full-time workforce. As a Chicago Tribune editorial stated, ''[p]art-time work does become a problem when Washington tilts the balance of incentives against full-time work. Not only will Obamacare raise costs for the government, it stands to make one of the most competitive features of the U.S. economy—a flexible labor market—less efficient. One more reason to rewrite, or halt, Obamacare.''

Obamacare was sold to the American people with affordability as its centerpiece. We were promised time and time again that ''if you like your plan, you can keep it,'' and ''if you like your doctor, you can keep your doctor.'' Instead, reports of sticker-shock and mass cancellations of plans have been the norm. Many are finding that their preferred doctor is now out-of-network and thus out of their coverage. A recent survey conducted by the Associated Press found that many of our nation's world-class cancer hospitals are off-limits to those with certain insurance carriers.

Now, in addition, workers are seeing their hours cut and their paychecks lowered. A recent study by the Hoover Institution found that 2.6 million workers are vulnerable to work hour reductions under 30-hour work week definition—with women and low-income Americans especially vulnerable. Last August, a township in my district cut the hours of 25 employees due to the new definition. My colleagues and I continue to hear from our constituents from both sides—those who cannot afford to keep full-time workers, and those who have had their hours reduced.

Last July, the leaders of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters (IBT), the United Food and Commercial Workers International Union (UFCW), and UNITE HERE sent a letter to Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid and House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi warning that Obamacare could ''destroy the foundation of the 40 hour work week that is the backbone of the American middle class.'' The letter states that ''[t]he unintended consequences of the ACA are severe. Perverse incentives are already creating nightmare scenarios.'' Further, ''[n]umerous employers have begun to cut workers' hours to avoid this obligation, and many of them are doing so openly.'' They stressed the same point we have stressed here today: ''[t]he impact is two-fold: fewer hours means less pay while also losing our current health benefits.''

This commonsense legislation we are voting on today will simply restore the definition of full-time employment to its traditional 40 hour work week. I have long believed that the federal government must play an appropriate role in providing a health care safety net for those in need of support. That goal can be achieved without the burdensome rules, regulations, and definitions imposed by Obamacare such as the one addressed today.

HONORING THE LIFE AND DEDICATED SERVICE OF CHIEF MASTER SERGEANT WALTER H. RICHARDSON, USAF, RETIRED

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 3, 2014

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the life of Chief Master Sergeant Walter H. Richardson, USAF, Retired, who passed away on March 29, 2014. Walt, who built his life ''on three pillars of faith, hope, and love,'' was dedicated to his country, his community, his family, and above all, the Lord. I am privileged to honor a truly remarkable man and American hero.

Born and raised in Pensacola, Florida, Walt joined the Armed Forces to serve his country and help provide for his family. His career in the Armed Forces spanned thirty years and included service in the Korean and Vietnam Wars. Walt was an original member of the revered Tuskegee Airmen, training at Tuskegee Army Airfield in a variety of disciplines that would serve him well throughout his entire career. A few years ago, I had the honor of presenting Walt the Congressional Gold Medal for his service as a Tuskegee Airman.

During his time in the military, Walt was one of over 1,000 enlisted men selected to integrate the Armed Forces. Walt's unwavering commitment to service and immense leadership skills were recognized when, while stationed at Dover Air Force Base, he became the first African-American to be promoted to the rank of Master Sergeant in the field maintenance squadron. He retired at the highest enlisted rank in the Air Force, Chief Master Sergeant, as the Senior Enlisted Advisor to the Commanding General of the 1st Special Operations Wing, Hurlburt Field, Florida.

Beyond his military service, Walt was an accomplished writer, whose personal memoir is titled How Great Thou Art: A Black Boy's Depression-Era Success Story, in addition to a dedicated member of the Northwest Florida community, who served as a deacon of St. Mary Parish in Fort Walton Beach for three decades. Walt was known throughout the Gulf Coast as a kind and warm-hearted man who was always willing to help his fellow citizens. To his family, he was a loving and devoted husband, father, grandfather, and great-grandfather.

The legacy left by Walt Richardson and his fellow Tuskegee Airmen had a profound impact on the course of our history. Our Nation is proud and grateful for the brave men and women like Walt Richardson who stared into the face of racial discrimination and said we are ''one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.'' Walt led an exemplary life of courage, service, patriotism, and devotion to faith and family, and his service to God, family, and country will never be forgotten.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, I am humbled to honor Chief Master Sergeant Walter H. Richardson, USAF, Retired. My wife Vicki and I send our sincerest condolences to his wife of 60 years, Helen; his eight children, Walter, Pat, Lillie, Carmen, Henri, Donna, William, and Carl; nine grandchildren, four great-grandchildren and the entire Richardson family.

Daily Digest

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S2135–S2167

Measures Introduced: Eleven bills and two resolutions were introduced, as follows: S. 2203–2213, and S. Res. 410–411. **Page S2161**

Measures Reported:

S. 161, to extend the Federal recognition to the Little Shell Tribe of Chippewa Indians of Montana.

S. 1074, to extend Federal recognition to the Chickahominy Indian Tribe, the Chickahominy Indian Tribe-Eastern Division, the Upper Mattaponi Tribe, the Rappahannock Tribe, Inc., the Monacan Indian Nation, and the Nansemond Indian Tribe.

S. 1219, to authorize the Pechanga Band of Luiseno Mission Indians Water Rights Settlement, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute. **Page S2161**

Measures Passed:

Green Mountain Lookout Heritage Protection Act: Senate passed S. 404, to preserve the Green Mountain Lookout in the Glacier Peak Wilderness of the Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest, after agreeing to the committee amendment. **Pages S2151–52**

Humanitarian Crisis in Syria and Neighboring Countries: Senate agreed to S. Res. 384, expressing the sense of the Senate concerning the humanitarian crisis in Syria and neighboring countries, resulting humanitarian and development challenges, and the urgent need for a political solution to the crisis. **Page S2166**

Gold Star Wives Day: Committee on the Judiciary was discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 394, designating April 5, 2014, as ''Gold Star Wives Day'', and the resolution was then agreed to. **Pages S2166–67**

Authorizing the Use of the Capitol Grounds: Senate agreed to H. Con. Res. 88, authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the Greater Washington Soap Box Derby. **Page S2167**

Measures Considered:

Protecting Volunteer Firefighters and Emergency Responders Act—Agreement: Senate continued consideration of H.R. 3979, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, taking action on the following motions and amendments proposed thereto: **Pages S2137–51, S2152–57**

Adopted:

Reid (for Reed) Amendment No. 2874, of a perfecting nature. **Pages S2138, S2150**

Withdrawn:

Reid Amendment No. 2875 (to Amendment No. 2874), to change the enactment date. **Pages S2138, S2146, S2149**

Reid Amendment No. 2877 (to the language proposed to be stricken by Amendment No. 2874), to change the enactment date. **Pages S2138, S2146, S2149**

Reid Amendment No. 2878 (to Amendment No. 2877), of a perfecting nature. **Pages S2138, S2146, S2149**

During consideration of this measure today, Senate also took the following action:

By 60 yeas to 36 nays (Vote No. 99), three-fifths of those Senators duly chosen and sworn, having voted in the affirmative, Senate agreed to the motion to waive all applicable sections of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 and applicable budget resolutions with respect to Reid (for Reed) Amendment No. 2874 (listed above). Subsequently, the point of order that Reid (for Reed) Amendment No. 2874 was in violation of section 311(b) of S. Con. Res. 70, the Concurrent Resolution on the Budget for Fiscal Year 2009, was not sustained, and thus the point of order fell. **Pages S2149–50**

By 61 yeas to 35 nays (Vote No. 100), three-fifths of those Senators duly chosen and sworn, having voted in the affirmative, Senate agreed to the motion to close further debate on the bill. **Page S2150**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, April 7, 2014, all post-cloture time be considered expired and the

bill, as amended, if amended, be read a third time and Senate vote on passage of the bill, as amended, if amended. **Page S2146**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that at 5:00 p.m. on Monday, April 7, 2014, Senate resume consideration of the bill, post-cloture, with the time until 5:30 p.m. equally divided and controlled between the two Leaders or their designees prior to a vote on passage of the bill, as amended. **Page S2167**

Appointments:

Joint Committee on Taxation: The Chair announced on behalf of the Committee on Finance, pursuant to section 8002 of title 26, U.S. Code, the designation of the following Senators as members of the Joint Committee on Taxation: Senators Wyden, Rockefeller, Stabenow, Hatch, and Grassley. **Page S2167**

Message from the President: Senate received the following message from the President of the United States:

Transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the issuance of an Executive Order declaring a national emergency with respect to the unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States posed by the situation in and in relation to South Sudan; which was referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs. (PM–38) **Pages S2159–60**

Treaties Approved: The following treaties having passed through their various parliamentary stages, up to and including the presentation of the resolution of ratification, upon division, two-thirds of the Senators present having voted in the affirmative, the resolutions of ratification were agreed to:

Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter, and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated Fishing (Treaty Doc. 112–4) as amended; **Pages S2157–58**

Convention on the Conservation and Management of High Seas Fishery Resources in the South Pacific Ocean (Treaty Doc. 113–1) as amended; **Pages S2157–58**

Convention on the Conservation and Management of High Seas Fisheries Resources in the North Pacific Ocean (Treaty Doc. 113–2) as amended; and **Pages S2157–58**

Amendment to the Convention on Future Multilateral Cooperation in the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries (Treaty Doc. 113–3) as amended. **Pages S2157–58**

Nominations Received: Senate received the following nominations:

Andre Birotte, Jr., of California, to be United States District Judge for the Central District of California.

Randolph D. Moss, of Maryland, to be United States District Judge for the District of Columbia.

1 Navy nomination in the rank of admiral. **Page S2167**

Enrolled Bills Presented: **Page S2160**

Executive Communications: **Pages S2160–61**

Petitions and Memorials: **Page S2161**

Executive Reports of Committees: **Page S2161**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages S2161–62**

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions: **Pages S2162–66**

Additional Statements: **Page S2159**

Notices of Hearings/Meetings: **Page S2166**

Authorities for Committees to Meet: **Page S2166**

Privileges of the Floor: **Page S2166**

Record Votes: Two record votes were taken today. (Total—100) **Page S2150**

Adjournment: Senate convened at 9:30 a.m. and adjourned at 5:37 p.m., until 2 p.m. on Monday, April 7, 2014. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Majority Leader in today's Record on page S2167.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

APPROPRIATIONS: FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies concluded a hearing to examine proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2015 for the Food and Drug Administration, after receiving testimony from Margaret Hamburg, Commissioner, and William Tootle, Director of the Office of Budget, both of the Food and Drug Administration, and Norris W. Cochran, Deputy Assistant Secretary, all of the Department of Health and Human Services.

APPROPRIATIONS: DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies concluded a hearing to examine proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2015 for the Department of Justice, after receiving testimony from Eric H. Holder,

Jr., Attorney General, and Michael E. Horowitz, Inspector General, both of the Department of Justice.

DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION REQUEST AND FUTURE YEARS DEFENSE PROGRAM

Committee on Armed Services: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the posture of the Department of the Army in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program, after receiving testimony from John M. McHugh, Secretary, and General Raymond T. Odierno, Chief of Staff, both of the Department of the Army, Department of Defense.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Environment and Public Works: Committee ordered favorably reported the following business items:

S. 491, to amend the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 to modify provisions relating to grants, with an amendment;

S. 1961, to protect surface water from contamination by chemical storage facilities, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. 224, to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to establish a grant program to support the restoration of San Francisco Bay;

S. 2080, to conserve fish and aquatic communities in the United States through partnerships that foster fish habitat conservation, improve the quality of life for the people of the United States, enhance fish and wildlife-dependent recreation;

S. 2042, to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to reauthorize the National Estuary Program, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. 1934, to direct the Administrator of General Services to convey the Clifford P. Hansen Federal Courthouse back to Teton County, Wyoming, with amendments;

S. 2055, to allow for the collection of certain user fees by non-Federal entities;

Corps Study Resolution: Point Judith, Rhode Island; and

Proposed resolutions relating to the General Services Administration.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Finance: Committee ordered favorably reported the following business items:

An original bill entitled, ''Expiring Provisions Improvement Reform and Efficiency (EXPIRE) Act''; and

An original bill entitled, ''The Tax Technical Corrections Act of 2014''.

Also, committee announced the following subcommittee assignments:

Subcommittee on Health Care: Senators Rockefeller (Chair), Stabenow, Cantwell, Nelson, Menendez, Carper, Cardin, Casey, Roberts, Hatch, Grassley, Enzi, Cornyn, Burr, and Toomey.

Subcommittee on International Trade, Customs and Global Competitiveness: Senators Stabenow (Chair), Rockefeller, Schumer, Cantwell, Menendez, Brown, Bennet, Warner, Isakson, Hatch, Grassley, Roberts, Thune, and Portman.

Subcommittee on Energy, Natural Resources and Infrastructure: Senators Bennet (Chair), Wyden, Rockefeller, Stabenow, Menendez, Cantwell, Nelson, Carper, Cornyn, Grassley, Crapo, Enzi, Thune, Burr, and Isakson.

Subcommittee on Social Security, Pensions, and Family Policy: Senators Brown (Chair), Rockefeller, Schumer, Nelson, Cardin, Toomey, Crapo, Isakson, and Portman.

Subcommittee on Taxation and IRS Oversight: Senators Casey (Chair), Wyden, Schumer, Menendez, Carper, Cardin, Bennet, Warner, Enzi, Hatch, Crapo, Roberts, Cornyn, Thune, and Toomey.

Subcommittee on Fiscal Responsibility and Economic Growth: Senators Warner (Chair), Brown, Casey, Portman, and Burr.

Senators Wyden and Hatch are ex officio members of each subcommittee.

TAIWAN RELATIONS ACT 35TH ANNIVERSARY

Committee on Foreign Relations: Subcommittee on East Asian and Pacific Affairs concluded a hearing to examine evaluating United States policy on Taiwan on the 35th anniversary of the ''Taiwan Relations Act'' (TRA), including S. 579, to direct the Secretary of State to develop a strategy to obtain observer status for Taiwan at the triennial International Civil Aviation Organization Assembly, after receiving testimony from Daniel R. Russel, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs; Abraham M. Denmark, The National Bureau of Asian Research, Washington, D.C.; and Randall G. Schriver, Project 2049 Institute, Arlington, Virginia.

RUSSIA

Committee on Foreign Relations: Committee received a closed briefing on Russia from Victoria Nuland, Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs; Evelyn N. Farkas, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Russia/Ukraine/Eurasia; and briefers from the Office of the Director of National Intelligence.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on the Judiciary: Committee ordered favorably reported the nominations of Cheryl Ann Krause, of New Jersey, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Third Circuit, Richard Franklin Boulware II, to be United States District Judge for the District of Nevada, Salvador Mendoza, Jr., to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Washington, Staci Michelle Yandle, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of Illinois, Leon Rodriguez, of Maryland, to be Director of the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services, Department of Homeland Security, and Damon Paul Martinez, of New Mexico, to be United States Attorney for the District of New Mexico, Department of Justice.

INTELLIGENCE

Select Committee on Intelligence: Committee held closed hearings on intelligence matters, receiving testimony from officials of the intelligence community.

Committee recessed subject to the call.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 15 public bills, H.R. 4383–4397; and 5 resolutions, H. Res. 537–538 and 540–542, were introduced. **Pages H2913–14**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages H2914–15**

Report Filed: A report was filed today as follows:

H. Res. 539, providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1874) to amend the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 to provide for macroeconomic analysis of the impact of legislation, providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1871) to amend the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 to reform the budget baseline, and providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1872) to amend the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 to increase transparency in Federal budgeting, and for other purposes (H. Rept. 113–400). **Page H2913**

Speaker: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein he appointed Representative Pittenger to act as Speaker pro tempore for today. **Page H2857**

Recess: The House recessed at 10:06 a.m. and reconvened at 12 noon. **Page H2858**

Save American Workers Act of 2014: The House passed H.R. 2575, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the 30-hour threshold for classification as a full-time employee for purposes of the employer mandate in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and replace it with 40 hours, by a recorded vote of 248 ayes to 179 noes, Roll No. 156. Consideration of the measure began yesterday, April 2nd. **Pages H2861–91**

Rejected the Takano motion to recommit the bill to the Committee on Ways and Means with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith with an amendment, by a yea-and-nay vote of 191 yeas to 232 nays, Roll No. 155. **Pages H2889–90**

H. Res. 530, the rule providing for consideration of the bill, was agreed to yesterday, April 2nd.

Moment of Silence: The House observed a moment of silence in honor of the victims of the violence at Fort Hood on April 2, 2014. **Pages H2890–91**

Committee Resignation: Read a letter from Representative Gabbard, wherein she resigned from the Committee on Homeland Security. **Page H2891**

Committee Elections: The House agreed to H. Res. 537, electing Members to certain standing committees of the House of Representatives. **Pages H2891–92**

Committee Resignation: Read a letter from Representative Horsford, wherein he resigned from the Committees on Natural Resources and Homeland Security. **Page H2891**

Presidential Message: Read a message from the President wherein he issued an Executive Order declaring a national emergency with respect to the unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States posed by the situation in and in relation to South Sudan—referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed (H. Doc. 113–102). **Page H2909**

Senate Message: Message received from the Senate today appears on page H2906.

Senate Referral: S. 404 was held at the desk.

Quorum Calls—Votes: One yea-and-nay vote and one recorded vote developed during the proceedings of today and appear on pages H2890 and H2891. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 6:33 p.m.

Committee Meetings

REVIEW THE STATE OF THE RURAL ECONOMY

Committee on Agriculture: Full Committee held a hearing to Review the State of the Rural Economy. Testimony was heard from Tom Vilsack, Secretary, Department of Agriculture.

APPROPRIATIONS—MILITARY CONSTRUCTION AND VETERANS' AFFAIRS AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS BILL FOR FY 2015

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Military Construction and Veterans' Affairs and Related Agencies held a markup on Military Construction and Veterans' Affairs and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill for FY 2015. The bill was ordered reported, without amendment.

APPROPRIATIONS—LEGISLATIVE BRANCH APPROPRIATIONS BILL FY 2015

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Legislative Branch held a markup on Legislative Branch Appropriations Bill FY 2015. The bill was ordered reported, without amendment.

APPROPRIATIONS—NATIONAL PARK SERVICE FY 2015 BUDGET

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Interior, Environment and Related Agencies held a hearing on National Park Service FY 2015 Budget. Testimony was heard from Jon Jarvis, Director, National Park Service.

APPROPRIATIONS—USDA FOOD SAFETY FY 2015 BUDGET

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, FDA and Related Agencies held a hearing on USDA Food Safety FY 2015 Budget. Testimony was heard from the following Department of Agriculture officials: Brian Ronholm, Acting Under Secretary, Food Safety; Phil Derfler, Deputy Administrator, Food Safety and Inspection Service; and Michael Young, Budget Officer.

APPROPRIATIONS—MISSILE DEFENSE AGENCY

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Defense held a hearing on Missile Defense Agency. This was a closed hearing.

APPROPRIATIONS—SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION FY 2015 BUDGET

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government held a hearing on Small Business Administration FY 2015 Budget. Testimony was heard from Marianne O'Brien Markowitz, Acting Administrator, Small Business Administration.

APPROPRIATIONS—NATIONAL NUCLEAR SECURITY ADMINISTRATION FY 2015 BUDGET

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development held a hearing on Department of Energy, National Nuclear Security Administration FY 2015 Budget. Testimony was heard from the following National Nuclear Security Administration Officials: Bruce Held, Acting Administrator; Don Cook, Deputy Administrator for Defense Programs, National Nuclear Security; and Brig. Gen. James C. Dawkins Jr., Principal Assistant Deputy Administrator for Military Applications.

APPROPRIATIONS—DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION MODES

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies held a hearing on Oversight of Department of Transportation Modes. Testimony was heard from Michael Huerta, Administrator, Federal Aviation Administration; Greg Nadeau, Deputy Administrator, Federal Highway Administration; Joseph Szabo, Administrator, Federal Railroad Administration; Therese McMillan, Deputy Administrator, Federal Transit Administration; Cynthia Quarterman, Administrator, Pipline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration; and Anne Ferro, Administrator, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration.

APPROPRIATIONS—NATIONAL GUARD AND U.S. ARMY RESERVE FY 2015 BUDGET

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Defense held a hearing on National Guard and U.S. Army Reserve FY 2015 Budget. Testimony was heard from General Frank J. Grass, Chief National Guard Bureau, Lieutenant General Stanley E. Clarke III, Director, Air National Guard; Major General Judd H. Lyons, Acting Director, Army National Guard; and Lieutenant General Jeffrey W. Talley, Chief, United States Army Reserve.

APPROPRIATIONS—UNITED STATES FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE FY 2015 BUDGET

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Interior, Environment and Related Agencies held a hearing on the United States Fish and Wildlife Service FY 2015 Budget. Testimony was heard from Dan Ashe, Director, Fish and Wildlife Service.

APPROPRIATIONS—DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY, NATIONAL NUCLEAR SECURITY ADMINISTRATION NUCLEAR NONPROLIFERATION AND NAVAL REACTORS

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development held a hearing on the Department of Energy, National Nuclear Security Administration Nuclear Nonproliferation and Naval Reactors. Testimony was heard from Bruce Held, Action Administrator National Nuclear Security; Anne Harington, Deputy Administrator, Defense Nuclear Nonproliferation, National Nuclear Security; and Admiral John M. Richardson, Director, Naval Reactors, National Nuclear Security.

2014 QUADRENNIAL DEFENSE REVIEW

Committee on Armed Services: Full Committee held a hearing on the 2014 Quadrennial Defense Review. Testimony was heard from Admiral James A. ''Sandy'' Winnefeld, Jr., USN, Vice Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, Department of Defense; and Christine E. Wormuth, Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Strategy, Plans and Force Development, Department of Defense.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION BUDGET REQUEST FOR NATIONAL SECURITY SPACE ACTIVITIES

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Strategic Forces held a hearing on Fiscal Year 2015 National Defense Authorization Budget Request for National Security Space Activities. Testimony was heard from Gil Klinger, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, Space and Intelligence, Department of Defense; Douglas L. Loverro, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Defense, Space Policy, Department of Defense; Lieutenant General John W. ''Jay'' Raymond, U.S. Air Force Commander, United States Strategic Command, Joint Functional Component Command, Space; and Betty J. Sapp, Director, National Reconnaissance Office; General William L. Shelton, U.S. Air Force, Commander, U.S. Air Force Space Command.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURE

Committee on the Budget: Full Committee concluded markup on the Concurrent Resolution on the Budget for Fiscal Year 2015. The concurrent resolution was ordered reported, without amendment.

FISCAL YEAR 2015 DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY BUDGET

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Energy and Power held a hearing entitled ''Fiscal Year 2015 Department of Energy Budget''. Testimony was heard from Ernest Moniz, Secretary of Energy, Department of Energy.

LEGISLATIVE MEASURE

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Health held a hearing on H.R. 3717, the ''Helping Families in Mental Health Crisis Act of 2013''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Full Committee held a markup on the following legislation: H.R. 3548, the ''Improving Trauma Care Act of 2013''; H.R. 4080, the ''Trauma Systems and Regionalization of Emergency Care Reauthorization Act''; H.R. 1281, the ''Newborn Screening Saves Lives Reauthorization Act of 2013''; and H.R. 1528, the ''Veterinary Medicine Mobility Act of 2013''. H.R. 3548; H.R. 4080; H.R. 1528; and H.R. 1281 were ordered reported, as amended.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURE; AND WOMEN'S EDUCATION: PROMOTING DEVELOPMENT, COUNTERING RADICALISM

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Women's Education: Promoting Development, Countering Radicalism''; and markup on H.R. 3583, the ''Malala Yousafzai Scholarship Act''. H.R. 3583 was ordered reported, as amended. Testimony was heard from public witnesses on the hearing.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURE

Committee on Homeland Security: Subcommittee on Cybersecurity, Infrastructure Protection, and Security Technologies held a markup on H.R. 4007, the ''Chemical Facility Anti-Terrorism Standards Program Authorization and Accountability Act of 2014''. The bill was forwarded to the Full Committee, as amended.

ASSESSING TERRORISM IN THE CAUCASUS AND THE THREAT TO THE HOMELAND

Committee on Homeland Security: Subcommittee on Counterterrorism and Intelligence held a hearing entitled ''Assessing Terrorism in the Caucasus and the Threat to the Homeland''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

STANDARD MERGER AND ACQUISITION REVIEWS THROUGH EQUAL RULES ACT OF 2014

Committee on the Judiciary: Subcommittee on Regulatory Reform, Commercial and Antitrust Law held a hearing on legislation regarding the Standard Merger and Acquisition Reviews Through Equal Rules Act of 2014. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

OVERTURNING 30 YEARS OF PRECEDENT: IS THE ADMINISTRATION IGNORING THE DANGERS OF TRAINING LIBYAN PILOTS AND NUCLEAR SCIENTISTS?

Committee on the Judiciary: Subcommittee on Immigration and Border Security; and Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Subcommittee on National Security held a joint hearing entitled ''Overturning 30 Years of Precedent: Is the Administration Ignoring the Dangers of Training Libyan Pilots and Nuclear Scientists?''. Testimony was heard from Alan D. Bersin, Assistant Secretary for International Affairs and Chief Diplomatic Officer, Office of International Affairs, Department of Homeland Security; and public witnesses.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, SPENDING AND THE PRESIDENT'S FISCAL YEAR 2015 BUDGET PROPOSAL

Committee on Natural Resources: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Department of the Interior, Spending and the President's Fiscal Year 2015 Budget Proposal''. Testimony was heard from Sally Jewel, Secretary, Department of Interior.

LEGISLATIVE MEASURES

Committee on Natural Resources: Subcommittee on Fisheries, Wildlife, Oceans and Insular Affairs held a hearing on the following legislation: H.R. 69, the ''Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated Fishing Enforcement Act of 2013''; H.R. 2646, the ''REFI Pacific Act''; and legislation regarding the Pirate Fishing Elimination Act. Testimony was heard from David A. Balton, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Oceans and Fisheries, Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs, Department of State; and Russell Smith, Deputy Assistant Secretary for International Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Department of Commerce; and public witnesses.

COBELL SETTLEMENT

Committee on Natural Resources: Subcommittee on Indian and Alaska Native Affairs held a hearing entitled ''Implementing the Cobell Settlement: Missed Opportunities and Lessons Learned''. Testimony was heard from Lawrence S. Roberts, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs, Department of Interior; and public witnesses.

AFGHANISTAN: IDENTIFYING AND ADDRESSING WASTEFUL U.S. GOVERNMENT SPENDING

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Subcommittee on National Security held a hearing entitled ''Afghanistan: Identifying and Addressing Wasteful U.S. Government Spending''. Testimony was heard from Donald L. Sampler, Assistant to the Administrator and Director, Office of Afghanistan and Pakistan Affairs; and John F. Sopko, Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction.

EXAMINING OBAMACARE'S PROBLEM-FILLED STATE EXCHANGES

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Subcommittee on Economic Growth, Job Creation and Regulatory Affairs; and Subcommittee on Energy Policy, Health Care and Entitlements held a joint hearing entitled ''Examining ObamaCare's Problem-Filled State Exchanges''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

BASELINE REFORM ACT OF 2013; BUDGET AND ACCOUNTING TRANSPARENCY ACT OF 2014; AND PR0-GROWTH BUDGETING ACT OF 2013

Committee on Rules: Full Committee held a hearing on the following legislation: H.R. 1871, the ''Baseline Reform Act of 2013; H.R. 1872, the ''Budget and Accounting Transparency Act of 2014''; and H.R. 1874, the ''Pro-Growth Budgeting Act of 2013''. The Committee granted, by record vote of 8–3, a structured rule for H.R. 1874. The rule provides one hour of general debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Budget. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the bill. The rule provides that the amendments recommended by the Committee on the Budget now printed in the bill and the amendment printed in part A of the Rules Committee report shall be considered as adopted and the bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. The rule waives all points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended. The rule makes in order only those further amendments printed in part B of the Rules Committee report. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question. The rule waives all points of order against the amendments printed in part B of the report. The rule provides one motion to recommit with or without instructions. Additionally, the rule granted a closed rule for H.R. 1871. The rule provides one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Budget. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the bill. The rule provides that the amendment recommended by the Committee on the Budget now

printed in the bill shall be considered as adopted and the bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. The rule waives all points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended. The rule provides one motion to recommit with or without instructions. Lastly, the rule granted a closed rule for H.R. 1872. The rule provides one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Budget. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the bill. The rule provides that the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on the Budget now printed in the bill shall be considered as adopted and the bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. The rule waives all points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended. The rule provides one motion to recommit with or without instructions. Testimony was heard from Chairman Ryan (WI).

DISASTER MITIGATION: REDUCING COSTS AND SAVING LIVES

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure: Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Management held a hearing entitled ''Disaster Mitigation: Reducing Costs and Saving Lives''. Testimony was heard from David Miller, Associate Administrator, Federal Insurance and Mitigation Administration, Federal Emergency Management Agency; and public witnesses.

VA RESPONDING TO CONGRESSIONAL REQUESTS IN A TIMELY MANNER; AND BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: Full Committee held a business meeting to consider a resolution to assign Congressman David W. Jolly to HVAC Subcommittees; and hearing entitled ''Trials in Transparency II: Is VA Responding to Congressional Requests in a Timely Manner?''. Testimony was heard from Sloan Gibson, Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs, Department of Veterans Affairs. The Committee resolution assigning Representative Jolly to HVAC Subcommittees was agreed to.

TRADE POLICY AGENDA

Committee on Ways and Means: Full Committee held a hearing on President Obama's Trade Policy Agenda with U.S. Trade Representative Michael Froman. Testimony was heard from Michael Froman, United States Trade Representative, Office of the United States Trade Representative.

ONGOING INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITIES

House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Ongoing Intelligence Activities''. This was a closed hearing.

Joint Meetings

No joint committee meetings were held.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR FRIDAY, APRIL 4, 2014

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

No meetings/hearings scheduled.

House

Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Defense, hearing for Members of Congress, 9 a.m., H–140 Capitol.

Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies, hearing on Department of Justice FY 2015 Budget, 9 a.m., 2359 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Interior, Environment and Related Agencies, hearing on Bureau of Land Management FY 2015 Budget, 9:30 a.m., B–308 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Agriculture, hearing on USDA Rural Development FY 2015 Budget, 10 a.m., 2362–A Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies, hearing on Bureau of Ocean Energy Management and Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement, 11 a.m., B–308 Rayburn.

Committee on Armed Services, Subcommittee on Intelligence, Emerging Threats and Capabilities, hearing on Fiscal Year 2015 National Defense Authorization Budget Request for Intelligence Activities, 10:30 a.m., 2212 Rayburn.

Committee on Homeland Security, Subcommittee on Border and Maritime Security, hearing entitled ''Passport Fraud: An International Vulnerability'', 9 a.m., 311 Cannon.

Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee on Immigration and Border Security, markup on H.R. 306, for the Relief of Corina de Chalup Turcinovic, 9 a.m., 2141 Rayburn.

Committee on Natural Resources, Subcommittee on Public Lands and Environmental Regulation, hearing on H.R. 2743, the ''Veterans Eagle Parks Pass Act''; H.R. 3976, the ''Wounded Veterans Recreation Act''; and a bill to amend the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act to improve consistency and accountability in the collection and expenditure of Federal recreation fees, and for other purposes, 9 a.m., 1324 Longworth.

Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources, hearing entitled ''Energy Independence: Domestic Opportunities to Reverse California's Growing Dependence on Foreign Oil'', 9:30 a.m., 1334 Longworth.

Joint Meetings

Joint Economic Committee: to hold hearings to examine the employment situation for March 2014, 9:30 a.m., SH–216.

Next Meeting of the SENATE

2 p.m., Monday, April 7

Senate Chamber

Program for Monday: After the transaction of any morning business (not to extend beyond 5 p.m.), Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 3979, Protecting Volunteer Firefighters and Emergency Responders Act, postcloture, and vote on passage of the bill at 5:30 p.m.

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

9 a.m., Friday, April 4

House Chamber

Program for Friday: Consideration of H.R. 1874—Pro-Growth Budgeting Act (Subject to a Rule).

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