

There was no objection.

#### WATERS OF THE UNITED STATES

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

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, the Environmental Protection Agency and the Army Corps of Engineers has proposed under waterways of the United States rules that the EPA claims jurisdiction not just over nearly every navigable waterway, but virtually every body of water in the Nation, no matter how large or how small.

Using a creative interpretation of a 40-year-old law, the EPA argues that it holds jurisdiction over any activities that could conceivably impact not just navigable waters, but any waterway that eventually flows into a river, even a waterway or wetland, which is simply near a navigable waterway.

Furthermore, the EPA doesn't stop at claiming control over water. It also claims control over any activity that could impact those waters in any way. This rule drastically limits private property rights by inserting the Federal Government into local land use decisions.

The rule would also expand EPA's authority from rivers, bays, and wetlands into manmade waterways like storm drains, drain ditches, farm ponds—unconnected in any way to a waterway—and even puddles. That's right, puddles.

EPA's first draft of that rule specifically exempted puddles. Tellingly, the final draft does not exempt them anymore.

Mr. Speaker, enough is enough. It is time to put an end to the government overreach and defund these efforts in the appropriations process and ensure that only America's elected representative make the laws that govern the Nation.

#### VERA HOUSE'S WHITE RIBBON CAMPAIGN

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

Mr. MAFFEI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, with what is left of my voice, to support Vera House's 20th annual White Ribbon campaign. For more than 35 years, Vera House has played a crucial role in combating domestic and sexual violence.

Located in the Syracuse area in my district, Vera House provides a safe shelter, counseling services, and other services for rape and sexual abuse victims and helps survivors rebuild their lives. It also provides life-saving prevention and education throughout central New York.

It is critically important that we continue to support Vera House's ongoing mission to end domestic abuse and sexual violence and to empower the victims to promote equality and respect in relationships.

The White Ribbon campaign encourages all members of the community to join those efforts and to demonstrate such support by wearing a white ribbon.

I urge my colleagues to support Vera House's White Ribbon Campaign to raise awareness of sexual and domestic violence.

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#### COMMENDING CHICAGO ON INITIATING NEW POLICIES

(Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commend the mayor of the city of Chicago for initiation of a new set of policies designed to help facilitate the reentry of individuals with criminal records back into normal and productive life.

These policies include apprenticeship and job opportunities with the Chicago Transit Authority, city departments, and other municipal agencies, and—on a limited basis—the ability to access public housing as a place to live.

These are important initiatives for the reentry into community and for the citizens of Chicago. I commend Mayor Rahm Emanuel.

#### EXTENDING UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) for 60 minutes as the minority leader.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, several of us come together to talk about unemployment insurance.

The majority leader said to accept the Senate bill is to accept the status quo. That is simply not correct. No, it is not accepting the status quo; it is whether we will penalize over 2 million long-term unemployed looking for work who have lost their unemployment insurance because of the overall economic situation in this country that is getting better, but for them, not nearly good enough. So don't raise the issue of the status quo as a reason to penalize over 2 million Americans.

Mr. Speaker, 2 months ago, a number of us invited a number of unemployment workers to be our guests at the President's State of the Union Address. We wanted to give a voice to the over 2 million Americans who have had their unemployment benefits cut off.

When these jobseekers told their stories one by one, I thought to myself: This is America, these are folks who come from every walk of life, who have worked hard, very hard, and who have played by the rules in pursuit of the American dream; now, they have lost their jobs, through no fault of their own, and they are desperately seeking new employment.

You can understand their complete bewilderment when uninformed people call them lazy, and you can feel their utter disbelief that their government apparently has abandoned them.

My guest for the State of the Union Address was Josie Maisano from St. Clair Shores, Michigan. Josie proudly told us she had worked since she was a teenager, but now, at age 60, she could not find a job.

Her unemployment benefits were helping her to keep her head above water as she searched for work, but when her benefits were cut off, she fell behind on her mortgage payments, struggled to keep the power on, and worried about becoming homeless, worried about that every day.

Josie and over 2 million Americans just like her are desperately waiting to see if this Congress will finally act to help those seeking jobs, not saying we are ratifying the status quo, but as I said to the majority leader, not letting the status quo—which is changing a bit but not enough—let that status quo penalize her.

Indeed, the good news is that the Senate is expected to take that critical step on Monday by passing bipartisan legislation—bipartisan legislation—to retroactively extend the unemployment insurance program through May.

So the question is this: Whether this House will also act or will it leave town and leave America's jobseekers in the lurch?

If every Member of this Chamber will simply take a few minutes to talk with unemployed workers in their district, to people like Josie, I have no doubt we will do the right thing and act; but up to this point, action has been scant, while the excuses have been plentiful.

We have heard that an extension of unemployment benefits must be paid for, even though these emergency benefits have traditionally not been offset, but the Senate unemployment extension is fully paid for with bipartisan offsets, so end of excuse.

We have heard that any legislation extending unemployment benefits must also create jobs, but the CBO has estimated that continuing emergency unemployment benefits would create 200,000 jobs by raising consumer demand, so, again, end of excuse.

We have heard that extended unemployment benefits aren't needed any more because the economy has recovered. The economy certainly has improved from the depths of the Great Recession, but we continue to have near-record rates of long-term unemployment.

Indeed, the percentage of those long-term unemployed in this country are the largest in our records, and we have never cut off these benefits in the past with anything close to this level of long-term unemployment, so end of that excuse.

Again, we have heard that it is too late to help the unemployed because the Federal UI program has been expired for too long, but as the whip said,