

Fifth District, received the 2014 Rural Health Program of the Year Award.

The Total HEALTH Program, a regional collaboration of health service providers encompassing Penn Highlands-Elk, Dickinson Center, Incorporated, and an independent physician in Elk County, aims to provide primary and behavioral health care services to individuals with physical, mental, and behavioral health needs.

Total HEALTH received the recognition for innovative programming in Elk, Cameron, and McKean Counties that resulted in both improved patient coordination and clinical outcomes.

Madam Speaker, I offer my thanks, my congratulations, and my praise to Mr. Daniel Blough of the Punxsutawney Area Hospital and the professionals and the staff represented through the Total HEALTH Program for their commitment to strengthening and improving the quality of care in the communities of our region.

THE CONCERNS OF THE NINTH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT OF TEXAS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. AL GREEN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Madam Speaker, I am honored to stand here today as a Member of the Congress of the United States of America, and I am grateful to my constituents for allowing me to serve in this capacity.

My district is a very diverse one. It contains the greatest medical center in the world, the Houston Medical Center, and it contains the first domed stadium, the Astrodome. We speak more than 80 different languages, and the ballot in the Ninth Congressional District in the State of Texas is printed in English, Spanish, Vietnamese, and Chinese. We are indeed a very diverse district.

My constituents are constituents not unlike those across the length and breadth of this country. There are issues of concern to them. I want to assure my constituents that as we move into the 114th Congress, I will be pushing legislation that will be important: the LAW Act, the Living American Wage Act. We have filed this bill before, and we will file it again in this Congress.

The LAW Act indexes the minimum wage to poverty. It is our belief that anyone who works full time should not live below the poverty line. People should be able to work their way out of poverty.

The LAW Act indexes the minimum wage to poverty such that when the poverty level rises, the minimum wage will also elevate, such that people who are working for minimum wage will continue to live above the poverty line.

As an aside, I spoke to a person who is working at the wage that is paid to the persons who wait tables, the wait staff, \$2.13 an hour; and one of the things that was called to my attention

was that these persons—good people, hardworking people—don't always make a lot with these tips that are supposed to supplement their income.

I have been told that as little as \$8 in one day in tips were being made by one of my constituents, so I am concerned not only about the \$7.25 an hour, the minimum wage, but also about the \$2.13 an hour. I also supported H.R. 1010, which was filed in the last Congress, and it also indexed the minimum wage, not to poverty, but it did index the minimum wage.

I will be concerned about comprehensive immigration reform because in my district, I have a good many persons who are the sons and daughters of immigrants who came here not of their own volition. Many of them came and discovered that they were not American citizens after graduating from high school.

I support what the President has done with his executive order. I have to support what he has done with his executive order, given that I am the beneficiary of the greatest executive order ever written: the Emancipation Proclamation. It did not free the slaves, but it did pave the way for the passage of the 13th Amendment.

I am honored to say that I support what the President has done, but we still must have comprehensive immigration reform because there is much more to be done. With millions of people living in the shadows, we need to know who is in the country, and we also need to make sure those who are in the country pay their fair share of taxes, that they are a part of the infrastructure that elevates the country—the economic infrastructure—and to do this, we need comprehensive immigration reform.

I am also concerned very much about our veterans. This is why in the last Congress, we passed the language that was in the HAVEN Act in the defense authorization bill.

Senator JACK REED, thank you so much. Senator JACK REED helped to get that through the Senate, and that language got through the Senate because Senator REED was there. Senator REED, we are eternally grateful, and I think a good many veterans are too.

Twenty million dollars was made available to veterans to help those who are low-income veterans who are injured in some way, such that they cannot use their facilities in their homes as they would without that disability. Counters are lowered, bathrooms are made accessible, and ramps are installed.

Senator REED, thank you for helping us to get this \$20 million, which will be matched by NGOs who will perform this service and help our veterans.

Finally, we are concerned about law enforcement. I respect law enforcement. I support law enforcement. What happened to these peace officers in New York was dastardly done. The dastard that did it is a person that we can never ever in any way glorify. The peo-

ple who commit crimes ought to be punished, and I support punishment for people who commit crimes.

I also support having a system that prevents our law enforcement officers from being falsely accused. I believe that a camera on an officer can make a difference, and I am honored to say that my colleague, the Honorable EMANUEL CLEAVER, and I are working together on bills that we have filed to bring them together, so that we can help our law enforcement avoid specious accusations and make sure that they have the evidence of what actually occurred.

God bless my constituents and the United States of America.

□ 1030

SERVING THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania). The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, as we come to begin this new opportunity of service to the American people, clearly we want to emphasize to them that we take this responsibility seriously and, as well, that we know that we represent our constituents. These are districts that are between thousands of people that are in our congressional districts, but we realize that the broader sense of what we do is to represent our Nation and the values and needs of the American people.

Over the last 2 days, as we begin this legislative process, I have been concerned about two issues in particular that I believe do not, if you will, provide for the overall sensitivity to the American people. We were discussing a major financial services bill that will be coming up. Many elements are in this bill, but I want our constituents and, more importantly, our colleagues to realize that you have a bill that will diminish what we call the Volcker rule.

What that is is a protection to make sure if banks want to dabble and dabble in risky ventures or risky investments, that they do so with the money that is private and separate from money that is protected by the FDIC. That is your savings accounts. That is the money you socked away. In the instance of this legislation, they want to take that protection away so that banks can dabble and dabble in accounts that are protected by the FDIC, meaning that you pay for mistakes; you pay for collapse; you pay for the wrong decisions that are made; and you lose. I don't want the American people to lose.

It is something that has touched my heart because I represent a vast amount of constituents: those who are quite well-endowed, if you will, quite wealthy, such as major corporations and neighbors and others who are doing quite well; and then, of course, I represent children and widows who are dependent on something called SSI, or those who are disabled who are dependent on SSI. And I cannot, for the life of

me, understand why we would pass legislation that would, in essence, indicate that we are not going to continue supporting SSI, in fact, that we may call for either the elimination or the decreasing of benefits under SSI.

Do we realize, does this Republican leadership realize, that those who receive SSI are the most vulnerable, the poorest, the children who are in great need, the sick who are in great need, people who have worked and who have fallen upon times in which they need that kind of support? Why would we, in the thinking of representing the core of American values, lifting all people, believing in the equality of all, why would we do this? And so my voice is going to be heard loudly and clearly. I call upon, as my Democratic colleagues have so aptly noted, that we raise our voices and that we get in the way and that we stop this kind of intrusion on those who cannot, in some instances, speak for themselves.

I want to rise today as well to acknowledge my deepest sympathy to the people of France for the heinous and tragic incident which has just occurred. When I left, there were 12 dead, including two police officers in the line of duty. We pray for their families, and we stand up against this vile act of franchise terrorism.

As a member of the Homeland Security Committee, I am grateful to serve on that committee with the ranking member, Mr. THOMPSON, and Chairman MCCAUL. I hope that we can work in a bipartisan manner to confront this kind of dangerous terrorism, recognizing that we do not label people by their faith, but we label them by their actions.

Might I also say that I express, again, on the floor, a sympathy for the tragic execution of the NYPD law enforcement officers. We do not stand for that. That individual has been determined to be disturbed, crazed, and does not represent any value of America. We offer our deepest sympathy to those shot recently in the line of duty. Hopefully we will continue working in the Judicial Committee to look at the criminal justice system that really involves a whole number of elements, such as the grand jury system, the special prosecutor system, the constant traffic stops in many instances that are done on a racially profiled scenario, and the uplifting of training and community-oriented policing.

Mr. Speaker, we can do all of these things if we work together, but I did not come to this Congress to undermine the criminal justice system or to undermine people who are in need.

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 34 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: Loving God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

We thank You for the joy, excitement, and ceremony of yesterday when the 114th Congress convened. It was a celebration of the ongoing American experiment of participatory democracy.

Today begins, if not in full force, the work of the Congress when the difficulties facing our Nation, and some communities especially, come into focus. We ask again an abundance of Your wisdom for the Members of the people's House.

May we be forever grateful for the blessings our Nation enjoys and appropriately generous with what we have to help those among us who are in need.

May all that is done this day be 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.

SWEARING IN OF MEMBERS-ELECT

The SPEAKER. Will the Representatives-elect please present themselves in the well.

Mr. CROWLEY of New York, Mr. ENGEL of New York, Mr. HIGGINS of New York, Mrs. LOWEY of New York, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Mr. MEEKS of New York, Ms. MENG of New York, Mr. NADLER of New York, Mr. RANGEL of New York, Mr. TONKO of New York, and Ms. VELÁZQUEZ of New York appeared at the bar of the House and took the oath of office, as follows:

Do you solemnly swear that you will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that you will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that you take

this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; and that you will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office on which you are about to enter, so help you God.

The SPEAKER. Congratulations. You are now Members of the 114th Congress.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. POE of Texas) laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, January 6, 2015.

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

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Under Clause 2(g) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, I herewith designate Mr. Robert Reeves, Deputy Clerk, and Mr. Kirk D. Boyle, Legal Counsel, to sign any and all papers and do all other acts for me under the name of the Clerk of the House which they would be authorized to do by virtue of this designation, except such as are provided by statute, in case of my temporary absence or disability.

This designation shall remain in effect for the 114th Congress or until modified by me.

With best wishes, I am
Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS,
Clerk of the House.

HIRE OUR HEROES ACT

(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. Mr. Speaker, the President's takeover of our Nation's health care system burdens small businesses and veterans seeking jobs. ObamaCare's employer mandate hurts small businesses' ability to hire employees while veterans already face a tough job market.

I am grateful the House yesterday passed the Hire More Heroes Act, a bipartisan bill to exempt veterans who already receive health care benefits through the VA and TRICARE from being counted in the number that must receive employer coverage.

This policy change encourages businesses to hire veterans and provides relief to employers to create jobs. I appreciate South Carolina Attorney General Bob Livingston working with Colonel Ronnie Taylor on Operation Palmetto Employment to reduce veteran unemployment from 16 to 3 percent.

Potential for employment should not be restricted by the failures of ObamaCare, and I am grateful one of the first votes of the 114th Congress supports veterans and creates jobs.

Also, God bless our troops, and the President, by his actions, must never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism. Our sympathy to America's first ally, France, on the terrorist attack today in Paris.