

to become energy independent. It is creating jobs, 3,000 of them, at or near the solar plant under construction in Buffalo, New York.

Solar panels empower consumers to generate clean and affordable energy at home and to sell the extra energy that they do not use to the grid. A policy called "net metering," which requires utilities to pay a fair price for this energy to the consumer, is currently in place in all but six States. It has been vital to the growth of the solar industry by providing consumers with certainty on the savings that solar will produce in their energy bill.

That is why I have introduced legislation to direct the Department of Energy to conduct a study on all of the impacts of net metering. Through a comprehensive analysis, we can ensure that regulators and policymakers have the accurate information they need to make a sound decision on whether to support consumer-generated solar energy.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT VETOED

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

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, my heart breaks for our military men and women who last week watched their Commander in Chief as he vetoed the NDAA, the National Defense Authorization Act. This was a bill that would give them more pay and better benefits for the job that they are doing. He vetoed it, great flourish, called a ceremony.

He vetoed the bill because he wanted more money for his domestic agenda that includes more money for broken agencies like the EPA and the IRS. Imagine that.

In Congress, our first responsibility is to provide for the common defense, and the NDAA just does that.

This year's defense bill passed both the House and the Senate with an overwhelming bipartisan majority. It is the most reform-centered defense bill in decades.

It includes pay and benefits for our troops. Did you know 83 percent of our military personnel have retired with no retirement benefits? It changes that.

The President vetoed it. It would have given them 401(k)-style benefits. The President vetoed it. He should be ashamed of those actions. The men and women in uniform deserve better.

NATION'S CRUMBLING INFRASTRUCTURE

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

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, well, it is long past time for Congress to do its job and get serious about funding a long-term solution to fix our crumbling roads and bridges, all of our infrastructure in this country.

In Michigan, of all States, we know that we need to invest in order to grow our economy. To build a 21st century economy, we need state-of-the-art infrastructure.

No more short-term fixes, no more month-to-month funding. I have voted against these short-term bills in the past, and I am going to continue to do so.

We are in urgent need of dramatic investment in infrastructure. Nearly a third of our roads are in poor or mediocre condition. One out of four of our bridges require significant repair. In my own hometown, our water infrastructure is wholly inadequate to provide even clean water to our residents.

We just cannot continue to threaten our economy by failing to do our job. Congress needs to do its job. The American people go to work every single day, and the least that they can expect is that we do the same thing and do our job.

If we really believe in our future in this Congress, we ought to be willing to invest in it.

FAIRNESS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR MARRIED HOUSEHOLDS WITH STUDENT LOANS ACT

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

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, student loan debt is now the fastest growing and second-largest type of household debt in America. It is no surprise that many Americans are putting off marriage and family life for financial reasons.

The decline in marriage is a problem that could impact our economy and society for decades to come. Yet, our Tax Code punishes married households who have student debt. That is why I have introduced the Fairness and Opportunities for Married Households With Student Loans Act.

Currently, an individual with student loans can deduct up to \$2,500 in interest paid on their loans, but that amount does not increase for married couples filing jointly. So spouses who both have student loan debt are limited to just one \$2,500 deduction. This is not fair.

My bill increases the deduction to \$5,000 for married couples. It only makes sense. It also strengthens incentives toward marriage and financial independence.

With student debt putting pressure on our economy, let's stop penalizing marriage and start helping families build a stronger future.

2015 JOBS FAIR AND ECONOMY

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

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I recently hosted my third annual hiring event where 500 applicants connected with more than 70 employers looking to fill positions.

I was delighted to see Ramona Young and Sommatra Jackson at the event, two women hired at my first event in 2013. They were back this year representing the company that hired them.

Their success continues to motivate me. For every Ramona and Sommatra, there are hundreds of Americans looking for good-paying jobs that allow them to build toward a future.

So today I rise on behalf of those American workers still looking for good-paying jobs.

We all know the statistics. Our economy is growing. After 67 months of consecutive job growth, our unemployment rate stands at 5.1 percent for the first time since 2008, but the fact is there are nearly 8 million Americans still searching.

The people I met at my hiring event were talented, skilled, and driven. They are hungry for an opportunity to work, to put their skills to good use, and to provide for their families.

I urge my colleagues to join me in creating an economy that works for everyone.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS

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

Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month. Far too many families fall victim to domestic violence. In fact, one in four women will experience domestic violence at some point in their lives.

I want to recognize and thank the organizations, their staff, and their volunteers across my district for what they do to help victims of domestic violence.

To cite just one example, Mr. Speaker, last week the Berks Women in Crisis held their annual Silent Witness Project march and ceremony to honor and remember victims lost. A group of about 75 people marched from the Berks Women in Crisis center to the Reading Area Community College, carrying 25 red silhouettes of women, men, and children killed due to domestic violence. Each cutout held a brass shield with the summary of that victim's story.

By spreading awareness of these horrors of domestic violence and encouraging victims to speak up, we can and must help reduce the number of women victimized.

I applaud the efforts of this annual ceremony and march and want to let them know that their work is recognized by the community. Indeed, the work of all the organizations, their staff, and volunteers is critical.

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STAND WITH SHERIFF LUPE
VALDEZ

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

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to stand with Lupe. That is Dallas County Sheriff Lupe Valdez. Sheriff Lupe Valdez has a great history in Dallas County, but recently she has come under attack from our Governor for trying to build relationships between the law enforcement community and the immigrant community.

Governor Abbott sent a threatening letter to Sheriff Valdez, questioning her decision to decline certain Federal ICE detainers when the immigrant in question is not a public safety risk—not a public safety risk.

Sheriff Valdez understands that, in order to serve and protect the immigrant community, she must have the trust of that community.

I call on Governor Abbott, instead of trying to erode that trust between law enforcement and the immigrant community, to work with the Republican Texas delegation to push for comprehensive immigration reform, to push for the things that the business community wants, that the church community wants, in order to do something about our broken immigration system instead of trying to push for things like sanctuary city bills.

If we work together with the immigrant community and do the right thing, together we can work on solving a lot of these issues.

I ask my colleagues and the Governor to stand with Lupe and to do the right thing when it comes to Texas immigrants.

HONORING VESTA MANGUN

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

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a faithful and God-fearing woman, Ms. Vesta Mangun of Alexandria, Louisiana, who will soon be celebrating her 90th birthday.

Ms. Mangun is a dedicated member of The Pentecostals of Alexandria Church. She has been instrumental in the life and spirit of the Pentecostal community for a long, long time.

Ms. Mangun and her husband, G.A. Mangun, started The Pentecostals of Alexandria when it was known as the First United Pentecostal Church with just 38 members. Today The Pentecostals of Alexandria is made up of thousands of members, largely thanks to the dedication of the Mangun family.

The work of Ms. Mangun extends far beyond community. A daughter of an east Texas pioneer, Vesta Mangun has dedicated her life to sharing the Lord's word as a speaker at camp meetings across the country and across the world.

I commend the Mangun family for their tireless dedication to Louisiana, and I congratulate The Pentecostals of Alexandria in their celebration this week commemorating 65 years of ministry.

GOOD THINGS AND BAD THINGS

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, today we will have an opportunity to support the Export-Import Bank opening so that constituents across America, including Houston, Texas, will have the opportunity to grow jobs and to compete internationally. That is a good thing, Mr. Speaker.

Soon I hope we will be able to reopen Riverside Hospital in my congressional district with the collaboration and work with Health and Human Services and State authorities to open the doors for those who need health care. That is a good thing.

Mr. Speaker, the showing of a video of a student being dragged out of a classroom violently while educators stand by and watch is a bad thing. It calls upon the Justice Department of that State, the Attorney General, and the local district attorney to stand up and be counted. It also calls upon the U.S. Department of Justice to determine whether the civil rights of that student were violated.

Not one American should be able to tolerate the heinous, horrific, violent actions of throwing a young girl student on the floor, up against the door, dragged as if she were a bag of potatoes. No one should tolerate that.

Mr. Speaker, I call upon everyone to address the conditions in schools and violence along with those who are perpetrating these acts against students.

NDAA VETO

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

Mr. PALAZZO. Mr. Speaker, last week the President once again disappointed the American people while only seeking to advance his own political agenda. Despite only vetoing four bills in 7 years, the President took the extraordinary measure of vetoing a bill vital to keeping Americans safe.

The annual National Defense Authorization ensures our troops have the tools and training they need to destroy our enemies and to return to their loved ones back at home. This bill has been passed for 53 consecutive years, yet this President saw fit to veto it, putting campaign promises above our military and the American people.

Mr. Speaker, the world is not becoming a safer place. In fact, it is becoming much more dangerous. China is building military islands in the South China Sea. The Russians are destabilizing Europe. Foreign fighters are flooding to

ISIS by the thousands. Iran is on the path to having a nuclear weapon. Yet this President is more concerned about liberal politics than he is about the safety of our Nation. As a veteran, I find it disgraceful.

WEAR RED WEDNESDAY

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

Ms. WILSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow is Wear Red Wednesday to Bring Back Our Girls.

This month President Obama announced he will deploy 300 troops to Cameroon to help with the fight against the ISIS-linked terrorist organization, Boko Haram. These American troops will provide vital intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance support to the multinational regional coalition fighting Boko Haram.

I applaud the President's commitment to rooting out and destroying radical terrorism in the region. This newly announced aid could be a turning point in the fight against Boko Haram.

Mr. Speaker, until the precious Chibok girls are returned, we will continue to wear red and continue to tweet, tweet, tweet. Continue to tweet, tweet, tweet #bringbackourgirls. Tweet, tweet, tweet #joinrepwilson.

OCTOBER IS NATIONAL FARM TO
SCHOOL MONTH

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

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a very innovative program in my home State of Arkansas. Governor Asa Hutchinson proclaimed October to be Farm to School Month. The Farm to School program provides healthy, locally grown food to our State's schools while creating new revenue streams for our Arkansas farmers.

According to the USDA, 169 schools, serving over 86,000 young Arkansans, participate in the program. This directed over \$600,000 into local economies by purchasing products from local farmers.

The Farm to School program helps to combat childhood obesity by encouraging healthy eating habits among our youngest, most impressionable citizens. Also, at a time when families are moving away from the rural, agricultural parts of our Nation, I believe it is vital that our children know how and where their food is produced. The Farm to School program helps to educate them.

Mr. Speaker, I believe the Farm to School program is important to the economy, health, and education of Arkansas' Fourth District. I look forward to working with the many stakeholders in Arkansas to see the continued success of the Farm to School program.