

CONGRATULATING ISRAEL ON ITS 68TH  
INDEPENDENCE DAY

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the democratic Jewish State of Israel as it marks its Independence Day.

Though the Jewish people have historical ties to Israel that date back millennia, in just 68 years of statehood, look at all that Israel has accomplished. Israel is a world leader in education, in technology, and in innovation. It is a vibrant and open democracy with a robust economy that thrives despite the constant threats that it faces daily.

The United States can have no greater friend than Israel not only because we share the same interests, but because we also share the same values and beliefs, such as democracy and the rule of law. That is why it is imperative that our two nations sign a new memorandum of understanding to ensure that Israel has the capability and the capacity to defend herself and her citizens from all threats and be a shining example of democracy for the entire region.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to continuing to work to strengthen the already-strong relationship between the U.S. and Israel. I congratulate the Jewish state and her citizens on its 68th Independence Day.

WAR ON DRUGS

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, there is a major front on the war on drugs that is only now getting the attention it deserves. We will be discussing it later today on the floor dealing with opioid addiction.

Instead of arresting or citing over 600,000 people for marijuana last year, which had zero overdose deaths and which a majority of Americans think should be legal, we should redouble our efforts to fight the abuse of opioid prescription painkillers and the epidemic of opioid deaths.

Because of reckless marketing and lax oversight, there is an overdose death every 19 minutes; 78 people a day die, 20,000 last year. This is directly related to many heroin addicts. Deaths on heroin are increasing because the addict's drug of choice when their supply of opioids is interrupted shifts to heroin.

2.1 million suffer from substance abuse and 1,000 people a day are admitted to emergency rooms for opioid related causes. We have a challenge that needs to be addressed. There is plenty of blame to go around: the drug company's marketing practices, pill mills and unscrupulous doctors whose government regulators were asleep at the switch; and the DEA, which cannot get its priorities or its story straight.

I am hopeful that today's action on the floor will be the first step. As my

friend and colleague from Connecticut pointed out, today's legislation really doesn't speak meaningfully to what we are going to have to do: prevention and treatment, which ultimately can help disrupt this cycle of abuse.

There is one simple step that I think would make a profound difference. We are introducing legislation today to deal with disposal of prescription drugs. We are issuing approximately one prescription per adult in the United States, 260 million this year.

There are tens of millions of these pills floating around and left over. And what do people do? Many of them just flush them down the toilet or leave them in the medicine cabinets.

Well, flushing them into the sewer system is not a good idea because we are slowly medicating millions of Americans who are having traces of these drugs showing up in their system from drinking water. They are expensive to remove. Leaving it in the medicine cabinet is how many people find drugs to abuse. Teenagers steal unused medicines out of medicine cabinets in homes that they visit or from family members.

We are proposing a safe drug disposal tax credit, which would offer qualified entities such as retail pharmacies, narcotics treatment programs, and long-term care facilities a tax credit to be able to deal with disposal of these prescription drugs on site.

Locating safe drug disposal and take-back programs at pharmacies and other healthcare sites will increase access to this safe medicine disposal and will remove millions of these highly dangerous drugs from the hands of people who shouldn't have them.

By all means, let's have the debate today. Let's start moving forward. A look at the broader challenges of treatment and prevention is long overdue. Hopefully, the DEA gets its priorities straight in the future.

But, in the meantime, providing a tax credit for safe disposal is a small step, which should have bipartisan support and will make a difference in every community across America to end this epidemic of prescription overdose deaths.

CONGRATULATING BROCKWAY'S  
GRACE PRESTON

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the efforts of Grace Preston, a sixth grader from Pennsylvania's Fifth Congressional District.

Grace visited Washington, D.C., last week to accept the Prudential Spirit of Community Award, a ceremony at the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History. Grace was one of only two students in Pennsylvania to be honored with this award, which recognizes outstanding acts of volunteerism.

Grace has raised more than \$4,000 in the past 3 years to improve the lives of animals in her community through the sale of homemade dog treats, cat toys, and flea and tick repellent.

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She became interested in helping animals after her family adopted a pet from a local shelter.

Through her efforts, Grace has raised enough money to enable the local Humane Society to purchase a storage shed, as well as other supplies, such as rabies gloves. She has also provided animal oxygen mask kits to a local fire department for pets that have been caught in fires; has helped pay for a shelter dog's surgery; and has collected animal food for the pets of needy families.

Grace's work is an example that students all across the Nation should look toward. I know she has made her school and her community proud.

LEADERSHIP FOR CLEAN WATER

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, last week was National Drinking Water Week. This designation is to highlight the importance of drinking water across our Nation and the need to reinvest in the infrastructure that brings tap water into our homes.

Quality water has been credited with vastly extending the life expectancy here in the United States by eliminating the sickness from diseases that are spread through drinking water, such as typhoid fever. While we have made great progress in improving water across our Nation, there is always more work to be done.

In Congress, since 1996, the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund has helped to fund public water systems and infrastructure projects in order to meet public health goals and to comply with Federal regulations. Last year alone, Congress provided \$2.3 billion to the EPA for local drinking water and sewer construction projects through the Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Loan Funds.

Good water is not only vital for good health, but it is also essential for our State's number one industry: agriculture. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania continues to provide substantial food, fiber, and energy for residents across our Nation. With this in mind, promoting and sustaining healthy waters and soil is essential.

As chairman of the Agriculture Subcommittee on Conservation and Forestry, with jurisdiction over Federal conservation programs that are administered by the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the U.S. Forest Service and forestry practices, we work to provide leadership and resources to promote the health of our watersheds, soils, and forests.

To help meet those needs, I was proud to work on the 2014 farm bill, which provides many positive tools for farmers and landowners. From on-farm operations to estuary management, the United States Department of Agriculture plays an important role in