Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, next week is National Forest Products Week, which the Nation observes from October 15 through October 21. Each year since 1960, our Nation has celebrated the achievements of the forest product manufacturers and organizations throughout this country.

The forest products industry is an integral part of U.S. manufacturing competitiveness and is among the top 10 manufacturing sector employers in 45 States. In the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, this industry is home to 265 wood products, paper, and packaging manufacturing facilities that make more than $16 million in products annually, and contribute nearly $3 million to State and local economies through wages and compensation. More than 53,900 hardworking men and women in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania are employed by the forest products industry.

Forest products continue to meet the evolving needs of people across the country and around the world. The forest products industry directly employs about 900,000 people and supports 2.4 million jobs. It is 4 percent of the total U.S. manufacturing GDP. The industry meets a payroll of approximately $50 billion, annually, and manufactures almost $240 billion in products every year.

One-third of the United States is forested—751 million acres. Privately owned forests supply 91 percent of the wood harvested in the United States; State and Tribal forests supply approximately 6 percent; and Federal forests supply only 2 percent of the wood used by the forest products industry. More than 56 percent of U.S. forests are privately owned, much of it by family forest owners who manage their lands to provide value to future generations.

The industry has tremendous impact on our environment, too. A single tree can absorb more than 10 pounds of CO₂ each year. In the United States, forests and forest products store enough carbon to offset approximately 12 percent of the Nation’s CO₂ emissions.

Forest products play a valuable role in the life of every American every day. Two-thirds of the Nation’s drinking water comes from forests. From paper and packaging to wood products, tissue and other personal care items, these products are at the heart of modern life and a modern economy.

Paper products allow us to communicate, teach, and learn. They provide safe packaging for goods and consumables, as well as personal hygiene and cleanliness. Wood products provide shelter and necessary components of daily life.

Mr. Speaker, because the industry plays such an important role in the life of everyday Americans, in 1960, Congress designated the third week in October as National Forest Products Week. Next week, the country celebrates with events and advocacy campaigns to mark that occasion. Mr. Speaker, I wholeheartedly join those across the Nation who applaud the forest products industry for its many contributions.
CLEAN POWER PLAN

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, 3 years ago, the Obama administration took a very positive and important step to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by initiating the Clean Power Plan, the first-ever national limit on carbon pollution from power plants. The plan was devised to give States the option to tailor how they would reduce carbon pollution, following benchmarks set by the Federal Government.

For years, States, local governments, businesses, and universities have been making progress towards a low-carbon future, both in anticipation of full implementation of the Clean Power Plan and spurred on by a variety of other forces. Now, the Trump administration has vowed to unravel the Clean Power Plan, but the momentum will not stop because of this reckless act.

Donald Trump and Scott Pruitt cannot repeal engineering, science, or economics. Their attempts would only harm the economy and our citizens, miring us in the past to serve the interests of Big Coal.

The case for action in reducing carbon pollution is compelling. The Clean Power Plan encourages steps to reduce the dangerous extent of accelerating climate disruption and attendant extreme weather events.

Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria are only the latest examples of those events. Now, millions of acres in the West are exploding in wildfires. More frequent, more intense, and more dangerous forest fires are the reality now, spurred by climate disruption.

Out-of-control wildfire has touched Oregon’s beloved Columbia River Gorge, and the latest instances are in California wine country, taking lives, destroying property, and damaging crops.

Regardless of your view on climate change, the Clean Power Plan is a very important step for the United States. It stands on firm legal ground. The Supreme Court has ruled on three separate occasions that the EPA has the authority and the responsibility to protect our families from carbon pollution.

Cleaner energy and a cleaner environment under the Clean Power Plan would improve the lives of working Americans. By 2030, it would prevent 90,000 asthma attacks, 300,000 days missed from work and school, and 3,600 premature deaths every year.

Instead of protecting human health, particularly those in communities most impacted by carbon pollution, Trump and Pruitt are seeking to tilt the energy playing field back in favor of Big Coal.

Make no mistake: without subsidies and regulatory favoritism, most old, dirty, coal plants would have been shut down years ago if they had been required to meet carbon pollution and air quality standards, as they should have been.

Trump and Pruitt are making a big mistake when they assault the Clean Air Act and the Clean Power Plan. They are on weak legal ground, and they are using their position of public service to promote engineering, science, and economics, the environment, and common sense.

The Clean Power Plan will not be easily unraveled. There is a process to unwind it, similar to what it took to put it in place. It would take a lot of hard work—and evidence that Pruitt doesn’t have—to repeal it and prevent the EPA from regulating carbon emissions.

The plan has powerful allies. I am proud to stand with the environmental community, my fellow Democrats in Congress, many government and trade groups, citizens who care, and a number of businesses. Mars is the latest company to announce that they are going to follow through on their carbon reduction plan.

We will continue this fight for a low-carbon, healthier, more economical future. We will protect alternative energy and honor the commitments we owe all of the wind and solar industries. We will continue to reduce emissions from our transportation sector by not rolling back fuel efficiency standards.

We will work with the agriculture sector, which makes up 9 percent of the total greenhouse gas emissions. A strong farm bill can reduce emissions and enhance productivity through low-carbon protections.

Ultimately, Trump and Pruitt cannot repeal science, engineering, or economics. I am proud to be part of this effort to ensure that the United States moves forward to exercise leadership in a low-carbon future to fight climate change and global weather disruption.

PROTECTING OUR SENIOR CITIZENS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join Mr. SCHNEIDER and me in support of this measure that will help ensure that our parents, grandparents, and loved ones are looked after after they are cared for by caregivers who will give them the treatment and respect they deserve.

CARING FOR SENIORS DURING NATURAL DISASTERS

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to cosponsor the Protecting Seniors During Disasters Act, which I introduced with my colleague, Congresswoman LOIS FRANKEL of Florida.

The horrific deaths of 14 seniors in a Florida nursing home facility in the aftermath of Hurricane Irma made it abundantly clear that more must be done to protect seniors during and after natural disasters.

Times of emergency, many senior citizens find themselves disconnected from caregivers and without the treatments and resources that they so desperately need. Our bill seeks to reconnect seniors by requiring that Federal agencies assess how their emergency response efforts impact the elderly. It also calls for the implementation of standards to better protect and care for senior citizens and nursing home residents across our Nation during and after emergency situations.

This is a commonsense, bipartisan legislative initiative that aims to save the lives of many senior citizens and helps ensure that the tragedy that took place in south Florida will not happen again. I urge my colleagues to join us in support of this lifesaving measure.

BUILDING A NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE AMERICAN LATINO

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, as we continue to celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month and the many contributions of our vibrant community throughout our country, I would like to bring attention to a bill that I have sponsored that would permanently showcase the history and stories of American Latinos.

H.R. 2911, the National Museum of the American Latino Act, will establish a world-class educational institution on The National Mall for the millions of visitors who come to our Nation’s capital every year eager to learn about American history.

Latinos have served our great country in every war dating back to before the Revolutionary War and continue to proudly serve in our military. They are small-business owners, job creators, TV stars, athletes, and public servants.

An initiative over 20 years in the making, this museum would be a visual representation of the difficulties that Latinos have overcome leaving their home countries, whether to flee an oppressive communist regime in my native homeland of Cuba, or Venezuela, or for the opportunity to partake in the American Dream, as well as the
story of Hispanics who have made the U.S. their home for many generations.

As the first Hispanic woman elected to the U.S. Congress, I am proud to invite my colleagues to join me in this endeavor and cosponsor H.R. 2911, the National Museum of the American Latino Act.

ASSISTANCE FOR PUERTO RICO

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

Mr. GUTÍERREZ. Mr. Speaker, it has been 3 weeks since the eye of Hurricane Maria crossed over Puerto Rico. It has been 3 weeks, and there are still parts of the island that have not had contact with FEMA yet—3 weeks. For most people, that has meant no power, and most still don’t have running water.

Hospitals and clinics were hit hard, as The New York Times reports. The daughter of one man who died because he couldn’t receive oxygen treatment told the paper: “Because of the electricity situation, a lot of people died and are still dying.”

Forty percent of the island still lacks running water because of the blackout, which still affects 85 percent of the island. As a result, many people are bathing in streams and receiving water from huge tanks, which is never a good idea.

This is after 3 weeks in the most powerful nation on Earth. This is unacceptable.

Our response to Hurricane Maria and the people of Puerto Rico is a national embarrassment and a tragedy. They are our own citizens in our own Caribbean colonies of Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, and we have not helped them at all that we can.

I spoke to Chicago firefighters yesterday who have been in Puerto Rico for about a week, and they tell me it is worse than we are being told.

They told me yesterday that they are still making contact in towns where people come up to them and say, “Thank God, it is FEMA; you are finally here.” Only to be told, “No, we are not FEMA; we are from Chicago; we are firefighters,” and they embrace and cry with gratitude.

Last week, a group of my colleagues and I got together. We represent large mainland in Connecticut, New York; Chicago; we are all ready, but the problem is transportation. If you have money, connections, or internet access, then you probably can find a flight out.

I know this because I was in Puerto Rico 2 weeks ago, and I saw the Land Rovers, the Jaguars, parked at the private airports in San Juan, because if you have the money, you have already put your loved ones on a flight out of Dodge.

The individuals from FEMA have been doing a great job, given the constraints, but I think now FEMA and the military resources should focus on the task of evacuating the elderly, the sick, and the vulnerable from the island.

Look, this is the way FEMA works. They say: Well, we only take on tasks that the Governor asks us to take on, and the Governor is not likely to go to FEMA to ask them to get thousands and thousands of his constituents off the island.

Number one, it is a difficult request for any local official to make. Captains of industry and leaders on the island we visit made sure that there are Puerto Rican workers there to rebuild, and of course, to continue to buy their products. I get that. But at the same time, those same captains of industry and political leaders, guess what, I bet you most of them have already got their loved ones off the island.

Number two, we know the Governor has to be extremely careful how he asks for anything because we all know the President doesn’t take criticism well or even a hint of criticism. The Governor doesn’t want to get blackballed by the President who might go off on a Twitter rant at any moment unless he is praised and stroked.

But our Puerto Rican constituents don’t vote for the Governor of Puerto Rico. They vote for us, for DELAURÉ, for CROWLEY, for McGOVERN, for ESPAILLAT, for MARCY KAPTUR, and they want us to help them get their families out of danger’s way. They are demanding help getting their family members out, and I think FEMA and the U.S. military can do the job. They just need the orders from the people in charge.

Let’s be clear: if anyone wants to leave Puerto Rico, they should have our help in doing so. For thousands, it is a question of life and death and survival. It is what is needed to help Puerto Rico. We don’t need the President to step out of the way. They have hundreds of thousands of people still stuck on the island. They have been doing a great job, given the constraints, but it is still making contact in towns where people come up to them and say, “Thank God, it is FEMA; you are finally here,” only to be told, “No, we are not FEMA; we are from Chicago; we are firefighters,” and they embrace and cry with gratitude.

CELEBRATING THE WORK OF TERESA LEWIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) for 5 minutes.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the work of a very wonderful constituent of the Fifth District of North Carolina, Teresa Lewis.

Every September, we celebrate American Business Women’s Day in order to recognize the many different backgrounds and diverse occupations of American businesswomen. However, it is my belief that we should celebrate American businesswomen like Teresa Lewis every day.

Teresa’s success was born out of determination and the desire to provide a better life for her family. In 1986, Teresa founded WorkForce Carolina, a professional staffing service that includes recruitment, interview completion, and skills assessment.

As CEO of WorkForce Carolina, Teresa has employed thousands of people, and her company has served as a boon to the North Carolina economy.

Most importantly, Teresa serves as a role model to all women and men in our country. I commend Teresa Lewis on all of her many accomplishments and thank her for all she does for the community.

CRITICAL TIME OF LIFE AND DEATH FOR PUERTO RICO AND VIRGIN ISLANDS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. ESPAILLAT) for 5 minutes.

Mr. ESPAILLAT. Mr. Speaker, this is a critical time of life and death for millions of U.S. citizens on the island of Puerto Rico and also in the Virgin Islands.

The efforts to rebuild will be great, and we each have a critical role to play to help these families recover following the aftermath of these catastrophic storms.

We have witnessed so much devastation this hurricane season, and the impact has been particularly destructive and wreaked havoc. It has left millions of U.S. families without shelter, electricity, and their lives in ruin.

We all have a part to play in the recovery efforts and must answer the calls to provide relief and aid in the immense rebuilding efforts that will take place to assist all of them who have been affected.

The amount of help and heart I have seen my home State of New York, including a recent effort of Uptown United this weekend, and from constituents of mine like Lin-Manuel Miranda, and even from children willing to crack open their piggy banks has been overwhelming.

If the Federal Government could have matched that compassion, then Puerto Rico would be well on its way to recovery.

Last night, the House Appropriations Committee released a $36.5 billion disaster relief package: $5 billion of that will go directly to Puerto Rico; $14 billion for FEMA’s disaster fund; and $16
telling me that the cleanup may not be complete in some cities, like Port Aransas and Rockport, until December or January. There is a big job ahead. It is going to take a lot of people.

Nearly a month into this crisis, the status of Puerto Rico today is such:

The Jones Act. On Sunday, the White House let the 10-day shipping waiver for the Jones Act expire for Puerto Rico, meaning that foreign ships can no longer bring aid to the hurricane-ravaged island from U.S. ports. I have been pushing for at least a 1-year waiver and an extension for Puerto Rico.

Electricity. To date, only 15 percent of Puerto Ricans have power and electricity, not being able to get in contact with their loved ones and the great impact the lack of electricity has on patients with dialysis.

Water. Access to clean drinking water lingers around 20 percent. It is reported that seaborne bacteria are contaminating the water supply. This may lead to bacterial infections such as cholera, dysentery, E. coli, and typhoid. That can be really disastrous.

The typical treatments for these illnesses, like tetanus shots and powerful antibiotics, are not readily available on the island where medical supplies are quickly running out.

The damage estimates. It is calculated around $95 billion. This is roughly 150 percent of the Puerto Rican annual gross national product. The downpayment really should be $10 billion to $15 billion.

The budget. The White House has reported that they have asked Congress to authorize approximately $30 billion in new disaster-related funding.

Fatalities. Mr. Speaker, the official death toll has increased to 43 deaths directly or indirectly related to Hurricane Maria. The death toll, unfortunately, will continue to rise, and this is becoming more and more our Caribbean Katrina. I urge my colleagues to pass the Disaster Relief Fund for Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Caribbean.

THANKING TEAM RUBICON

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

Mr. FARENTHOLD. Mr. Speaker, I want to take a few minutes to talk about and thank Team Rubicon and all other volunteers who are helping assist victims of Hurricane Harvey with storm cleanup, not only in the district I represent but throughout the State of Texas.

Many of our cities still have piles and piles of debris. Initially, it was trees and brushes cleared, but now, as people are starting to survey and repair the damage to their home, there is insulation, there is sheetrock, there are personal belongings all out along the street waiting to be picked up and cleaned up.

This Monday, I spent time with the Governor of Texas, Greg Abbott, visiting some of our cities, and they are

HONORING THE MEMORY OF FIRST SERGEANT CHARLESTON HARTFIELD OF THE NEVADA ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Nevada (Ms. ROSEN) for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank my constituent, First Sergeant Charleston Hartfield of the Nevada Army National Guard. Our community lost a true-blue American hero on the 1st of October. Since the age of 18, Officer Hartfield valiantly served our country and our community, spending 16 years in the Army both on Active Duty and in the Nevada National Guard and 11 years in our local law enforcement.

First Sergeant Hartfield spent a year deployed to Iraq with the 42nd Air Defense Artillery Brigade in 2003, where they were awarded the Combat Action Badge for having bravely engaged in combat operations.
No community should ever be forced to experience the grief and trauma that my constituents are now confronting. It is more urgent than ever that we take meaningful action to reduce the toll of widespread gun violence. The time is now.

RECENTFY IRAN NUCLEAR DEAL

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

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about the significance of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action regarding Iran, more commonly referred to as the Iran nuclear agreement. I have always been a vocal advocate for tough sanctions on Iran. While I was a member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, in 2010, I was a member of the conference committee which drafted the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act. These sanctions, in 2010 and subsequently, did make a difference.

Unfortunately, Iran continues to support terrorist organizations, and its record on human rights is well known. But we should not withhold certification of the Iran nuclear agreement without credible evidence that Iran is not complying. Let’s remember, this agreement has always been about Iran, not obtaining nuclear weapons.

Doing so would strip the United States of our credibility in future international agreements not just with Iran, but with our allies as well.

In addition to Iran, we negotiated the Iran nuclear agreement with the United Kingdom, Germany, European Union, China, and Russia, and we must keep our word. In other words, to remain a country that is known for being righteous and reaching for high standards.

For over 250 years, since the formation of the United States, immigrants have come from all over the world to America to have a better life for themselves and, in turn, have made us the greatest country in the world. During Hispanic Heritage Month, I am honored to celebrate the community whose determination and achievements are an integral part of not only our Nation, but the San Joaquin Valley that I have the honor to represent.

SUPPORT FOR NFL FOOTBALL PLAYERS

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

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise and stand in the well of the Congress of the United States of America. I am always honored that I have this opportunity, and I see it as a preeminent privilege to be able to stand in the well of the Congress of the United States of America.

I love my country. I have said it many times here at this podium. I salute the flag, Mr. Speaker. I say the Pledge of Allegiance. I sing the national anthem. I love my country.

And because I love my country, I can stand here in the well of the House of the United States of America and announce that I support the NFL men, who are professional football players. I can say I support them because I believe in what the flag stands for: liberty and justice for all. I believe in this. And if there is to be liberty and justice for all, then they, too, are a part of has to be called to the attention of the American public. I support the NFL players, Mr. Speaker.

To those who say that “they are so lucky, they are making millions, why don’t they just play football, they ought to be happy,” first, let me comment in this way: They are earning millions. Their bodies are being torn apart, in many cases. They are earning millions. They get concussions. They are earning millions. They suffer after they leave football. They are earning millions. And they are also earning pain as they play a game that amuses many.

So those who say they are making piles of money and they ought to just go away, I contend that they are not doing it for the money. They are doing it because they understand injustice anywhere is still a threat to justice everywhere, as Dr. King put it. They want to eliminate the injustice that they see, and, in so doing, they have decided to take a knee.

I salute the flag. I support my country. I love my country. And I respect what they are doing in the form of peaceful protest to bring about change that ought to have been brought about decades or centuries ago; should have been, but has not been. Yes, we have come a long way, but we sure have a long way to go.

Now, to those who say “they have earned millions, why aren’t they happy,” well, it is not hush money.

Is that what you are saying, that what they get paid is hush money? That says that they don’t have freedom of speech? Does that check negate their freedom of speech? I think not. Freedom of speech is something that you cherish, whether you live in a mansion or you live under a bridge. Freedom of speech belongs to you. It doesn’t matter your station in life. It doesn’t matter your ethnicity. It doesn’t matter your religiosity. Freedom of speech belongs to you because you are a child of God and you live in the greatest country in the world.

So I stand in support of the NFL players. I want them to continue. I want them to stand their ground. I want this movement to continue. And I want those who were thwarted to know that you are trying to thwart injustice. When you try to change the subject and make it about something that it is not, you are trying to thwart justice. Even if you don’t do it with intentionality, that is the reality. We cannot allow injustice to continue. And I thank God that there are those who are making millions, those who are having their bodies abused, who are willing to take a stand by taking a knee against injustice, and they still respect this country and its flag and this anthem.

If there is one among them who has other thoughts, then I don’t support them. I support the righteous cause and who are respectful of the country, who can love the flag and still protest. I support that.
I am an American. I was born in the United States of America. I am a patriotic American. I believe in this country. And if you believe in it, you ought to allow peaceful protest to continue, because John F. Kennedy was right when he was paraphrased by Dr. King: Those who make peaceful protest impossible will make other forms of protest inevitable.

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 42 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
Reverend Molly Fraser, Gig Harbor United Methodist Church, Gig Harbor, Washington, offered the following prayer:

God of many names, we give thanks for the opportunity to serve. Remember us that we are servants of our country, our people, and the land. Let us not forget all the blessings You have given us so that we might use our power and influence to help order the country in ways that allow each and every person to find life and liberty and to pursue happiness.

We come, perhaps, already weary from an onslaught of emails, texts, tweets, phone calls, and meetings where people make demands on how we vote and assumptions about every decision that we put forward. Help us, O God, to do the right thing, not just for a few, but for the many. Help us work together diligently so that we might see the fruit of our effort grow into good throughout our community, which can serve to make this world more livable for all.

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 Texas (Mr. BABIN) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. BABIN 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.

WELCOMING REVEREND MOLLY FRASER
The SPEAKER. Without objection, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. KILMER) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mr. KILMER. Mr. Speaker, I am so honored to welcome Pastor Molly Fraser from Gig Harbor United Methodist Church, my home church.

Our church isn’t the biggest church, it isn’t the oldest church, but it has left a large impact throughout Gig Harbor because it makes clear that all are welcome. Whether you are in pain and need somewhere to go or you are looking for fellowship, there is a welcome mat for you.

It makes clear to regular attendees and newcomers that it is a place of open hands, open hearts, and open doors. It is a place that is committed to supporting the needs of those most in need throughout our community and around the world. It is a place to ask tough questions and to celebrate our faith.

Finally, it is a place that benefits from the tremendous leadership of Pastor Molly, who, during her brief tenure with the church, has brought incredible energy and heart and musical talent.

She is here in our Nation’s capital today with her family. It is my honor to welcome them and, in spirit, the entire congregation of Gig Harbor United Methodist Church.

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

ARMY NATIONAL GUARD
(Mr. WILLIAMS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WILLIAMS. Mr. Speaker, today, I would like to recognize the Army National Guard’s 236th Engineering Company. Located in Stephenville, Texas, they were the first on the ground in Houston to assist with Hurricane Harvey relief efforts on August 27. Over the course of a week, they rescued approximately 2,300 civilians and 380 animals from flooded areas.

Mr. Speaker, these men and women who serve are true heroes, and I am honored to represent them in the 25th Congressional District of Texas. I had the opportunity to meet with these soldiers a few weeks ago and personally shake their hands to thank them for their service.

They stepped up in a moment of absolute crisis and when the people of Texas needed them most. They put their lives on the line in order to save others. Without them, the number of deaths could have been significantly higher.

It is because of selfless people like these that America is able to remain the strongest country in the world. The Lone Star State came together for their swift and noble actions, and we will always remember their heroism.

Hurricane Harvey victims are still recovering, and all of America is behind them. We will rebuild together because we are all Texas strong.

God bless Texas, God bless the military, and God bless the United States of America.

In God we trust.

HONORING JAHEIR MOORE FOR SERVICE TO HIS COMMUNITY
(Mr. PAYNE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Jaheir Moore, a seventh grade student from Jersey City, New Jersey, for his service to people in need.

This young man from my district takes the time nearly every day to crochet hats, scarves, blankets, and other items for people in homeless shelters and newborn babies in intensive care units. Over the past couple of years, he has donated dozens of bags full of his creations to make life a little better for others.

Jaheir is a straight A student who wants to become a fashion designer. In February, he was a guest on the “Rachael Ray Show.” A week later, Jaheir had his first runway show in Jersey City. In April, I presented him with a Certificate of Special Congressional Recognition for his charity work.

Mr. Speaker, Jaheir Moore’s unselfish acts of kindness for people in need shows that our country’s future is a bright one.

ALLEN COUNTY RIGHT TO LIFE
(Mr. BANKS of Indiana asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BANKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, on Monday night, I had the privilege of attending the Allen County Right to Life’s 20th annual Uniting Our City for Life Banquet.

The event was a wonderful time with fellow Hoosiers who share a common concern for the sanctity of innocent human life, from the moment of conception to the moment of natural death. It also was a celebration of the fact that our culture increasingly is recognizing the value of human life.

A poll released last year found that a majority of young Americans support increasing restrictions that protect the unborn. Another recent poll found that 61 percent of Americans oppose using tax dollars to fund abortions. This
ever hit the U.S. and the strongest storm to hit Puerto Rico in 80 years. What it left behind was vast devastation and great damage to infrastructure and energy distribution systems.

Mr. Speaker, I am tremendously proud of our Pennsylvania Guardsmen who are on the ground assisting with this humanitarian disaster. They welcomed the call to action and are working to restore Puerto Rico’s infrastructure, install additional telecommunication equipment, distribute supplies to families and businesses, and deliver more than 300 generators to provide electricity to those who need it.

We are working on rebuilding, and the Pennsylvania National Guard is there to aid in the recovery effort. It is the American way to have all hands on deck, and I am grateful for their efforts.

**Billionaires First Tax Plan**

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

Mr. KILDEE, Mr. Speaker, last week, Republicans brought their extreme budget to the floor, a budget that forces the middle class to pay more in taxes just to give the wealthiest Americans a massive tax break.

This budget slashes investments in our future, such as rebuilding roads and bridges and education, just so it can provide huge tax breaks to the absolute wealthiest Americans. Billionaires would receive a massive tax cut under this plan.

Under this “billionaires first” tax plan, according to the nonprofit, nonpartisan Tax Policy Center, middle class families would pay an average of $1,290 a year more in taxes, while 80 percent of the benefits would go to the wealthiest 1 percent of Americans: the superwealthy. By repealing the estate tax, 5,400 families would receive a $270 billion tax break.

Who pays for this? The middle class.

How? By passing the costs on to them and increasing our deficit at the same time. Trillions of dollars would be added to our deficit.

Giving billionaires a massive tax break is fiscally irresponsible and morally wrong. We ought to reject it.

**Praising Pennsylvania National Guard for Helping with Puerto Rico Relief Efforts**

(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. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend 42 members of the Pennsylvania National Guard who are currently in Puerto Rico assisting with hurricane relief efforts.

Thousands of National Guard members are working in both Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands to help our fellow Americans recover from devastating hurricanes.

Hurricane Maria, with its Category 5 winds, was the fifth strongest storm to hit the U.S. and the strongest storm to hit Puerto Rico in 80 years. What it left behind was vast devastation and great damage to infrastructure and energy distribution systems.

Mr. Speaker, I am tremendously proud of our Pennsylvania Guardsmen who are on the ground assisting with this humanitarian disaster. They welcomed the call to action and are working to restore Puerto Rico’s infrastructure, install additional telecommunication equipment, distribute supplies to families and businesses, and deliver more than 300 generators to provide electricity to those who need it.

We are working on rebuilding, and the Pennsylvania National Guard is there to aid in the recovery effort. It is the American way to have all hands on deck, and I am grateful for their efforts.

**Domestic Violence Awareness**

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

Ms. GABBARD. Mr. Speaker, domestic violence often hides behind closed doors and drawn curtains, but the problem is very staggering.

In my home State of Hawaii, 575 domestic violence survivors reach out to local organizations seeking help every single day. Their stories are heart-breaking and, too often, even if they are temporarily removed from the abusive environment, they are often returned to their abuser.

Survivors need legal protection from their abusers, but they aren’t likely to do so or be successful unless they have a lawyer. Just 32 percent of victims successfully obtain a restraining order without legal representation.

I call on my colleagues to support the POWER Act, which requires every State’s U.S. attorney to promote and expand pro bono legal services specifically for domestic violence survivors.

We all know that we are more conscious of this problem because it is happening in our communities. As we observe Domestic Violence Awareness Month, let us have the courage to confront the pervasiveness of this crime and take action to help provide survivors with the safety and security they need.

**Media Ignores Donation to Anti-Cop Group**

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

Mr. SMITH. Mr. Speaker, you may have heard of Colin Kaepernick, the football quarterback who started “the kneel” to protest the national anthem at NFL games. He was the originator of the resistance movement in the NFL against police officers. But you likely haven’t heard that he donated money to a group that was named after a convicted cop killer.

Neither national broadcast stations nor major daily newspapers reported the donation to an organization honoring Assata Shakur, who escaped prison and fled to Cuba after being found guilty in the 1973 murder of police officer Werner Foerster. Assata is currently on the FBI’s Most Wanted Terrorists list.

Why did the liberal national media think this story was not newsworthy? Do they agree with Kaepernick? Do they approve of contributions to organizations named after cop killers?

The liberal national media seems to have a grudge against law enforcement and patriotism, as well as religion and traditional values, based on their lack of fair coverage of those subjects. This might explain why the media’s credibility is at a record low.

**Honoring Dr. Daniel J. Bradley on His Retirement**

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

Mr. BUCSHON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a true champion for higher education. Dr. Daniel J. Bradley, the 11th president of Indiana State University.

During his 9-year tenure at Indiana State, Dr. Bradley has led ISU to achieve the highest enrollment in its history, increase the student success by increasing the student retention rate and increasing the student graduation rate.
From his service to our country in the U.S. Army to his service to the students of Indiana State University, I urge my colleagues to join me in congratulating Dr. Bradley on his retirement at the end of this year.

CR 7928

CHALLENGE TO DEMOCRATS AND REPUBLICANS TO WORK TOGETHER TO PASS A DACA FIX

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

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, there are upwards of 800,000 DREAMers in our country—young, de facto Americans, people who grew up here, are as American as you or I, American in fact, albeit not in law. They are able to work legally under the deferred action, or DACA program, that President Obama has set up. That has been jeopardized by an announcement that President Trump will be terminating that program within 6 months.

Now we are down to about 4½ months, a challenge to this body, Democrats and Republicans, to work together to rectify the legal situation of 800,000 de facto Americans. This body must act. We can’t leave these young Americans in limbo with regard to what their future prospects are to work.

Make no bones about it, if this body fails to act, over 800,000 aspiring Americans will no longer be able to go to work legally the very next day after deferred action expires. In the interest of unifying families, in the interest of these young people who are as American as you or I, in the interest of our economic growth and prosperity, I call upon my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to stop playing politics and finally pass a DACA fix, like the Dream Act, into law to make sure that they can give back to the country that has given so much to them.

IMPACT OF RECENT HURRICANES

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

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, it was great to participate in this morning’s board of delegation meeting, during which we discussed the impact of recent hurricanes on our State and unmet needs to require further attention.

With the onslaught of natural disasters that have plagued our country in recent months, we must provide appropriate levels of Federal support to all who are suffering. However, we must also ensure that Florida’s ongoing needs are not overlooked as we seek to fully recover.

Our two largest industries, tourism and agriculture, have sustained significant losses, which will have a long-term impact on our economy, unfortunately. We also learned valuable lessons during the hurricane as it relates to the care for our most vulnerable citizens, our seniors and the disabled. These lessons need to translate to action in order to prevent future tragedies.

I look forward to working with my colleagues as we evaluate the proposed natural disaster funding bill that will be voted on later this week and determine its impact on Florida.

HONORING DAVE DAVIS

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

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a dear friend of mine, Dave Davis, who passed away recently. Dave was a giant Purdue fan, but we first met at a UCLA basketball game over 20 years ago.

We immediately struck up a friendship, and in 2000, when I announced I was running for Congress, Dave was all in and, despite the long odds, took vacation time to drive me all around Madison County. We didn’t win that race, but that is the kind of guy Dave Davis was. He put others first, sharing in your successes and your struggles as if they were his own.

Dave had a great smile and a rare quality: he cared for everyone for whom they could be, not just what they were.

Dave spent his career in public service for our State and our Nation, but his most important priority was his family. He never passed up an opportunity to talk about his wife, Robyn; or his kids, Alex, Amy, and Eric.

Dave Davis was a good man and my friend. Congratulations on a life well lived. Godspeed.

REFORMING THE TAX CODE

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

Mr. YODER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about our efforts here in the people’s House to reform our Tax Code and reduce the burden of the Federal Government on every American. Right now, Americans know that our Tax Code is unfair, it is too long, and it is too complicated.

It has been 30 years since we have made meaningful reforms, and the time for that change is now. House and Senate Republicans have announced reforms that will make the Tax Code simpler, with more than 90 percent of filers being able to do their returns on a simple postcard.

We have asked to make the Tax Code fair for middle class Americans, lowering their rates and doubling their standard deduction. We have asked to give relief to low-income Americans by eliminating the lowest 10 percent bracket completely and cutting the 15 percent bracket to 12. We have asked to crack down on tax avoidance by ending the dozens and dozens of loopholes that only the wealthiest taxpayers and corporations can take advantage of.

Mr. Speaker, we have a unique opportunity to do so much for hardworking families across America. I hope that my colleagues on the other side of the aisle will join us, offer solutions, and make this a bipartisan effort to give the American people the relief they deserve.

RISING ON BEHALF OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

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

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of the many who have concluded that enough is enough. I rise today to speak on behalf of those people who believe that Article II, section 4 of the Constitution of the United States of America has meaning and that it is something that is appropriate for a time such as this, appropriate for a time when there is a President who seems to incite hatred, bigotry, and invidious discrimination.

I rise to speak on their behalf today, Mr. Speaker, and I do so understanding that I am not doing it on behalf of Republicans, generally speaking, or Democrats, generally speaking. The people whom I reference are Americans, generally speaking.

So I rise to speak on their behalf.

NOTICE OF INTENTION TO OFFER RESOLUTION RAISING A QUESTION OF THE PRIVILEGES OF THE HOUSE

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 2(a)(1) of rule IX, I seek recognition to give notice of my intent to raise a question of the privileges of the House.

The form of the resolution is as follows:

Articles of Impeachment against Donald J. Trump, President of the United States of America, in Congress of the United States of America. Resolution.

Resolved, that Donald J. Trump, President of the United States of America, has undermined the integrity of his office with impunity and has brought disrepute on the Presidency with immunity, has betrayed his trust as President to the manifest injury of the American people and is unfit to be President, and is impeached pursuant to Article II, section IV of the Constitution of the United States of America, and that the following Articles of Impeachment be exhibited to the United States Senate:

Articles of Impeachment exhibited by the House of Representatives of the United States of America in the name of itself and of all of the people of the United States.
United States of America against Donald John Trump, President of the United States of America, in maintenance and support of its impeachment against him for high crimes and misdemeanors of a nature which may, with peculiarly political nature, he denominated as political, not requiring the commission of a crime, and exclusively the jurisdiction of the United States House of Representatives for impeachment purposes.

Article I: That Donald John Trump, President of the United States of America, unmindful of his high duties of his office and the dignity and proprieties thereof, and of the harmony, respect, and courtly manners which should exhibit and be maintained in American society, has under the inane pretext of dispensing with political correctness, produced a demonstrable record of inciting white supremacy, sexism, bigotry, and racism by demeaning, defaming, disrespecting, and disparaging women and certain minorities.

In so doing, Donald John Trump, President of the United States of America and is fueling an all-right hate machine and its worldwide covert sympathizers engendering racial antipathy, LGBTQ enmity, religious anxiety, stealthy sexism, and dreadful xenophobia, perniciously causing immediate injury to American society, to wit:

On September 23, 2017, Donald John Trump incited race-baiting and racism, engaging stealthy sexism and racial antipathy, when he demeaned and disparaged professional football players by calling them dogs as he made the widely published statement:

"Won't you love to see one of these NFL owners, when somebody disrespects our flag, say, Get that son-of-a-B-I-T-C-H off the field right now, out. He's fired. He's fired."

On September 23, 2017, Donald John Trump incited race-baiting and racism, engaging stealthy sexism and racial antipathy, when he demeaned and disparaged professional football players, approximately 70 percent of whom are reportedly African American, by calling them sons of dogs as he made the widely published statement:

"Won't you love to see one of these NFL owners, when somebody disrespects our flag, say, Get that son-of-a-B-I-T-C-H off the field right now, out. He's fired. He's fired."

On September 23, 2017, Donald John Trump incited race-baiting and racism, engaging racial antipathy, when he disrespected, disparaged, and demeaned Puerto Ricans, who are Americans, by implying Puerto Ricans want others to do for them what they won't do for themselves, as he made the widely published claim:

"They want everything to be done for them when it should be a community effort."

Further, on October 3, 2017, while in Puerto Rico, as was widely shown on American television, Donald John Trump incited bigotry, engaging racial antipathy, when he disparaged Puerto Ricans by stating:

"I hate to tell you, Puerto Rico, but you've thrown our budget a little out of whack because we spent a lot of money on Puerto Rico, and that's fine. But we've saved a lot of lives."

The President did not make similar widely published statements about Texas or Florida.

On January 27, 2017, Donald John Trump incited xenophobia and hate against Muslims in the United States of America, engaging religious anxiety, when he disrespected Islam by issuing Executive Order 13769, fulfilling a campaign promise to ban Muslims from entering the United States of America. This widely published campaign promise is dated December 7, 2015, and reads as follows:

Donald J. Trump Statement on Preventing Muslim Immigration, New York, New York, December 7, 2015. Donald J. Trump is calling for the total and complete shutdown of Muslims entering the United States until our country's representatives can figure out what is going on.

On March 4, 2017, Donald John Trump incited race-baiting and racism, engaging racial antipathy, when he defamed, disrespected, and disparaged President Barack Obama by making the widely published statement, which has since been disclaimed:

"Terrible. Just found out that Obama had my "wires tapped" in Trump Tower just before the victory. Nothing found. This is McCarthyism."

On July 26, 2017, Donald John Trump incited race-baiting and racism, engaging racial antipathy when he disparaged and disrespected transgender Americans by indicating that the costs of their medical care outweighs the sacrifice they are willing to make for our country as he made the widely published statement:

"After consultation with my generals and military experts, please be advised that the United States Government will not accept or allow transgender individuals to serve in any capacity in the military. Our military must be focused on decisive and overwhelming victory and cannot be burdened with the tremendous medical costs and disruption that transgender in the military would entail."

In so doing, the aforementioned Donald John Trump, unmindful of the high duties of his high office and the dignity and proprieties thereof, and of the harmony, respect, and courtly manners which ought to exist and be maintained within American society, has undermined the integrity of his office, has brought disrepute on the Presidency, and has betrayed his trust as President to the manifest injury of the people of the United States of America, and is unfit to be President.

Therefore, Donald John Trump, by betraying his trust as President, warrants impeachment, trial, and removal from office and the disqualification to hold any office of honor, trust, or profit under the United States of America.

Article II: That Donald John Trump, President of the United States of America, unmindful of the high duties of his high office and the dignity and proprieties thereof, and of the harmony and courtesies which ought to exist and be maintained within American society, did betray his trust as President and bring shame and dishonor to the office of the President by assaulting the majesty and dignity of the Presidency with causes rooted in White supremacy, bigotry, racism, anti-Semitism, White nationalism, and neo-Nazism when he, to wit:

On August 15, 2017, Donald John Trump made a widely published statement characterizing a group of anti-Semites, bigots, racists, White nationalists, and Klu Klux Klansmen who rallied in Charlottesville, Virginia, as "very fine people."

Thereafter, on August 23, 2017, the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination released a 2-page decision in which it was stated that they were "disturbed at the failure by the highest political level of the United States of America to unequivocally reject and condemn the racist violent events and demonstrations led by the aforementioned groups, thereby potentially fueling the proliferation of racist incidents throughout the State party, and deeply concerned by the example this failure could set for the rest of the world."

On October 7, 2017, hate groups were again back in Charlottesville, Virginia, at the stadium of Robert E. Lee, the Confederate general, chanting, "You will not replace us." Since this event on October 7, the President has made many widely published statements about many things including, but not limited to, the National Football League, but has not made one widely published statement condemning the hate groups for returning to the place where an innocent person lost her life at the hands of hate.

In so doing, the aforementioned Donald John Trump, unmindful of the high duties of his high office and the dignity and proprieties thereof, and of the harmony, respect, and courtly manners which ought to exist and be maintained within American society, has undermined the integrity of his office, has brought disrepute on the Presidency, and has betrayed his trust as President to the manifest injury of the people of the United States of America, and is unfit to be President.

Therefore, Donald John Trump, by betraying his trust as President, warrants impeachment, trial, and removal from office and the disqualification to hold any office of honor, trust, or profit under the United States of America.

Article III: Donald John Trump, President of the United States of America, unmindful of the high duties of his high office and the dignity and proprieties thereof, and of the harmony and courtesies which ought to exist and be maintained in American society, did engage in perfidy by making the widely reported claim that 3 to 5
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million people voted illegally in the 2016 Presidential election and, further,
expending tax dollars to establish a commission to investigate his claim, to wit:

On November 27, 2016, Donald John Trump made the widely reported claim that:

In addition to winning the electoral college in a landslide, I won the popular vote if you deduct the millions of people who voted illegally . . . in Virginia, New Hampshire, and California. So why isn’t the media reporting on this? Serious bias. Big problem.

On January 25, 2017, Donald John Trump made the widely reported claim that:

On July 1, 2017, Donald John Trump made the widely reported claim that:

Numerous States were refusing to give in-formations, distinguishing with voter fraud panel. What are they trying to hide?

On June 28, 2017, according to highly reported news stories, the commission previously referenced by Donald John Trump requested detailed voter reg- istration data from all 50 States, in- cluding home addresses, and other sensitive data from every voter in the country. Several States refused to send the information, and some States have been prevented by courts from turning over the information.

In so doing, the aforementioned Donald John Trump, unmindful of the high duties of his high office and the dignity and proprieties thereof, and of the harm and disrepute on the Presidency and has betrayed his trust as President to the manifest injury of the people of the United States of America, and is unfit to be President.

Therefore, Donald John Trump, by betraying his trust as President, war-rants impeachment, trial, and removal from office and disqualification to hold any office of honor, trust, or profit under the United States of America.

Article IV: Donald John Trump, President of the United States of America, unmindful of the high duties of his high office and the dignity and proprieties thereof, and of the harmony and courtesies which ought to exist and be maintained in American soci- ety, while aware of the widely reported history of unlawful abuses and bru-tality perpetrated by many, not all, police officers against innocent persons in the United States of America, did betray his trust as President, bringing shame and dishonor to the office of the Presidency by encouraging law enforce- ment officials to violate the constitutional rights of suspects in their custody and control, to wit:

On July 28, 2017, Donald John Trump, in a speech in front of the Suffolk County Police Department in Long Island, New York, stated that:

And when you see these towns and when you see these thugs being thrown into the back of a paddy wagon, you just see them

thrown in—rough. I said, “Please don’t be too nice.” Like when you guys put somebody in the car and you’re protecting their head, you know, the way you put their hand over? Like, don’t hit their head, and they’ve just killed somebody—don’t hit their head. I said, “You can take the hand away, okay?”

This statement is injurious not only to the rule of law, which presumes in- nocence until guilt is proven in a court of law, but also to the administration of justice, which requires that care is given to persons held in the custody of law enforcement. Our Nation is found- ed upon a social contract where the constitutional rights of the individual are not surrendered by virtue of their status or she is accused of a crime. To speak to the contrary is a violation of the Presi- dential oath of office to which Donald John Trump is bound.

In so doing, the aforementioned Donald John Trump, unmindful of the high duties of his high office and the dignity and the proprieties thereof, and of his oath of office, to “faithfully execute the Office of President of the United States of America, and will to the best of my ability, preserve, protect, and de-fend the Constitution of the United States,” has undermined the integrity of his office, has brought disrepute on the Presidency, has betrayed his trust as President to the manifest injury of the people of the United States of America, and is unfit to be President.

Therefore, Donald John Trump, by betraying his trust as President, war-rants impeachment, trial, and removal from office and disqualification to hold any office of high honor, trust, or profit under the United States of America.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FRANKS of Arizona). Under rule IX, a resolution offered from the floor by a Member other than the majority leader or the minority leader as a question of privilege have immediate precedence only at a time design- ated by the Chair within 2 legisla- tive days after the resolution is prop- erly noticed.

Pending that designation, the form of the resolution noticed by the gentle- man from Texas will appear in the RECORD at this point.

The Chair will not at this point de- termine whether the resolution con- stitutes a question of privilege. That determination will be made at the time designated for consideration of the res- olution.


Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 562 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. Res. 562

Resolved, That upon adoption of this reso- lution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (S. 585) to provide greater whistleblower protections for Federal em- ployees; increased awareness of Federal whistleblower protections; and increased ac- countability and required discipline for Fed- eral supervisors who retaliate against whis- tleblowers, and for other purposes.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to bring this rule for- ward on behalf of the Rules Committee.

Yesterday, the Rules Committee heard testimony from our colleagues, Congressmen PAUL MITCHELL, Over- sight and Government Reform Com- mittee Ranking Member ELIJAH CUM- MINGS, and Congressman ANN KUSTER.
Today we have a chance to make whistleblower protections in the Federal Government better and stronger. The Dr. Chris Kirkpatrick Whistleblower Protection Act provides for better training for Federal employees so that they understand Federal whistleblower protections. It also sets minimum disciplinary standards across all agencies for retaliation against whistleblowers while increasing protections for those who come forward with information necessary to maintain and increase accountability within our government.

The bill specifically requires the Department of Veterans Affairs to determine a plan to restrict unauthorized access to employees’ medical files, which—and it disturbs me to say this—has been used as a method of retaliation against whistleblowers. This legislation would make much-needed changes to ensure that those who come forward with information needed to maintain and increase accountability within our government do not suffer backlash as well.

Importantly, the bill also helps these individuals to know their rights and what protections are available to them. It is unfortunate that we need this legislation, but evidence has indicated that we do. The underlying legislation puts bullies who have made their nest in government agencies on notice that their behavior won’t stand. It defends brave whistleblowers and puts the bad actor Federal employees on notice: hostile work environments that target whistleblowers are on the bureau
cracy’s endangered species list.

The Dr. Chris Kirkpatrick Whistleblower Protection Act also builds on the work the current administration is doing to address retribution levied against whistleblowers at the Department of Veterans Affairs. Importantly, I have colleagues on both sides of the aisle who agree that we need to address this problem and that the time to do so is now.

On behalf of the whistleblowers who have risked their careers and safety to bring the truth to light, no one should fear losing their job or career or their life simply for following the rules.

The Dr. Chris Kirkpatrick Whistleblower Protection Act increases accountability by enacting mandatory punishments for any manager or superior at an agency who has been found to have retaliated against a whistleblower.

The bill also contains VA-specific reforms to better protect the privacy of medical records. Employee medical records would now be prohibited from being accessed in the case of potential retaliation cases, which adds an additional level of accountability for supervisors and protecting the whistleblower from attacks and threats based on their personal medical history, which would be completely inappropriate.

Mr. Speaker, while there are strong and necessary reforms in this bill, I want to make sure that you know that legislation can always be improved through the amendment process or at least through conducting a hearing and markup of a bill.

Sadly, but unsurprisingly in this Congress, this bill didn’t have a mark-up in committee; didn’t have a hearing; is considered under a closed rule, where amendments that were brought forward aren’t even allowed to be debated on the House floor.

This might be a surprise even to the chairman of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, who himself requested a structured rule that allowed for debate on amendments.

Much of my statement today echoes the sentiment of Oversight and Government Reform Ranking Member Cummings and his testimony yesterday evening in the Rules Committee. Though this bill isn’t perfect, it can be improved and strengthened by a few relatively straightforward amendments, which, unfortunately, were shut
down in the Rules Committee last night.

The first amendment, which was blocked today, would have addressed the bill's constitutional concerns first raised by the Office of Personnel Management, by requiring the mandatory disciplinary procedures to allow supervisors their constitutional rights to due process in responding to accusations of retaliation. It would have improved the bill and made it more likely to stand up in court to challenge.

An amendment confirming the right to due process would have been something at least worth voting on, and, in fact, could have preserved the constitutionality of the core elements of this bill, ensuring that it stays in place to protect whistleblowers.

Another amendment blocked under this rule would have addressed privacy concerns contained in the bill. Specifically, the amendment would have protected the privacy of a whistleblower who refuses to obey an order that they face discrimination, by requiring the permission of the whistleblower's next of kin before an agency can share information regarding the suicide.

Again, it seems like a straightforward fix to protect the privacy of whistleblowers and their families. At the very least, even if Members of this body disagreed with it, why didn't we at least bring it forward for debate and a vote?

Another amendment that was blocked today contained the text of Mr. CUMMINGS' bill, H.R. 702, which was passed by the House of Representatives unanimously. As you know, this bill would expand protections for employees who face discrimination, by requiring the permission of the whistleblower's next of kin before an agency can share information regarding the suicide.

Yet here we are debating a bill without even allowing an amendment process that we could have passed under suspension vote yesterday so we could move on to CHIP, to Puerto Rico, to DACA today, rather than spend one of our 30 remaining days of business this year avoiding the topics that the American people want us to take on.

Despite the important goals we have left to accomplish this year, it is misleading to assume that regular order doesn't move as fast as Congress can work when we are pushed right up to the edge. It is past time that we show that same urgency and commitment in considering legislation under regular order, even if it means we have to stay here on Thursdays and Fridays, even if it means we are working until 8 or 9 or 10 or midnight. The American people deserve no less.

Make no mistake, the Whistleblower Protection Act of 2017 is an important piece of legislation that protects whistleblowers and holds Federal agencies accountable, but if we are going to devote this much time to legislation that protects employees, let's take it a step further and talk about expanding worker protections for an even greater number of Americans.

For example, my legislation, the Giving Workers a Fair Shot Act—which I introduced last session and this session, and has yet to receive a hearing, no less—is a markup in the Education and Workforce Committee—would protect workers from wage theft, prevent tax-payer funds from going towards union busting, and establish first contract arbitration to prevent companies from dragging on labor negotiations unnecessarily to the detriment of workers.

We don't have time to waste. If we are going to consider an issue, let's dive in. We can protect whistleblowers from retaliation and strengthen the rights of workers at the same time. Given the minimal amount of time we have left to work with, 30 days this year, we have an obligation to do both.

By the way, the fact that we only work 30 more days this year here in the United States Congress probably comes as a great surprise to many hard-working Americans who are accustomed to working 5 days a week. We have the rest of the month of October, November, December. Well, many Americans might get Christmas Day off, perhaps even Christmas Eve, but I don't think Americans realize that Congress is only going to work 30 days out of the next 78. That is less than a half-time job, Mr. Speaker.

I think the American people deserve more from us in this body, especially when so many issues like CHIP, like Puerto Rico, and DACA and many others have gone unanswered by us in this body, the House of Representatives, or by colleagues across the way in the Senate.

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

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield as much time as she may require.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge my colleagues to support this rule and the underlying bill, S. 585, the Dr. Chris Kirkpatrick Whistleblower Protection Act of 2017.

This bill strengthens penalties against those who retaliate against whistleblowers, adds protections and opportunities for whistleblowers placed on probation, and ensures Federal employees have a greater knowledge of whistleblower rights and protections.

Specifically, this bill forbids a supervisor from taking or threatening to take action against an employee because they refuse to obey an order that would violate a law, rule, or regulation.

I want to thank Senator Roy Johnson for his persistence in pushing this legislation even after the former Senator Harry Reid shut it down last Congress.

What a poignant and meaningful gesture to name this bill after Dr. Chris Kirkpatrick, a VA employee who took his own life after being subjected to cruel retaliation from VA officials. I hope it puts in perspective the immense emotional burdens that victims of retaliation face.

Mr. Speaker, this issue is personal for me. Unfortunately, I have seen exactly what retaliation against whistleblowers looks like, how easy it is to get
away with it, and why we have to put a stop to it.

Last week marked the 3-year anniversary since the director of the central Alabama VA became the first senior manager in the country fired as a result of the wait-list scandal. That was a major step towards turning around one of the Nation’s worst VA systems and restoring trust with the veteran population it serves.

Mr. Speaker, I can say, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that it would have never happened without brave whistleblowers inside the VA telling me the truth.

Two brave individuals in particular, Sheila Meuse and Rich Tremaine, told me the truth about major instances of misconduct and mismanagement when no one else would. Seeing no other way to achieve change, they finally told their story to the media, at great personal risk to their careers.

The stories that emerged from those exposures were almost unbelievable:

- More than 1,000 X-ray cancer screenings were lost and unread for years, even though some showed malignancies. When alerted to the problem, top administrators tried to cover this up.
- A pulmonologist manipulated more than 1,200 patient records but, even after being caught twice, was still given a satisfactory review.
- A central Alabama VA employee took a recovering veteran to a crack house and bought him drugs and prostitution in order to extort his VA payments. Even when caught, this employee was not fired until a year and a half later when we exposed it in the newspaper.
- Mr. Speaker, this behavior is egregious, and, trust me, there is a lot more where it came from.

However, had it not been for the courage of those on the inside to expose wrongdoing, the world might not have ever known. To me and to the veterans whose lives they might have saved, they are heroes. But that is not how they were treated by VA officials. They were treated as enemies and outcasts, all because they tried to do the right thing.

Rich Tremaine actually testified here before the Veterans’ Affairs Committee, detailing the systemic way that some VA officials attempted to silence him. The effects of him blowing the whistle on wrongdoing follow him to this day, far away from Montgomery, Alabama.

Mr. Speaker, my experience working to clean house at the VA taught me a fascinating and frustrating truth about the culture in some parts of the VA. The system routinely goes out of its way to protect those who don’t do their jobs or even harm veterans, but then goes after those who try to stop that misbehavior.

For years, because of poorly written civil service laws and powerful unions, too many VA employees got the message that misconduct, negligence, and poor performance would be tolerated, but blowing the whistle on that kind of behavior would not be. I have seen it too many times. All too frequently, VA employees caught for doing the wrong thing are reprieved. A federal employee, who was fired for different jobs, or allowed to quietly retire, but those who try to do the right thing by our veterans by shining a light on misconduct are persecuted, intimidated, or worse.

While I am proud of the work that we have done for the last 3 years to put an end to this unacceptable culture at the VA, there is much work left to be done.

Mr. Speaker, there is a reason why Federal employees face retaliatory firing for speaking up. It is not because people are just naturally mean or because there is some kind of misunderstanding. The reason whistleblowers face systemic retaliation is because it works. When whistleblowers face intimidation or persecution for their action, every other employee sees it, and they know what will happen to them if they tell the truth. It has a powerful, chilling effect—one we saw firsthand in Montgomery.

They realize how it works. That is just wrong, and it is time to punish those who do it with harsher penalties. We need to rethink our civil service laws in this country to make sure public servants live up to the honor and responsibility of the public trust, and I believe that this bill is another positive step in that direction. Mr. Speaker, that is why I urge my colleagues to bring it to the floor by supporting this rule.

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

Mr. Speaker, President Trump has been relentless on his attack on immigrants. Americans, generally, and, in particular, DREAMers since he took office. Yet 82 percent of American voters, including about 70 percent of Republicans, believe DREAMers should be allowed to stay in the U.S. and apply for citizenship. Mr. Speaker, President Trump has continued to turn his back on these innocent young people.

Mr. Speaker, here is our chance to rectify President Trump’s decision and restore the American people’s faith in us and our faith in our aspiring Americans.

When we defeat the previous question, I will offer an amendment to the rule to bring up H.R. 3440, the Dream Act. This bipartisan, bicameral legislation would help thousands of young people who are de facto Americans in every way except for on paper.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert the text of my amendment in the RECORD, along with extraneous material prior to the vote on the previous question.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Colorado?

There was no objection.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, by defeating the previous question today, we can bring forward the Dream Act, which I am confident would pass on the floor of the House probably by a good margin.

What the Dream Act does is it allows young people who grew up in our country, who know no other country, a pathway to become Americans. If we have gone to our schools, they have been on the football team or cheerleaders like your own kids or grandkids, Mr. Speaker.

They are able to work legally in our country because of the deferred action program, which is scheduled by President Trump to be canceled in 4½ months. We need to act now to give these young people the certainty they need to live their lives as Americans, the only country they know, and the only country that they are loyal to.

We simply don’t have time to waste. We need to give these young de facto Americans the certainty they need to continue with their lives to be able to contribute to our country, join our military, pay taxes, and all of the other responsibilities that Americans have.

Of course, Mr. Speaker, protecting whistleblowers is important. It is critical to ensure that our democracy functions honestly and that the Federal government is truly working in the best interests of the people that it serves. But we could get there a better way, by having an open process that allows Democrats and Republicans to work further improve whistleblower protection rather than having a bill that was never marked up in committee, that simply appeared fully formed for the full House to consider without the opportunity for Democrats or Republicans to make it any better.

The Dr. Chris Kirkpatrick Whistleblower Protection Act will strengthen the rights of whistleblowers and reaffirm their value and importance to our country. But once again, this bill did not even go through a regular process that allowed us to amend it.

The fact that this bill passed the Senate with bipartisan support shouldn’t stop us from making changes in this body, the House of Representatives, to improve the bill and make it work even better. We have an obligation to our constituents to thoughtfully consider every piece of legislation in front of us and to amend where we see fit.

As we move forward on addressing the pressing issues in front of us, such as finding a path forward on deferred action, which we will present if we can defeat the previous question, reauthorizing CHIP, or making improvements in our healthcare system, let’s do it through a regular process that allows Democrats and Republicans, the 435 of us who serve here, to bring forward our ideas, not just the ideas of leadership in making the country a better place.

We have good, smart, deliberate Members on both sides of the aisle who want to work, want to legislate. It is ridiculous that we only have 30 days out of the next 78 in which Congress
will even be working, and I suspect for most of the 30 days, like today, Democrats and Republicans won’t even be able to offer their ideas and have them considered. The American people deserve better.

We as an institution, as the United States Congress, can do better, and we can begin by defeating the previous question and defeating the rule.

Mr. Speaker, that is why I urge my colleagues to oppose the rule, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman’s concern, especially for the piece of legislation that is before us. I think it is a step forward and things that we should be doing and things that are the oversight role of this Congress, especially when we are dealing with the issue of whistleblowers and the value that they bring and also the culture that seems to have pervaded.

I so appreciate the gentlewoman from Alabama and her stories. We, in Georgia, have had similar issues. We had that in the Augusta medical center. We had others.

I think the issue here today, though, and I want to be very clear, Mr. Speaker, many times when we come to the floor, there is this discussion and it gets circulated that we are actually against all Federal employees, or that every Federal employee is bad, and that none of the Federal employees are worth their payment or whatever. That is just not true. The work of the vast majority of the VA employees, the workers of the vast majority of the agencies, although we may have philosophical differences on how big some of our agencies should be or if they should be in the role of Federal Government, at the end of the day, the value and the worth of the Federal employee is never questioned by this Member.

But when we find bad actors, when we find bad policies, when we find bad procedures, when we find things that inherently are wrong and they are kept wrong, as the gentlewoman from Alabama so well pointed out, that when the culture becomes protecting the bad and punishing the good, then we have an issue that has developed far beyond the scope of what it should be.

These are some of the things that we are doing today, and I think it is worth the time on this floor, it is worth the time on the Senate floor, as they have already passed this bill, and I think the concerns raised are the discussion of which has been addressed in this.

I think what we look at today is today’s bill is a necessary step, but I believe toward integrity, Mr. Speaker. My colleagues and I owe it to our neighbors and to Federal employees who serve to increase whistleblower protection. We need a clear path for public servants to serve Americans with the knowledge that we will honor their good character and courage. They should not feel alone in their resolve to improve the VA or any other agency. Yet too often, we have seen the current law leave them at the mercy of bad actors. We must strengthen the existing statutes to address the litany of retaliations aimed at whistleblowers.

We must revisit how to best utilize agency officials from targetting whistleblowers for shining a light on dark flaws in their organization. Bad actors are even today evading discipline while whistleblowers who strive to do what is right too often face more punishment for their brave actions.

The whistleblowers are on the losing end of a system that often favors mischiefs, which means that the American public also suffers. This bill will bring relief to Federal truth tellers and the everyday Americans who depend on their services.

We best serve the American people by protecting whistleblowers, addressing their concerns properly, and investigating their claims with transparency.

I appreciate the gentleman from Georgia, Mr. Collins, and I think it is a necessary step, but I believe toward integrity, Mr. Speaker. My colleagues and I owe it to our neighbors and to Federal employees who serve to increase whistleblower protection. We need a clear path for public servants to serve Americans with the knowledge that we will honor their good character and courage. They should not feel alone in their resolve to improve the VA or any other agency. Yet too often, we have seen the current law leave them at the mercy of bad actors. We must strengthen the existing statutes to address the litany of retaliations aimed at whistleblowers.

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The Federal Government exists to protect its citizens by holding wrongdoers accountable. It is designed to support those who work to root out wrongs in the system. The underlying legislation brings us closer to a Federal system run by the people, for the people. It is not for the benefit of a few bad actors who exploit its structure. It delivers justice to both victims and bad actors, protects whistleblowers who act in good faith, and ensures that the American Government better serves the American people.

At the end of the day, Mr. Speaker, is that not what it is all about? At the end of the day, is it not what we as a Congress and as a House and as a Senate stand for? It should be about what the American people want. Not for the benefit of a few bad actors who exploit its structure. It delivers justice to both victims and bad actors, protects whistleblowers who act in good faith, and ensures that the American Government better serves the American people.

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ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on questions previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

Ordering the previous question on House Resolution 502, and Adoption of the resolution, if ordered.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. The second electronic vote will be conducted as a 5-minute vote.


The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on ordering the previous question on the resolution (H. Res. 562) providing for consideration of the bill (S. 585) to provide greater whistleblower protections for Federal employees, increased awareness of Federal whistleblower protections, and increased accountability and required discipline for Federal supervisors who retaliate against whistleblowers, and for other purposes; providing for proceedings during the period from October 16, 2017, through October 20, 2017; and providing for consideration of motions to suspend the rules, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 227, nays 190, not voting 16, as follows:

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Mr. POLIS. Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I demand a record vote. The Speaker pro tempore. This vote will be taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 234, noes 185, not voting 14, as follows: [Roll No. 561] AYES—234

Recorded vote:

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I demand a record vote.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote was ordered, or votes objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

The House will resume proceedings on postponed questions at a later time.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote was ordered, or votes objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

The House will resume proceedings on postponed questions at a later time.

NIST SMALL BUSINESS CYBERSECURITY ACT

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2105) to require the Director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology to disseminate guidance to help reduce small business cybersecurity risks, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill. The text of the bill is as follows:

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, 

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.
The Act may be cited as the “NIST Small Business Cybersecurity Act”.

SEC. 2. IMPROVING CYBERSECURITY OF SMALL BUSINESSES.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

(b) SMALL BUSINESS CONCERN.—The term “small business concern” has the meaning given such term in section 3 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 632).
Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to re-read this important bill. It is especially timely as October is National Cyber Security Awareness Month, so taking up this bill at this time is a perfect time. We must come together to protect all businesses—large, small, and medium—from the constant threat of cyber attacks.

America’s small businesses are the backbone of our economy, accounting for 54 percent of all American sales and 55 percent of American jobs. Unfortunately, small businesses are especially vulnerable, with some reports noting that 43 percent of cyber attacks specifically target them. These small businesses are more susceptible to attacks due to the limited access to the tools they need to prepare for such an event. Implementation of the NIST Framework into these small businesses will protect small business owners, their employees, and their customer base all while contributing positively to the economy.

H.R. 2105, the National Institute of Standards and Technology Small Business Cybersecurity Act, will help small businesses better address their cybersecurity risks to help them survive and thrive in the face of such adversity. As an owner of a multigenerational family air-conditioning and heating business, I understand firsthand the importance of equipping and empowering small businesses to tackle these challenges so that they can grow and prosper.

About 10 months ago, my sons called me and said that there was a message on the screen of one of our computers that said: “Your data has been frozen. You have been attacked.” It had a little clock on it that was ticking down. “If you don’t pay a ransom by a certain time, then we will destroy your data. It is inaccessible.”

Well, there was something we had done. Fortunately, the phone line was down every day, but we had done several days before—which protected us from that. We were able to fix our problem and wipe it clean and get started all over. But most small businesses may or may not—including ourselves—have done that just a few days before.

Thus, I introduced H.R. 2105 with the support and cosponsorship of many of my colleagues on the committee, including Chairman SMITH, Chairwoman CHRISTOFRICK, and Ranking Member LIPINSKI.

H.R. 2105 would provide small businesses in my district, State, and across the country with the tools they need to meet the threats and challenges of the modern world.

This bill describes the vital role played by small businesses in the U.S. economy, the devastating impact of cyber attacks on a majority of small businesses and large businesses and what they need to develop to specifically help themselves.

It directs the NIST Director—for a year of the act’s enactment—to disseminate clear and concise resources, which are defined as guidelines, tools, best practices, standards, methodologies, and other ways of providing this information.

Dissemination would be in consultation with heads of other Federal agencies. These resources—based on the NIST Framework for Improving Critical Infrastructure Cybersecurity—will help small businesses identify, assess, manage, and reduce their cybersecurity risks.

H.R. 2105 also clarifies that use of the resources by small businesses is voluntary, directs the NIST Director to clarify that use of the resources by small businesses is voluntary, directs the NIST Director and heads of Federal agencies that so elect to disseminate clear and concise resources, which are defined as guidelines, tools, best practices, standards, methodologies, and other ways of providing this information.

Dissemination would be in consultation with heads of other Federal agencies. These resources—based on the NIST Framework for Improving Critical Infrastructure Cybersecurity—will help small businesses identify, assess, manage, and reduce their cybersecurity risks.

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

Mr. WEBSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2105, the NIST Small Business Cybersecurity Act of 2017, a bipartisan effort to make the resources available on their government websites, and specify that no new funds are authorized to carry out this act.

This bill is very similar to S. 770, the MAIN STREET Cybersecurity Act, which is supported by the National Small Business Association, National Restaurant Association, U.S. Chamber of Commerce, and the InternationalTechneGroup. The Chamber and InternationalTechneGroup have also come out in support H.R. 2105.

On September 26, 2017, the Senate passed S. 770 by unanimous consent, and I ask my colleagues to similarly support H.R. 2105.

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

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.
The NIST cybersecurity framework provides valuable guidance on cybersecurity best practices for organizations of all sizes, but small businesses often don’t have the time or resources to figure out how to adapt it to their needs and implement it. This bill directs NIST to develop guidance, and best practices specifically for small businesses so that they can protect their networked resources.

Most small businesses do not have significant IT departments. Some do not even have dedicated information security personnel. Thus, they may be at more risk of cyber attack than larger enterprises.

According to data released last month, 53 percent of American businesses of all sizes suffered a cyber attack in the past year. Of those, 72 percent spent more than $5,000 to investigate and recover. A 2016 report found that 42 percent of businesses suffered a cyber attack of some kind.

In many cases, these attacks do not only hurt individual small-business owners, employees, and customers, they hurt American competitiveness.

In my district in the southwest suburbs of Chicago, there is a fourth-generation manufacturing business that has suffered multiple sophisticated phishing attacks. The few times they have fallen victim to these attacks, the costs have been significant. The owners have told me that they would welcome guidance on affordable, off-the-shelf resources to strengthen their cyber defenses and let them get back to focusing on their business.

This is a story repeated across the country. That is why we must act, and we must pass this bill for our small businesses. The guidelines created under this bill, like the NIST framework, will be voluntary, so we won’t be adding to the regulatory burden on small businesses. Instead, we will be offering opportunity to secure their networks so that they can compete on a level playing field.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DUNN).

Mr. DUNN. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in support of H.R. 2105, the National Institute of Standards and Technology Small Business Cybersecurity Act. This bipartisan legislation instructs the Director of NIST, in consultation with other Federal agencies, to disseminate guidance to help small businesses identify, assess, manage, and reduce their cybersecurity risks. As a small-business owner, I am honored to be a co-sponsor of this bill.

We know the importance of keeping all records safe and secure from outside threats. With the recent hacking of Equifax and many others, there is clearly a growing risk of online hacking and cyber warfare in the world today. It is imperative that we ensure that the backbone of our economy, our small- and medium-size businesses, have the resources they need to stay safe.

I strongly believe that the businesses in Florida’s Second District would benefit from this vital information, which will help them keep their data safe and secure. By issuing comprehensive, clear, and useful cybersecurity guidance, this bill will help reduce the risk and cost of cyber attacks against small businesses and their millions of customers across the country.

This bill does not cost the taxpayers anything, but it could potentially save small-business owners both their privacy and livelihoods.

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON), the ranking member of the Science, Space, and Technology Committee.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2105, the NIST Small Business Cybersecurity Act of 2017, which directs the National Institute of Standards and Technology to provide more guidance, resources, and tools to small businesses to improve their cybersecurity and protect the personal information of their customers.

According to the National Institute of Standards and Technology, the 28 million small businesses in America account for 54 percent of all U.S. sales and 55 percent of all U.S. jobs. Small businesses play a central role in our economy.

Unfortunately, the information systems and networks of small businesses are especially vulnerable to an increasing volume and sophistication of cyber attacks. Small businesses rarely have employees or leadership with education or training in cybersecurity. Further, small businesses typically have limited resources to invest in cybersecurity.

The National Institute of Standards and Technology, or NIST, is a leader in developing and using standards and technology to provide more guidance, resources, and tools to small businesses to improve their cybersecurity and protect the personal information of their customers.

In 2014, in response to an executive order from President Obama, NIST published the Cybersecurity Framework for Critical Infrastructure. The cybersecurity framework, as written, is most useful for larger businesses with at least some cybersecurity expertise. Therefore, in November 2016, NIST published an update of their small-business guidance document using the framework as a template.

The two examples of how NIST has long privatized supporting small-business efforts to strengthen cybersecurity. The requirements of H.R. 2105 are consistent with these ongoing efforts and help ensure that they will continue.

Ideally, H.R. 2105 would have also provided resources for NIST to expand these activities because the need is very clear. We cannot effectively support small business in this country unless we provide the relevant government agencies the resources to help protect those businesses from cyber threats.

Mr. Speaker, I support H.R. 2105, and I thank the sponsors, including Mr. WEBSTER, Mr. LIPINSKI, and Ms. ROSEN, for their strong support for small businesses and NIST’s important role in cybersecurity. However, I am concerned that the House bill contains an explicit statutory requirement that the Senate pass a version that is silent in funding. I hope Congress will provide NIST the adequate resources to fulfill the mandates in this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I urge passage of the bill.

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SMITH), chairman of the committee.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2105, the NIST Small Business Cybersecurity Act.

This important and timely bipartisan bill, cosponsored by 17 Members of Congress and approved by the Science Committee by voice vote, directs the National Institute of Standards and Technology to provide small businesses with cybersecurity guidelines, tools, best practices, standards, and methodologies necessary to better protect themselves from cyber attacks.

Small businesses help produce a thriving economy that benefits our entire country. They bring innovative ideas, cutting-edge products and services, and jobs to the marketplace. In my home State, for example, there are more than 2.4 million small businesses that employ almost 4.5 million Texans.

Major cyber attacks dominate news coverage, such as the Equifax or Yahoo hacks that impacted millions and billions of people. But small businesses, which often do not have sufficient information to adequately monitor and protect their computer systems, are frequently the target of cyber attacks, as well.

A 2016 Symantec report notes that cyber attacks against businesses with fewer than 250 employees have grown from 18 percent in 2011 to 43 percent in 2015. This bill can help those businesses.

October is National Cybersecurity Awareness Month, so it is appropriate that we consider a bill designed to help protect small businesses from cybersecurity attacks. Today’s legislation provides small businesses with NIST expertise to reduce their cybersecurity risk.

NIST experts developed a cybersecurity framework through collaboration between the government and the private sector. This framework is accepted and used by many private organizations to address and manage their information technology vulnerabilities in a cost-effective way.
The guidance described in this bill to help small businesses is based on the NIST cybersecurity framework. H.R. 2105 prioritizes dissemination of this guidance by NIST within its almost $1 billion budget.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to show their support for small business by approving Mr. WEBSTER’s fiscally responsible, innovation protection bill today.

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Virginia (Mrs. COMSTOCK), the chairwoman of the subcommittee.

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2105. When I travel around my district, which is rich with technology workers, the thing that I hear repeated concern about is the increasing need for individuals with the skill set, education, training, and knowledge of cybersecurity matters.

With the recent events with Equifax, WannaCry, and OPM breaches, it is clear that our cybersecurity infrastructure needs to be strengthened.

In December 2016, the Commission on Enhancing National Cybersecurity specifically recommended that the administration should “develop concrete efforts to support and strengthen the cybersecurity of small- and medium-sized businesses.” With small businesses accounting for most of the U.S. economy’s jobs and sales, it is imperative that we provide guidance to help them identify, assess, manage, and reduce their cybersecurity risks. By making these resources readily available to small businesses across the country, this commonsense legislation will help them protect their sensitive data and business from cyber threats so they can grow our economy and provide more jobs instead. I am an original cosponsor of this measure, the NIST Small Business Cybersecurity Act, and I urge my colleagues to vote “yes” on its passage.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues from Florida (Mr. WEBSTER) for his leadership on this legislation.

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

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BACON).

Mr. BACON. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the National Institute of Standards and Technology Small Business Cybersecurity Act, a bill that I am proud to cosponsor. This legislation will help promote stronger cybersecurity practices amongst our Nation’s small businesses, and it is fiscally responsible.

The well-being of our small businesses is important to the overall health of our economy. According to the Small Business Administration, small businesses account for 55 percent of total jobs in the United States. In my home State of Nebraska, small businesses employed 390,000 people in 2016. Some small businesses are not able to prioritize cybersecurity efforts over other aspects of their business or they lack the resources to secure their networks and systems. We must promote greater preparedness to protect small businesses from cyber attacks.

H.R. 2105 directs NIST to disseminate guidance to help small businesses identify, assess, manage, and reduce their cyber risks based off NIST’s extensive expertise. This is a big step towards promoting better cybersecurity practices amongst our Nation’s small businesses.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 2105.

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

Mr. Speaker, we all have come down here and talked about the importance of small business. We know how important small businesses are to our country, the real engine of our economic growth.

We also know that, in most small businesses today, they don’t have the capabilities to have an IT department or the expertise that they need to protect themselves from the continual cyber attacks, the theft of data that we hear about. But those attacks and that theft of data does not only happen for large companies; it is a threat to small businesses. Therefore, we need to do all that we can to make sure that they are capable of protecting themselves so that our small businesses can continue to thrive and be the economic engine that they are. I urge my colleagues to support this bill. We get something good done for our small businesses. I urge them to support this, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I thank those from both sides—Ranking Member LIPINSKI, Chairman SMITH, and others—who have supported this bill. It is a great idea. It is an opportunity to not only have available for us, it has bipartisan support and also bicameral support. This is a good opportunity to help all small businesses.

I know personally from my business and I know others who have small businesses who know that there is, in a sense, very little help right now for small businesses in this area of cybersecurity. The larger businesses certainly have their own IT people; we don’t. So I am excited about the fact that this could happen, and I move passage.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BARTON). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. WEBSTER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2105, as amended.

The question was taken: and two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

THE SMALL BUSINESS INNOVATION RESEARCH AND SMALL BUSINESS TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER IMPROVEMENTS ACT OF 2017

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2763) to amend the Small Business Act to improve the Small Business Innovation Research program and Small Business Technology Transfer program, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill. The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2763
Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled.

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as “The Small Business Innovation Research and Small Business Technology Transfer Improvements Act of 2017”.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

1. Short title, table of contents.
Sec. 2. Requiring insertion incentives.
Sec. 3. Additional SBIR and STTR technology insertion reporting requirements.
Sec. 4. Encouraging innovation in United States manufacturing.
Sec. 5. Encouraging innovation in cybersecurity.
Sec. 6. Compliance of Phase III awards with competitive procedures.
SEC. 2. REQUIRING INSERTION INCENTIVES.

Section 9(y)(5) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 638(y)(5)) is amended by striking "(tt) ENCOURAGING INNOVATION IN UNITED STATES MANUFACTURING.

SEC. 3. ADDITIONAL SBIR AND STTR TECHNOLOGY INSERTION REPORTING REQUIREMENT.

Section 9(e) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 638(e)) is amended—

(i) in the subsection heading, by inserting "and STTR" after "SBIR";

(ii) by striking "and STTR" after "the vendor".

SEC. 4. ENCOURAGING INNOVATION IN UNITED STATES MANUFACTURING.

Section 9 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 638) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

"(uu) ENCOURAGING INNOVATION IN UNITED STATES MANUFACTURING.—In carrying out this section, the Administrator shall—

(1) ensure that, in selecting small business concerns to participate in SBIR or STTR programs under this section, Federal agencies give high priority to small manufacturing companies and other small businesses or entities engaged in or planning to engage in manufacturing research and development for the purpose of developing and producing new products and technologies in the United States;

(2) include in the annual report to Congress under subsection (b)(7) a determination of whether the priority described in paragraph (1) is being carried out;".

SEC. 5. ENCOURAGING INNOVATION IN CYBERSECURITY.

Section 9 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 638), as amended by section 4, is further amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

"(uuu) ENCOURAGING INNOVATION IN CYBERSECURITY.—In carrying out this section, the Administrator shall—

(1) ensure that, in selecting small business concerns to participate in SBIR or STTR programs under this section, Federal agencies engaged in cybersecurity research give high priority to small business concerns that are engaged in cybersecurity research and development for the purpose of developing and implementing technology services and products to strengthen the security of United States Government and private computer systems, including software, hardware, and portable devices; and

(2) include in the annual report to Congress under subsection (b)(7) a determination of whether the priority described in paragraph (1) is being carried out;".

SEC. 6. COMPLIANCE OF PHASE III AWARDS WITH SBIR AMENDMENTS.

Section 9(r)(4) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 638(r)(4)) is amended by inserting "as direct follow-on awards issued without further competition" after "developed the technology"

SEC. 7. IMPROVEMENTS TO TECHNICAL AND BUSINESS ASSISTANCE IN THE SBIR AND STTR PROGRAMS.

Section 9(q) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 638(q)) is amended—

(1) in the subsection heading, by inserting "and BUSINESS" after "TECHNICAL";

(2) in paragraph (1)—

(A) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A)—

(i) by striking "a vendor selected under paragraph (2)" and inserting "1 or more vendors selected under paragraph (2) (A)";

(ii) by inserting "and business" before "assistance services"; and

(iii) by inserting "with product sales, intellectual property protections, market research, market validation, and development of regulatory plans and manufacturing plans," after "technologies,"; and

(B) in subparagraph (B), by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

"(D) not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of this paragraph, the Administrator shall—

(i) ensure that, in selecting small business concerns to participate in Phase III programs under this section, Federal agencies give high priority to small business concerns that have received multiple Phase II SBIR or STTR awards for a fiscal year;".

SEC. 8. PROCUREMENT CENTER REPRESENTATIVES AND OTHER ACQUISITION PERSONNEL IN THE SBIR AND STTR PROGRAMS.

(a) DEFINITION OF PROCUREMENT EXECUTIVE.—Section 9(e) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 638(e)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (12)(B), by striking "and" at the end;

(2) in paragraph (13)(B), by striking the period at the end and inserting "and"; and

(3) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

"(14) the term ‘senior procurement executive’ means an official designated under section 15(k) for the agency letting the contract, to coordinate with the appropriate Director of the Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization established pursuant to section 15(k) for the agency letting the contract, to assist small business concerns participating in the SBIR or STTR program with any research developed under such a program before such small business concern is awarded a contract from such Federal agency;".

(b) TECHNICAL AMENDMENT.—Section 9(b)(3) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 638(b)(3)) is amended by striking "and at the end.

(c) MODIFICATIONS RELATING TO PROCUREMENT CENTER REPRESENTATIVES AND OTHER ACQUISITION PERSONNEL.—

(1) SBIR AMENDMENT.—Section 9(j) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 638(j)) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

"(4) MODIFICATIONS RELATING TO PROCUREMENT CENTER REPRESENTATIVES.—In carrying out this section, the Administrator shall modify the policy directives issued pursuant to this subsection to require procurement center representatives (as described in section 15(i)) to coordinate with the appropriate contracting officer or SBIR program officer, and the appropriate Director of the Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization established pursuant to section 15(k) for the agency letting the contract, to assist small business concerns participating in the SBIR or STTR program, particularly in Phase III. The procurement center representatives shall coordinate with the appropriate contracting officer and the appropriate Director of the Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization established pursuant to section 15(k) for the agency letting the contract.

(2) STTR AMENDMENT.—Section 9(p)(2) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 638(p)(2)) is amended—

(A) in paragraph (8), by striking "and" at the end;

(B) in paragraph (9), by striking the period at the end and inserting "and";

(C) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

"(2) to coordinate, where appropriate, with the appropriate contracting officer or SBIR program officer, and the appropriate Director of the Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization established pursuant to section 15(k) for the agency letting the contract, to assist small business concerns participating in the SBIR or STTR program, particularly in Phase III. The procurement center representatives shall coordinate with the appropriate contracting officer and the appropriate Director of the Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization established pursuant to section 15(k) for the agency letting the contract.".

"(2) TECHNICAL AMENDMENT.—Section 9(d)(3) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 638(d)(3)) is amended by striking "and at the end.

"(3) TECHNICAL AMENDMENT.—Section 9(d)(3) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 638(d)(3)) is amended by striking "and at the end;

(ii) in clause (i), by striking "the vendor" and inserting "1 or more vendors"; and

(iii) in clause (ii), by striking "the vendor" and inserting "1 or more vendors"; and

(F) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

"(H) MULTIPLE AWARD RECIPIENTS.—The Administrator shall establish a multiple award program that awards multiple Phase II SBIR or STTR awards for a fiscal year;".
“(G) procedures to ensure that procurement center representatives (as described in section 15(l)(1))—

(i) coordinate with the appropriate contracting officer of the SBIR or STTR program, and the appropriate Director of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization established pursuant to section 15(k) for the agency letting the contract for small business concerns participating in the SBIR or STTR program, particularly in Phase III; and

(ii) coordinate with the appropriate contracting officer and the appropriate Director of the Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization established pursuant to section 15(k) for the Federal agency letting the contract, including coordination with procurements described in clause (i); and

(c) AMENDMENT TO DUTIES OF PROCUREMENT CENTER REPRESENTATIVES.—Section 15(l)(2) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 644(l)(2)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (I), by striking “and” and inserting “or” and “the appropriate Director of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization established pursuant to section 15(k) for the agency letting the contract, to assist small business concerns participating in a SBIR or STTR program under section 9 with Phase III; and

(2) in paragraph (2) (as so designated), by striking “or” and inserting “and”; and

(3) in subparagraph (H), by striking “the agency letting the contract” and inserting “the agency allowing the contract, including coordination with procurement center representatives and the appropriate Director of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization for Federal Agencies.”—Section 15(k) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 644(k)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (19), by striking ''and'' at the end; and

(2) in paragraph (20), by striking the period at the end; and

(d) AMENDMENT TO DUTY OF ADMINISTRATOR.—Section 15(j) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 644(j)) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(J) coordinate with the appropriate contracting officer, the Director of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization established pursuant to section 15(k) for the agency letting the contract, to assist small business concerns participating in a SBIR or STTR program under section 9 with Phase III; and

(K) coordinate with the appropriate contracting officer and the appropriate Director of the Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization established pursuant to section 15(k) for the agency letting the contract, and”—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking “shall” and inserting “may not exceed”;

(2) in paragraph (2), by striking “the purpose of making a subsequent Phase II SBIR award” and inserting “a Civilian Agency Commercialization Readiness Program’’; and

(3) by inserting at the end following new subparagraph:

“(2) COMMERCIALIZATION ASSISTANCE PILOT PROGRAMS.—

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 9 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 638), as amended by section 10, is further amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(b) FUNDING FOR OUTREACH.—Section 9(mm)(1) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 638(mm)(1)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking the ‘‘and’’ at the end; and

(2) in paragraph (2), by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon; and

(3) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(k) the outreach efforts described under subsections (j)(4) and (p)(2)(G); and

(c) ANNUAL MEETING.—Section 10 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 644(l)(2)) is amended—

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 9 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 638), as amended by section 5, is further amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(v) ANNUAL MEETING.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The head of each Federal agency required to have a program under this section (or a designee) shall meet annually to discuss—

(A) to improve the collection of data under this section;

(B) to improve the reporting of data to the Administrator under this section;

(C) to make the application processes for programs under this section more efficient; and

(D) to increase participation in the programs established under this section.

(2) REPORT.—Not later than 60 days after the date on which an annual meeting required under paragraph (1) is held, the Administrator shall submit to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship of the Senate and the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship of the House of Representatives, a report on the findings of such meeting and recommendations on how to implement changes to programs under this section.

(b) FUNDING FOR ANNUAL MEETING.—

Section 9(mm)(1) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 638(mm)(1)) as amended by section 9, is further amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

(L) the annual meeting required under subsection (v) shall be disbursed during Phase II.”.

(b) FUNDING FOR ANNUAL MEETING.—Section 9(mm)(1) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 638(mm)(1)) as amended by section 9, is further amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

(n) the annual meeting required under subsection (v) shall be disbursed during Phase II.”.

SEC. 11. ESTABLISHING THE CIVILIAN AGENCY COMMERCIALIZATION READINESS PROGRAM.

Section 9(gg) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 638(gg)) is amended—

(1) in the subsection heading to read as follows—

“CIVILIAN AGENCY COMMERCIALIZATION READINESS PROGRAM’’;

(2) in paragraph (1), by inserting “shall establish and maintain” after “the” and “shall” after “the”;

(3) in paragraph (2)(A)—

(A) by striking “a pilot program” and inserting “a Civilian Agency Commercialization Readiness Program”;

(4) in paragraphs (3) and (4), by striking “a pilot program” each place such term appears and inserting “a Civilian Agency Commercialization Readiness Program’’.

(c) INCREASED OUTREACH REQUIREMENTS.—

SEC. 12. COMMERCIALIZATION ASSISTANCE PILOT PROGRAMS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 9 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 638), as amended by section 10, is further amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(ww) COMMERCIALIZATION ASSISTANCE PILOT PROGRAMS.—

(1) PILOT PROGRAMS IMPLEMENTED.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), not later than one year after the date of enactment of this subsection, a covered agency shall implement a commercialization assistance pilot program, under which an eligible entity may receive a subsequent Phase II SBIR award.

(B) EXCEPTION.—If the Administrator determines that a covered agency has a program that is sufficiently similar to the commercialization assistance pilot program established under this subsection, such covered agency shall not be required to implement a commercialization assistance pilot program under this subsection.

(C) EXCEPT OF AGENCY FUNDS.—The head of each covered agency may allocate not more than 5 percent of the funds allocated to the SBIR program of the covered agency for the purpose of making a subsequent Phase II SBIR award under the commercialization assistance pilot program.

(2) TERMINATION.—A commercialization assistance pilot program established under this subsection shall terminate on September 30, 2022.

(3) MATCHING FUNDING.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall require, as a condition of any subsequent Phase II SBIR award made to an eligible entity under this subsection, that a matching amount (excluding any fees collected by the eligible entity receiving such award) equal to the amount of such award be provided from an eligible third-party investor.

(B) INELIGIBLE SOURCES.—An eligible entity may not use funding from ineligible sources to meet the matching requirement of subparagraph (A).

(4) APPLICATION.—To be selected to receive a subsequent Phase II SBIR award under a commercialization assistance pilot program, an eligible entity shall submit to the covered agency a completed SBIR program application at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the covered agency may require, including—

(A) an updated Phase II commercialization plan; and

(B) the source and amount of the matching funding required under paragraph (5).

(5) MATCHING FUNDING.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall require that a matching amount (excluding any fees collected by the eligible entity receiving such award) equal to the amount of such award be provided from an eligible third-party investor.

(B) INELIGIBLE SOURCES.—An eligible entity may not use funding from ineligible sources to meet the matching requirement of subparagraph (A).

(6) AWARD.—A subsequent Phase II SBIR award made to an eligible entity under this subsection—

(A) may not exceed the limitation described under subsection (aa)(1); and

(B) shall be disbursed during Phase II.

(7) USE OF FUNDS.—The funds awarded to an eligible entity under this subsection may only be used for research and development activities that build on eligible entity’s technological innovation, and the research funded under such Phase II is rapidly progressing towards commercialization.
“(8) SELECTION.—In selecting eligible entities to participate in a commercialization assistance pilot program under this subsection, the head of a covered agency shall consider—

(A) the extent to which such award could aid the eligible entity in commercializing the research funded under the eligible entity’s Phase I SBIR award; and

(B) the likelihood that the proposed activity to be conducted under such Phase II commercialization plan will lead to commercialization of such research;

(C) whether the proposed activities to be conducted under such updated Phase II commercialization plan are necessary to improve the likelihood that such research will provide societal benefits;

(D) whether the small business concern has progressed satisfactorily in Phase II to justify receipt of a subsequent Phase II SBIR award; and

(E) the expectations of the eligible third-party investor that provides matching funding under paragraph (5); and

(9) EVALUATION REPORT.—Not later than 3 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the Committees on Science, Space, and Technology and the Committee on Small Business of the House of Representatives, and the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship of the Senate, a report including—

(A) a summary of the activities of commercialization assistance pilot programs carried out under this subsection;

(B) a detailed compilation of results achieved by such commercialization assistance pilot programs, including the number of eligible entities that received awards under such programs;

(C) the rate at which each eligible entity that received a subsequent Phase II SBIR award under this subsection commercialized the research of the recipient;

(D) the growth in employment and revenue attributable to the small business concern that received funds under such program; and

(E) a comparison of commercialization successes and failures participating in a commercialization assistance pilot program with recipients of an additional Phase II SBIR award under subsection (f);

(F) demographic information, such as ethnicity and geographic location, of eligible entities participating in a commercialization assistance pilot program;

(G) the number of the funds used at each covered agency that implements a commercialization assistance pilot program under this subsection;

(H) an analysis of the matching funding provided by eligible third-party investors, set forth separately by source of funding;

(I) an analysis of the effectiveness of the commercialization assistance pilot program implemented by each covered agency; and

(J) recommendations for improvements to the commercialization assistance pilot program.

(10) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this subsection:

(A) COVERED AGENCY.—The term ‘covered agency’ means a Federal agency required to have an SBIR program.

(B) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term ‘eligible entity’ means a small business concern that has received a Phase II award under an SBIR program and an additional Phase II SBIR award under subsection (f) from the covered agency to which such small business concern is applying for a subsequent Phase II SBIR award.

(C) ELIGIBLE THIRD-PARTY INVESTOR.—The term ‘eligible third-party investor’ means a small business concern other than an eligible entity, a venture capital firm, an individual investor, a nonprofit or State or local government, or any combination thereof.

(D) INELIGIBLE SOURCES.—The term ‘ineligible sources’ includes—

(i) the eligible entity’s internal research and development funds;

(ii) funding in forms other than cash, such as in-kind or other intangible assets;

(iii) funding from the owners of the eligible entity, or the family members or affiliates of such owners;

(iv) funding attained through loans or other forms of debt obligations.

(E) SUBSEQUENT PHASE II SBIR AWARD.—The term ‘subsequent Phase II SBIR award’ means an award granted to an eligible entity under this subsection to carry out further commercialization activities for research conducted pursuant to an SBIR program.

SEC. 13. PHASE 0 PROOF OF CONCEPT PARTNERSHIP PILOT PROGRAM.

(a) INCLUSION OF AGENCIES IN PILOT PROGRAM.—Section 9(jj) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 638(jj)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking ‘‘(A)’’ and inserting—

(A) a summary of the activities of commercialization assistance pilot programs carried out under this subsection;

(B) a detailed compilation of results achieved by such commercialization assistance pilot programs, including the number of eligible entities that received awards under such programs;

(C) the rate at which each eligible entity that received a subsequent Phase II SBIR award under this subsection commercialized the research of the recipient;

(D) the growth in employment and revenue attributable to the small business concern that received funds under such program; and

(E) a comparison of commercialization successes and failures participating in a commercialization assistance pilot program with recipients of an additional Phase II SBIR award under subsection (f);

(F) demographic information, such as ethnicity and geographic location, of eligible entities participating in a commercialization assistance pilot program;

(G) the number of the funds used at each covered agency that implements a commercialization assistance pilot program under this subsection;

(H) an analysis of the matching funding provided by eligible third-party investors, set forth separately by source of funding;

(I) an analysis of the effectiveness of the commercialization assistance pilot program implemented by each covered agency; and

(J) recommendations for improvements to the commercialization assistance pilot program.

(b) EXTENSION OF PILOT PROGRAM AUTHORITY.—Section 9(3)(7) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 638(3)(7)) is amended by striking ‘‘fiscal year 2017’’ and inserting ‘‘fiscal year 2022’’.

SEC. 14. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.

(a) ANNUAL REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Section 9(b)(7) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 638(b)(7)) is amended by striking—

(1) ‘‘make an annual report’’ and inserting ‘‘to report not less than annually’’ and inserting ‘‘to submit a report not later than December 31 of each year’’;

(b) ANNUAL REPORT TO SBA AND THE OFFICE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY POLICY.—Section 9(g)(9) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 638(g)(9)) is amended by striking—

(1) ‘‘make an annual report’’ and inserting ‘‘not later than March 30 of each year, submit a report’’; and

(2) by striking ‘‘Office of Science and Technology Policy’’ and inserting ‘‘the Office of Science and Technology Policy, the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the Committee on Small Business of the House of Representatives, and the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship of the Senate’’.

SEC. 15. SBIR AND STTR ELIGIBILITY.

Section 9(cc) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 638(cc)) is amended by striking ‘‘During fiscal years’’ and all that follows through ‘‘shall provide’’ and inserting ‘‘During fiscal years 2018 through 2022, all agencies participating in the SBIR program may provide’’.

SEC. 16. EXTENSION OF DEADLINE FOR ASSISTANCE FOR ADMINISTRATIVE, OVERSIGHT, AND CONTRACT PROCESSING COSTS.

Section 9(mm)(1) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 638(mm)(1)), as amended by this Act, is further amended by striking ‘‘September 30, 2017’’ and inserting ‘‘September 30, 2022’’.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. CHABOT) and the gentleman from Florida (Mrs. MURPHY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Ohio.

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, this bipartisan legislation introduced by Chairman KNIGHT and Ranking Member MURPHY of the Committee on Small Business Subcommittee on Contracting and Workforce aims to modernize and improve small business innovation research and Small Business Technology Transfer, or SBIR and STTR, programs.

The SBIR and STTR programs have helped thousands of small businesses create new technologies, commercialize their ideas, and generate new jobs. While creating these benefits in the private sector, the programs offer, in a cost-effective manner, ways for Federal agencies to solve operational problems. H.R. 2703 strengthens these two programs in quite a few ways.

First, the bill emphasizes agency accountability by creating several firm reporting deadlines for covered agencies and for the SBA to provide future Congresses with improved information that will lead to a better understanding of the programs’ strengths and weaknesses.

Second, the legislation clarifies the congressional intent of the 2011 reauthorization to ensure taxpayers reap the benefits of the SBIR and STTR programs by binding the technologies developed in the programs to long-term projects at the Department of Defense.

Third, the legislation extends a popular pilot program included in the 2011 reauthorization that would allow all participating Federal agencies to award a phase II contract immediately if the agency finds that the small business concern has completed work typically done during phase I.

Fourth, it makes permanent the option for all participating agencies to
establish commercialization readiness programs, or CRPs. As a pilot program from the 2011 reauthorization, these CRPs have been shown to provide much-needed support to small companies nearing the completion of the process and have helped address technological vulnerabilities throughout the commercialization phases.

Fifth, it extends, through 2022, the provision that allows participating agencies to utilize 3 percent of their allocation for administrative functions, conduct outreach in an effort to bring more companies into the SBIR and STTR programs, and increase deterrents to waste, fraud, and abuse.

I want to thank Congressman Knight and Congresswoman Murphy for the bipartisan work on this important legislation. I would also like to thank Chairwoman Comstock and Ranking Member Johnson of the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, as well as Chairwoman Comstock and Ranking Member Lipinski of the Subcommittee on Research and Technology, for working together with us to produce this bipartisan bill that we have before us this afternoon.

I urge my colleagues to support the bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. Murphy of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2763, the Small Business Innovation and Research in the Small Business Technology Transfer Improvements Act, which will modernize two programs that provide Federal funding to small technologically advanced firms to research and develop innovative products.

I am proud to have cosponsored this legislation with Congressman Steve Knight, and I am encouraged that my colleagues on the Small Business Committee and the House Science, Space, and Technology Committee on both sides of the aisle support the bill.

For decades, American innovation and ingenuity have bolstered our economic growth and solidified our country's status as a global leader in technology; and for more than 30 years, the Small Business Innovation Research and Small Business Technology Transfer programs have provided a critical source of funding to small businesses that engage in research and development activities that help spur innovation and job creation throughout the country.

Since the inception of the programs, more than $80 billion has been awarded to small, innovative firms to address our Nation's most important research and development challenges. Because of the high-risk nature of their ventures, SBIR and STTR grantees receive R&D funding that might otherwise be unavailable in the private sector.

As a direct result of the Federal investment in these programs, breakthroughs have been made in a wide range of sectors, including agriculture, defense, energy, and healthcare. In turn, these discoveries have generated tremendous economic growth and job opportunities across the country, including in central Florida.

For many research companies in my district, these two programs serve as a gateway to the Federal contracting field. That is why I am honored to have cosponsored this bipartisan legislation.

The final bill reflects bipartisan compromises and input from both committees of jurisdiction. Most importantly, it includes many provisions focused on developing innovative products that support important national priorities and that can be sold on the commercial market.

To improve oversight of the program, the bill requires the Small Business Administration to submit an annual report to Congress no later than December 31 of each year. This will enable us to better account for the use of funds in the program for the SBIR and STTR initiatives at participating agencies.

Another provision makes permanent the pilot program that establishes the Civilian Agency Commercialization Readiness program, which allows up to 10 percent of agency administrative dollars for sequential phase II awards to eligible businesses.

Finally, the bill includes an amendment that I authored to require participating Federal agencies to take additional steps to educate small firms about the SBIR and STTR programs and to encourage more small firms to apply for funding.

After more than a decade of fits and starts with these two programs, H.R. 2763 will make program improvements and provide much-needed certainty to small businesses seeking to commercialize. By authorizing the administration to fund the programs for an additional 5 years beyond its current authorization, Congress is taking proactive steps to give small firms the confidence they need to continue developing innovative products.

I respectfully ask my colleagues to vote for this bill.

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

Mr. Chabot. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. Knight), who is the chairman of the Subcommittee on Contracting and Workforce on the Small Business Committee.

Mr. Knight. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the chairman for his hard work and for his leadership, and I want to thank my partner in this, Congresswoman Murphy, for her cosponsoring of this bill and for her work on this important legislation.

A 21st century military requires a 21st century acquisition process, one that is agile, efficient, and effective. I represent California's 25th District, and nowhere will you find a more exemplary place that demonstrates the important role that small businesses play in both our aerospace and defense industrial base.

I see firsthand the innovative effect small businesses make and how they can positively impact government functioning.

The Small Business Innovation Research and Small Business Technology Transfer—SBIR and STTR—programs are critical to this impact. Not only have these programs been reauthorized until 2022, it is important that we continue to focus on spurring innovation.

That is why I introduced H.R. 2763, the Small Business Innovation Research and Small Business Technology Transfer Improvements Act of 2017. My bill reinforces agency accountability by requiring the Small Business Administration to provide Congress with better information and reasonable, hard deadlines. It clarifies congressional intent of the previous authorization to ensure that taxpayers reap the benefits of SBIR and STTR programs by keeping them to long-term projects at the DOD. It also allows participating agencies to establish a new, separate commercialization assistance pilot program and extends three popular pilot programs through FY 2022, when the full program will need a full reauthorization.

With the use of SBIR and STTR programs, we can increase small business participation in the defense and aerospace industry while tapping into the true potential their American innovative spirit represents.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation and to vote “yes” on H.R. 2763, the Small Business Innovation Research and Small Business Technology Transfer Improvements Act.

Mrs. Murphy of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. Eddie Bernice Johnson), the ranking member of the Science, Space, and Technology Committee.

Ms. Johnson. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support H.R. 2763, the Small Business Innovation Research and Small Business Technology Transfer Improvements Act of 2017.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman Chabot, Ranking Member Velázquez, Chairman Smith, and all other colleagues on both committees for their work to advance this bipartisan piece of legislation.

SBIR and STTR are valuable programs that provide competitive research and development grants and contracts to innovative small businesses. Stability and continuity in the SBIR and STTR programs are important goals, which is why I supported the agreement in last year's National Defense Authorization Act to extend the program until fiscal year 2022 at the current allocation level.

In H.R. 2763, the two authorizing committees have come to agreement on a number of policy improvements and some strengthened oversight for the programs.
The policy changes in H.R. 2763 advances sensible ways to further leverage small business R&D to help meet Federal mission needs, as well as contribute more broadly to U.S. innovation and economic growth. The bill includes additional support for early-stage funding of entrepreneurial researchers, provides funding for important agency outreach and administrative activities, streamlines reporting requirements, ensures agency outreach for researchers at minority-serving institutions, and authorizes several additional activities to support implementation of the program.

I am particularly pleased that the bill includes a provision to address current agency shortfalls in fostering the participation of women and minority-owned firms. Fostering diversity in STEM research and innovation is an economic imperative.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired. Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, we must continue to encourage such policies.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired. Mrs. MURPHY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill. Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill. Mr. M. MCNERNEY. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

The bill extends the Phase 0 program for another 5 years at NIH and expands it to the National Science Foundation, NASA, and the Department of Energy. In doing so, we will be giving a needed boost to more researchers who are budding entrepreneurs who will create the jobs of tomorrow.

Mr. Speaker, our small businesses deserve support as they drive America’s economic growth. This bill will give innovators and entrepreneurs additional tools to drive this growth that we so desperately need. So I strongly urge my colleagues to support this bill. Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. MURPHY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California. Mr. McNERNEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California. Mr. McNERNEY.

Mr. McNERNEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman and the sponsors of this important bill. I also thank Chairmen SMITH and CHABOT and Ranking Members JOHNSON and VELÁZQUEZ for including my amendment to benefit minority-serving institutions in H.R. 2763. This is essential to retaining American leadership in innovation and small business development.

The SBIR and STTR programs have helped countless innovative small businesses—MSIs and entrepreneurs—add additional tools to drive this growth that we so desperately need. So I strongly urge my colleagues to support this bill.

The SBIR and STTR programs were both created to expand small business participation in the Federal research mission. One of the four objectives Congress had in mind in establishing the SBIR was to facilitate and increase participation of minority and disadvantaged persons in technological innovation.

My amendment requires that the participating Federal agencies in the SBIR and STTR programs conduct outreach to minority-serving institutions—MSIs—and Hispanic-serving institutions and faculty conducting research at those institutions so that participation rates in Federal research and development opportunities will increase.

There are many great MSIs and researchers who work at these institutions across the country. For example, California State University Stanislaus, which has a campus in my district, is a Hispanic-serving institution and an MSI, and has been ranked one of the best colleges in our Nation. Our country depends on innovation of MSIs and the intellectual capital of its graduates.

In the 21st century, American economic growth is going to be determined by the innovation and growth of technology and STEM-focused businesses. It is critical to the growth of our economy that minority-serving institutions and minority-owned businesses are connected to this technological ecosystem.

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

Mrs. MURPHY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York. Mr. TONKO.

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired. Mrs. MURPHY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York. Mr. TONKO.

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill. Reauthorizing the SBIR and STTR programs are critical to supporting our Nation’s most forward-thinking entrepreneurs and innovators. I am relieved that we are preserving the critical parts of the programs and continuing to improve upon the programs themselves.

These programs have proven to be one of the most successful Federal programs for technological innovation in United States history, delivering more than 700,000 patents and valuable innovations in agriculture, defense, energy, health sciences, homeland security, space, transportation, and other fields.

Through Phase I and Phase II SBIR, countless jobs have been created in the capital region of New York. It is through programs such as SBIR that our region has developed the underpinnings of support for a boom in high technology innovation and economic development.

One of many examples of this is Ecovative Design located within my congressional district in Green Island, New York, which has benefitted from the SBIR program over a number of years. These efforts will allow the company to continue its work on a replacement of engineered wood resins that will be economically competitive and nontoxic.

The resin system represents cost and energy savings, and is capable of leveraging existing manufacturing equipment in production today. This funding will help them deliver on the promise of this innovative technology.

Gavin McIntyre, cofounder and chief scientist at Ecovative said: “We’re very excited to bring our new material technology to market and displace toxic formaldehyde-based resins. The SBIR/STTR program was fundamental to how Ecovative got its start and has enabled us to continue to take risks and develop game-changing technology.”

While this bill is a positive step forward towards helping more small businesses, we must do more to help other small businesses develop these types of game-changing technologies.

I thank the value of research and I will fight to see more funding for all these agencies and, in turn, more funding for the SBIR and STTR programs. Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. MURPHY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers and I am prepared to close.
Mr. Speaker, supporting our entrepreneurs and small businesses is a top priority for both sides of the aisle. Our bill will make it easier for small firms that receive SBIR and STTR awards to bring their products to market and achieve commercial success.

The SBIR and STTR programs are also critical to our economy, as they support our Nation’s job creators and ensure that our country continues to produce cutting-edge research and development. This ingenuity is what makes our country a global economic powerhouse.

These programs, while successful, can be improved. The bill before us is a step in the right direction insofar as it will ensure that all Federal agencies are enhancing efforts to help more small businesses obtain SBIR and STTR funding and bring their innovative products to market.

Therefore, I respectfully urge my colleagues to support this bipartisan bill. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I thank all those who spoke on this legislation, a very bipartisan, good legislation, here this afternoon on the House floor.

In closing, whether it is a new secure system for tracking contract payments or a new medical device to help with cancer treatments, or a new piece of technology that literally saves lives on the battlefield, the SBIR and STTR programs have consistently delivered results to Federal agencies. They are worthy programs that do what they are supposed to do, but we can always do better. This legislation improves and modernizes these programs, and I ask that all my colleagues support it.

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

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I support H.R. 2763, the Small Business Innovation Research and Small Business Technology Transfer Reauthorization Act of 2017.

And I thank the gentleman from California, Mr. KNIGHT, for introducing this important legislation. He serves on the two Committees that share jurisdiction over the SBIR and STTR programs: the Small Business Committee, chaired by my good friend, Mr. CHABOT, and the Science, Space, and Technology Committee, which I chair.

Mr. KNIGHT took the lead on last year’s timely reauthorization of the SBIR and STTR programs, and he is the sponsor of H.R. 2763, which requires a number of needed policy changes to increase the programs’ efficiency and effectiveness.

The SBIR program was signed into law by President Reagan in 1982, followed by the STTR program in 1992. These programs help spur economic innovation and competitiveness, and create new small business participation in federal research and development activity.

SBIR and STTR award winners convert the results of taxpayer-supported pioneering research into products that are critical to our economic competitiveness and national security. Recent examples include parts for NASA’s Mars Rover and a unique cockpit airbag system to protect Army helicopter pilots.

Today 11 federal agencies provide funding to small businesses through SBIR, and five agencies provide funding through STTR—a total of nearly $3 billion this fiscal year. That’s more than 66 times greater than the $45 million spent under the original program in 1983. Recipients of SBIR and STTR funding have boosted scientific and technological innovation and created hundreds of thousands of American jobs.

Several large, international companies like Qualcomm, Sonicare and Symantec can trace their initial growth to when they were small businesses that received SBIR and STTR support.

I want to call attention to two provisions of H.R. 2763 that were added by Members of the Science Committee.

A provision authored by Mr. HULTGREN requires participating federal agencies to give priority to SBIR and STTR projects that will strengthen American manufacturing innovation and increase manufacturing jobs in our country.

A provision authored by Mr. HIGGINS requires federal agencies engaged in cybersecurity research to give priority to SBIR and STTR projects that will spur advances in cybersecurity to protect the American people from increasingly aggressive and malicious cyber-attacks.

The legislation before us addresses a number of red flags raised by the Government Accountability Office (GAO) about lax administration of the SBIR and STTR programs.

Several participating agencies do not produce accurate, timely information that Congress requires to evaluate program performance.

The U.S. Small Business Administration has not submitted its required, comprehensive annual report to Congress since 2013.

The last administration provided virtually no information to Congress and taxpayers about the SBIR and STTR programs.

It’s reassuring that SBA associate administrator Joseph Shepard promised during a joint hearing of our Committee and the Small Business Committee that annual reports will be submitted on time.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 2763 was unanimously approved by both the House Small Business Committee and the House Science Committee. I urge all of my colleagues to support it.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of S. 190.

External power supplies are used for all sorts of devices, and we have learned from experience that the Federal energy efficiency standards sometimes don’t work in the ways we want them to. In particular, we need an exemption from these rules for the security and life safety alarm and surveillance systems.

S. 190, the Power and Security Systems, or PASS, Act, provides targeted exemptions that allow these critical devices to remain in use for those who need them.

Devices like home security alarms or fire detection need to be on 24/7, 365, but the 2007 energy law on energy efficiency standards for external power supplies does not allow for this. Since then, Congress has created exemptions for these “always on” devices, but this exemption ended on July 1 of 2017. S. 190 extends this exemption out to 2023.
Mr. BROOKS from Alabama, as well as the gentleman from Texas (Mr. OLSON) question is on the motion offered by me for it.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S. 190, the Power and Security Systems, or PASS, Act.

Mr. Speaker, this bill would provide a nontraditional technical fix to a Department of Energy efficiency standard, and it has widespread bipartisan support.

I would also like to acknowledge my colleagues, Mr. WELCH from Vermont, Mr. BROOKS from Alabama, as well as Senator GARDNER and Senator CANTWELL, for their work in sponsoring this bill and getting it to the floor here today.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation would simply amend the Energy Policy and Conservation Act to require the Department of Energy to issue a rule by July 1, 2021, which would determine whether energy conservation standards for external power supplies should be amended.

The rule must contain any amendment standards and would apply to products manufactured on or after July 1, 2023.

Mr. Speaker, current law exempts external power supplies for security or life safety systems from energy conservation standards until July 1, 2017. This bill simply extends that exemption to July 1, 2023.

Mr. Speaker, this clarification is necessary in order to exclude power supply circuits, drivers, and devices that are designed to power security alarms, life-saving devices, and surveillance systems.

Mr. Speaker, as I stated, this legislative fix has widespread support from both houses of Congress, from both sides of the aisle, as well as from industry and the energy efficiency community.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to support this valuable piece of legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I close with a short and sweet: good bill, vote for it.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. OLSON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 190.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds voting in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

NATIONAL CLINICAL CARE COMMISSION ACT

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 920) to establish a National Clinical Care Commission.

The Clerk read the title of the bill. The text of the bill is as follows: S. 920

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 “National Clinical Care Commission Act”.

SEC. 2. NATIONAL CLINICAL CARE COMMISSION.
(a) Established.—The Commission is hereby established, within the Department of Health and Human Services, a National Clinical Care Commission (in this section referred to as the “Commission”) to evaluate and make recommendations regarding improvements to the coordination and leveraging of programs within the Department and other Federal agencies related to awareness and clinical care for at least one, but not more than two, complex metabolic or autoimmune diseases resulting from issues related to insulin that represent a significant disease burden on the United States, which may include complications due to such diseases.

(b) Membership:
(1) In general.—The Commission shall be composed of the following voting members:
(A) The heads of the following Federal agencies and departments, or their designees:
(i) The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services.
(ii) The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality.
(iii) The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
(iv) The Indian Health Service.
(v) The Department of Veterans Affairs.
(vi) The National Institutes of Health.
(vii) The Food and Drug Administration.
(viii) The Health Resources and Services Administration.
(ix) The Department of Defense.
(x) The Department of Agriculture.
(xi) The Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology.
(B) Twelve additional voting members appointed under paragraph (2).
(C) Are intended for health care professionals and the public; and
(D) Do not have overlapping or duplicative Federal programs.
(2) Additional members.—The Commission shall include additional voting members, as may be appointed by the Secretary, with expertise in the prevention, care, and epidemiology of any of the diseases and complications described in subsection (a), including one or more such members from each of the following categories:
(A) Physician specialties, including clinical care and public health experts, that play a role in the prevention or treatment of diseases and complications described in subsection (a).
(B) Primary care physicians.
(C) Non-physician health care professionals.
(D) Patient advocates.
(E) National experts, including public health experts in the duties listed under subsection (c).
(F) Health care providers furnishing services to a patient population that consists of at least 20 percent of the individuals who are enrolled in a State plan under title XIX of the Social Security Act who are covered under a health plan or health insurance policy.
(3) Chairperson.—The members of the Commission shall elect a chairperson from the members appointed under paragraph (2).
(4) Meetings.—The Commission shall meet at least twice, and not more than four times, a year.

(5) Vacancies.—A vacancy on the Commission shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointments.

(c) Duties.—The Commission shall evaluate and make recommendations, as appropriate, to the Secretary of Health and Human Services and Congress regarding—
(1) Federal programs of the Department of Health and Human Services that focus on preventing and reducing the incidence of the diseases and complications described in subsection (a);
(2) current activities and gaps in Federal efforts to support clinicians in providing integrated, high-quality care to individuals with the diseases and complications described in subsection (a); and
(3) the improvement in, and improved coordination of, Federal education and awareness activities related to the prevention and treatment of the diseases and complications described in subsection (a).

(d) Operating plan.—Not later than 90 days after its first meeting, the Commission shall submit to the Secretary of Health and Human Services and the Congress an operating plan for carrying out the activities of the Commission as described in subsection (c). Such operating plan may include—
(I) a list of specific activities that the Commission plans to conduct for purposes of carrying out the duties described in each of the paragraphs in subsection (c);
(2) a plan for completing the activities;
(3) a list of members of the Commission and other individuals who are not members of the Commission who will need to be involved to conduct such activities;
(4) an explanation of Federal agency involvement and coordination needed to conduct such activities;
(5) a budget for conducting such activities; and
(6) other information that the Commission deems appropriate.

(e) Final Report.—By not later than 3 years after the date of the Commission’s first meeting, the Commission shall submit to the Secretary of Health and Human Services and the Congress a final report containing all of the findings and recommendations required by this section.

(f) Sunset.—The Commission shall terminate 60 days after submitting its final report, but not later than the end of fiscal year 2021.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. OLSON) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. RUSH) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous material in the RECORD.
Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S. 920, the National Clinical Care Commission Act, a bipartisan bill that has received unanimous support within both the House and the Senate. S. 920 is the Senate companion to my bill H.R. 309, which is cosponsored by over half of my House colleagues.

It has this level of support because our Nation faces an epidemic. Diabetes or prediabetes affects over 100 million Americans. Nearly one in three of our neighbors is affected.

This legislation will also help many others who are affected by other diseases like heart disease, obesity, and many others.

When I first came to Congress in 2009, it was crystal clear that we had a big problem. We had all the Federal research dollars going into these diseases were simply not making their way to patients. Researchers at the NIH, the CDC, the DOD, the VA, and the FDA weren’t sharing diabetes research to know what information may have put us on a path to cure diabetes.

It was clear then, and it still is clear today: we need a laser-like approach to improve patient care by pursuing a strong Federal focus on research. This is not a new, unending bureaucracy. This legislation has been around for a few years. This bill will establish a clinical care commission comprised of doctors and professionals who specialize in diabetes care for patients.

This commission will have 3 years to strengthen the partnership between Federal stakeholders and health professionals who will bring hands-on, clinical experience to improve care.

This is not a new, unending bureaucracy. After 3 years, this commission will be gone. There has been made such a huge investment of taxpayer dollars into research. It is time to leverage that investment into meaningful prevention and effective treatment options.

President Reagan once said: “There is no limit to the amount of good you can do if you don’t care who gets the credit.”

That is why I stand here today in strong support of my bill, which became the National Clinical Care Commission Act, a bipartisan bill that has helped so many Americans who are suffering from diabetes. So today I ask my colleagues to again help all those who suffer from diabetes and other complex metabolic and autoimmune disorders by voting for S. 920.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S. 920, the National Clinical Care Commission Act.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation aims to help improve Federal efforts to treat and to prevent metabolic and autoimmune disorders related to insulin.

The most common metabolic disorder in the U.S. is diabetes, which affects more than 25 million Americans. Another 66 million Americans have prediabetes, a condition associated with an increased risk of developing type 2 diabetes and heart disease.

Mr. Speaker, diabetes takes a huge toll on human health; in fact, it is the seventh leading cause of death in our Nation. Additionally, Mr. Speaker, all too often diabetes leads to avoidable complications, such as blindness, such as limb amputation, and also kidney failure.

In addition to the effects on human health, Mr. Speaker, diabetes care makes up a large percentage of U.S. healthcare expenditure.

Mr. Speaker, currently $1 of every $5 of healthcare cost is spent caring for people with diabetes. The proportion of people with diabetes who spend even greater than this. Currently $1 of every $3 of Medicare expenditure is spent caring for people with diabetes.

Mr. Speaker, that is why it is important to improve the Federal efforts that prevent avoidable cases of diabetes and other metabolic disorders, and to ensure that all Americans have the treatment and services necessary to successfully manage this and other similar conditions.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation was previously passed in the 114th Congress and again at the beginning of the 115th Congress. I am pleased to see that the Senate took action on this legislation to support passage of this bill into law.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote “yes” on S. 920, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I yield as much time as he may consume to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS).

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in support of S. 920, the National Clinical Care Commission Act, sponsored by Senator SHAHEEN.

This legislation has been around for a while. It has been championed in the House by our good friend and fellow Texan, Representative PETE OLSON, as H.R. 309. This bill has strong bipartisan support. It passed this House unanimously earlier this year.

Diabetes and other endocrine disorders have been a great cost burden on Medicare and, in fact, our Nation’s healthcare system in general. Thirty million Americans have diabetes, 84 million have prediabetes, and three out of four Americans on Medicare have diabetes or prediabetes. And $1 out of every $3 Medicare spends is spent on diabetes.

This bill will establish a clinical care commission to develop and recommend solutions for better coordination and use of Federal programs aimed at improving care for people with diabetes and other related endocrine disorders. This commission will be tasked with identifying gaps where new approaches are needed, eliminating duplication across Federal agencies, and leveraging the Federal resources and tools available to enhance the quality of patient care.

I am confident their work will help improve the lives of tens of millions of Americans living with diabetes and with other endocrine disorders while beginning the process of reducing the staggering impact of these diseases.

Mr. Speaker, I certainly want to thank and commend our colleague, Representative PETE OLSON, for spearheading this important initiative. I want to thank him for bringing it to the floor of the House as many times as he has. This has been a lengthy process, but today, with the passage of this bill, we are voting on final passage, and this bill will be sent to the President’s desk for signature.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. OLSON’s long and arduous journey now comes to a close.

Mr. Speaker, that is why it is important to me today to speak on this important bill.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in strong support of S. 920, the National Clinical Care Commission Act, S. 920, as was mentioned already, creates a commission comprised of clinical endocrinologists, other physician specialists, primary care physicians, healthcare professionals, patients, and representatives from the Federal agencies most involved in diabetes care.

The commission is charged with making recommendations to streamline Federal investments in diabetes, to improve the coordination and clinical care outcomes for people with diabetes, prediabetes, and other insulin-related metabolic and autoimmune diseases.

Passage of this legislation will help the Nation undertake more and innovative approaches to diabetes and its disease complications, for which the United States spends some $322 billion annually.

I urge the Secretary also to move expeditiously to set up the commission so it can begin its important work as soon as possible. Clinical training and expertise in diabetes and other insulin-related diseases will be needed to lead the commission, and it is my hope that a clinical endocrinologist will be chosen to serve as the chairperson of the commission. I think that is very important.

With a clinical endocrinologist as chair and representatives from other medical specialties, healthcare professionals, and patients, advocacy groups, and other medical experts, the commission created under S. 920 will help to ensure that new innovative medications and devices are
effectively translated to the clinical setting for the benefit of patients. That clinical translation is so important.

The work of the commission will help improve the lives of the tens of millions of Americans living with diabetes while simultaneously beginning the process of reducing the staggering impact of diabetes and its disease complications and the dollars that, as has already been mentioned, are associated with that.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank in particular Representative Olson for his persistence, as was already mentioned, and for sponsoring this bill in the House. I was very happy to lead the way as the Democrat on this side of the aisle on this bill, and for my colleagues on both sides of the aisle who supported this bill that enabled House passage of the legislation earlier, as was mentioned, and now we are finally going to get it over the finish line. Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative Olson in particular for his efforts on this.

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Iowa for those kind words, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, again, short and sweet. This is a good bill. It is the first step towards actually funding a cure for diabetes. Maybe we will do that. By the way, it leaves here and will be signed into law before this week ends. I urge my colleagues to vote "aye" when this vote comes up for a final passage vote.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. OLSON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 920.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

DR. JOHN F. NASH, JR. POST OFFICE

Mr. RUSSELL. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2302) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 259 Nassau Street, Suite 2 in Princeton, New Jersey, as the "Dr. John F. Nash, Jr. Post Office". The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2302

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

(a) D ESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 259 Nassau Street, Suite 2 in Princeton, New Jersey, shall be known and designated as the "Dr. John F. Nash, Jr. Post Office".

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the facility referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the "Dr. John F. Nash, Jr. Post Office".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) and the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oklahoma.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. RUSSELL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I speak in support of H.R. 2302, introduced by the gentlewoman, Congresswoman BONNIE WATSON COLEMAN. The bill designates the post office located at 259 Nassau Street, Suite 2, in Princeton, New Jersey, as the Dr. John F. Nash, Jr. Post Office.

John Nash was a brilliant mathematician, publishing groundbreaking work in many areas. One of his most famous contributions was to the field of game theory, creating what is known as the Nash equilibrium.

For his achievements, he won a Nobel Prize in Economics in 1994, and the Abel Prize from the Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters in 2015.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to hearing more about Dr. Nash's life from the gentlewoman from New Jersey, and I urge my colleagues to support the bill.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I do rise to urge support for my bill, H.R. 2302, which would designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 259 Nassau Street in Princeton, New Jersey, as the Dr. John F. Nash, Jr. Post Office.

As a legendary figure of Princeton University's mathematics department, Dr. Nash was famous both for his genius and his life story. Born in Bluefield, West Virginia, in 1928, Dr. John Nash was a child prodigy who graduated from the Carnegie Institute of Technology at age 19, with both a bachelor's and a master's degree in mathematics. Dr. Nash subsequently received his doctorate in 1950 from Princeton University and published a groundbreaking theory of noncooperative games later that year, which is now known as the Nash equilibrium.

His monumental work in mathematics, game theory, economics, and evolutionary biology has influenced generations of experts in these fields.

In addition to his academic contributions, Dr. Nash gained worldwide acclaim from the 2001 film "A Beautiful Mind," which portrayed his vast accomplishments while living with schizophrenia and throughout his recovery from mental illness.

In recognition of his lifelong work, Dr. Nash was awarded a Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences in 1994, and the 2015 Abel Prize from the Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters.

Tragically, he and his wife, Alicia, were killed in an automobile accident in 2015 on their return from receiving the award in Norway.

Finally, I want to end my remarks by congratulating Ms. Lyla Malloy, the student in my district whose essay submission to our post office naming competition was chosen out of 84 entries.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the passage of H.R. 2302 in recognition of Dr. Nash's important contributions to our country, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. RUSSELL. Mr. Speaker, I urge the adoption of this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2302.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

BONUSES FOR COST-CUTTERS ACT OF 2017

Mr. RUSSELL. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 378) to amend title 5, United States Code, to enhance the authority under which Federal agencies may pay cost savings awards to employees for making cost saving disclosures, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 378

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 "Bonuses for Cost-Cutters Act of 2017".

SEC. 2. COST SAVINGS ENHANCEMENTS.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—Section 4511 of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in the section heading, by striking "Defi-

nition" and inserting "Definitions"; and

(2) in subsection (a)—

(A) by striking the period at the end and in-

serting '; and';

(B) by striking "this subchapter, the term" and

inserting the following: "this subchapter—

(1) the term"; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

"The term "wasteful expenses" means amounts made available for salaries and exp-

enses accounts, operations and maintenance accounts, or other equivalent accounts-

(A) that are identified by an employee of the agency under section 4512(a) as wasteful; and.

"(B) that the Chief Financial Officer of the agency determines are not required for the pur-

pose for which the amounts were made avail-

able.".
Mr. RUSSELL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to review their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I speak in support of H.R. 378, introduced by the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. FLEISCHMANN), the Bonuses for Cost-Cutters Act of 2017.

The people in the best position to identify waste throughout the Federal Government are the employees on the front lines of the Federal agencies. They are the ones on the ground who know when agencies waste money. It is in the taxpayers’ best interest to encourage Federal employees to report waste when they see it.

H.R. 378 increases the incentive for Federal employees to report wasteful spending by authorizing a reward of up to $20,000 for blowing the whistle on waste. This incentive is especially necessary at the end of the fiscal year when too many agencies adopt a “use it or lose it” mentality regarding their budgets.

Some agencies fear that if they do not spend every last dollar in their budget, that Congress will somehow decrease their future funding. That dynamic leads to the most outrageous expenditures in the last week before the end of the fiscal year on September 30.

Under the structure put in place by H.R. 378, agency leadership will also be able to verify whether spending identified by whistleblowers is actually wasteful. This was a concern raised by my colleagues in the minority. We are thankful for their constructive work in getting this bill to a mutually agreeable compromise.

The bill also maintains Congress’ constitutional role in the appropriations process. As we know, Congress is responsible for authorizing spending by the Federal Government, and this bill is careful to respect that authority.

After the agency’s chief financial officer affirms that the spending in question is indeed wasteful, the agency must submit a report to the President. The President may then submit a recommendation to Congress to eliminate the wasteful spending in question.

H.R. 378 is the result of a bipartisan process, and I urge my colleagues to support this bill as an example of what we can achieve when both sides put their minds to reform and husband the taxpayers’ dollars.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 378, the Bonuses for Cost-Cutters Act, as reported by the committee. This legislation enhances the existing award program for Federal employees whose identification of waste, fraud, and abuse results in cost savings to an agency.

Every day, Federal employees across the country provide vital services to the American people. They ensure that our veterans receive the benefits to which they are entitled. They work to keep our air safe to breathe and our water safe to drink. They spend long hours and put their lives at risk to safeguard our national and homeland security. And Federal employees are on the front lines in ensuring that these important missions are carried out as effectively and efficiently as possible.

We can address all of this and more. We can protect the taxpayers’ best interest. We can ensure that the agencies whose identification of wasteful expenses result in cost savings for the agency are rewarded.

The bill also doubles the amount that an inspector general may award an employee for disclosures of waste, fraud, and abuse that result in cost savings from $10,000 to $20,000. In addition, the bill contains several accountability measures that both the House and Senate propose for this year, including new legislative language that would require the President to report to both Houses of Congress each year certifying that each agency’s cash award program complies with the bill.

In addition, the bill requires a GAO report on the operation of awards program within 3 years, including any recommendations for legislative changes. Democratic members of the Oversight and Government Reform Committee raised concerns about prior versions of this bill, and I want to thank Chairman GOWDY for working with us to address those concerns. The bill we have before us today reflects bipartisan concerns.

We must support Federal employees who identify ways to increase efficiency and reduce waste. I believe this bill does that, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

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

Mr. RUSSELL. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. FLEISCHMANN), the sponsor of this bill.

Mr. FLEISCHMANN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of my bill, the Bonuses for Cost-Cutters Act of 2017. The bill contains several accountability measures that both Houses of Congress propose for this year, including new legislative language that would require the President to report to both Houses of Congress each year certifying that each agency’s cash award program complies with the bill.

In addition, the bill requires a GAO report on the operation of awards program within 3 years, including any recommendations for legislative changes. Democratic members of the Oversight and Government Reform Committee raised concerns about prior versions of this bill, and I want to thank Chairman GOWDY for working with us to address those concerns. The bill we have before us today reflects bipartisan concerns.

We must support Federal employees who identify ways to increase efficiency and reduce waste. I believe this bill does that, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

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

Mr. RUSSELL. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. FLEISCHMANN), the sponsor of this bill.

Mr. FLEISCHMANN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of my bill, the Bonuses for Cost-Cutters Act of 2017. The bill contains several accountability measures that both Houses of Congress propose for this year, including new legislative language that would require the President to report to both Houses of Congress each year certifying that each agency’s cash award program complies with the bill.

In addition, the bill requires a GAO report on the operation of awards program within 3 years, including any recommendations for legislative changes. Democratic members of the Oversight and Government Reform Committee raised concerns about prior versions of this bill, and I want to thank Chairman GOWDY for working with us to address those concerns. The bill we have before us today reflects bipartisan concerns.

We must support Federal employees who identify ways to increase efficiency and reduce waste. I believe this bill does that, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.
for Cost-Cutters Act of 2017. I wish to thank the gentleman from Oklahoma and the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia.

Mr. Speaker, what we see today in my bill is what I think the American people want. Republicans and Democrats working together with good, commonsense legislation that makes sense and saves the American taxpayer's money.

Let's face it: whether we are a family or a business, we have to manage our money in the private sector; and the Federal Government, for far too long, has been guilty of spending waste, fraud, and abuse. There have been so many problems, and the American people know it.

When we go home and we talk with our constituents, they want us to be very good stewards of their money, and they deserve that. That is exactly what this bill does. And it does it in a way that does a lot of different things that I think is great.

First of all, as my colleagues on both sides of the aisle have said, it incentivizes Federal employees to detect waste, fraud, or abuse. I know our government has a tendency, when they have a pool of money, to spend it, whether they need it or not. So if a Federal employee can go in there, find this problem out, tell the agency head, he or she now can get up to $20,000 of incentive pay. So we have incentivized fiscal responsibility in the Federal Government. That is great, and that is just good government.

In addition to that, Mr. Speaker, we look at the United States Constitution, and that is a document that our Founding Fathers gave us and is so important. Why is that so important with this bill? Because when that agency head tells the President of the United States with this recommendation, the President of the United States has to come where? Back to the Congress, where he should have to come.

When Congress looks at that recommendation from the President, Congress then can make the final determination. So we have fiscal responsibility, we have constitutional sanctity, and we have good government.

Most of all, I want to thank my colleagues on both sides of the aisle. We have Republicans and Democrats working together, the way the American people want us to do, to be fiscally responsible.

Mr. Speaker, I urge colleagues on both sides of the aisle to pass this good government bill.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. RUSSELL. Mr. Speaker, I urge the adoption of the bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion made by the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 378, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RECIPIENTS OF WHISTLEBLOWER DISCLOSURES

Mr. RUSSELL. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2196) to amend title 5, United States Code, to allow whistleblowers to disclose information to certain recipients, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled.

SECTION 1. RECIPIENTS OF WHISTLEBLOWER DISCLOSURES.

Section 2302(b)(6)(B) of title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking “or to the Inspector” and all that follows through “such disclosures” and inserting “the Inspector General of an agency, a supervisor in the employee’s direct chain of command and up to and including the head of the employing agency, or designated by any of the aforementioned individuals for the purpose of receiving such disclosures”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) and the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oklahoma.

Mr. RUSSELL. Mr. 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 bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) and the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) each will control 20 minutes.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the gentleman from Oklahoma?

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I speak in support of H.R. 2196, a bill I introduced with Ranking Member CUMMINGS, Mr. LYNCH, and Mr. FARENTHOLD from Texas earlier this year to allow whistleblowers to disclose information to certain recipients.

Whistleblowers in the Federal Government should be able to tell their supervisors when something is wrong. That is true no matter what, but especially so in cases involving classified information, which implies a matter of national security. If whistleblowers cannot make a protected disclosure to their supervisors, they are more likely to make an illegal disclosure to people or entities without the proper security clearances.

Under current law, whistleblowers in the intelligence community can make protected disclosures to their supervisors. However, whistleblowers dealing with classified information outside the intelligence community do not have that same protection.

Federal employees outside the intelligence community must be reassured that they can report wrongdoing to the appropriate people, including their supervisors. With this protection, whistleblowers will be less likely to disclose potentially sensitive information on waste, fraud, and abuse to the media, or other entities or individuals without the proper security clearance.

There is no reasonable basis for concern about giving whistleblowers throughout the Federal Government the right to contact those individuals about waste, fraud, or abuse of a classified nature. These additional protections will make it easier for these employees to do the responsible thing when it comes to classified disclosures.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, what we see today in my bill is what I think the American people want. Republicans and Democrats working together with good, commonsense legislation that makes sense and saves the American taxpayer's money.
This bill is modeled on language in the Presidential Policy Directive issued in 2012. That directive, PPD 19, provided whistleblower protections to intelligence community employees who are not covered by the Whistleblower Protection Act.

This bill will provide a more consistent approach for employees who handle classified information by ensuring that employees who are covered by the Whistleblower Protection Act will blow that whistle to a supervisor, the same way that intelligence community employees who are covered by PPD 19 can do so.

This is a good bill. I urge my colleagues to support it, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. RUSSELL. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Ranking Member Cummings, Mr. FARENTHOLD of Texas, and Mr. LINCH of Massachusetts for their great support in this needed reform, and I urge my colleagues to support my bill.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is the motion offered by the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2196, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, H.R. 2196, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ALL CIRCUIT REVIEW ACT

Mr. RUSSELL. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2229) to amend title 5, United States Code, to provide permanent authority for judicial review of certain Merit Systems Protection Board decisions relating to whistleblowers, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill. The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2229

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 “All Circuit Review Act”.

SEC. 2. JUDICIAL REVIEW OF MERIT SYSTEMS PROTECTION BOARD DECISIONS RELATING TO WHISTLEBLOWERS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 7703(b)(1)(B) of title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking “During the 5-year period beginning on the effective date of the Whistleblower Protection Enhancement Act of 2012, a petition” and inserting “A petition”.

(b) DIRECTOR REVIEW.—Section 7703(d)(2)(B) of such title is amended by striking “During the 5-year period beginning on the effective date of the Whistleblower Protection Enhancement Act of 2012, this paragraph” and inserting “This paragraph”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) and the gentleman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oklahoma.

Mr. RUSSELL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members of this Committee have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extra‐neous material on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I speak in support of H.R. 2229, the All Circuit Review Act, which amending title 5, United States Code, to provide permanent authority for judicial review of certain Merit Systems Protection Board decisions relating to whistleblowers, and for other purposes.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is the motion offered by the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2196, as amended.

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The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is the motion offered by the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2196, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, H.R. 2196, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.
Federal whistleblowers to file appeals in courts where they work or live rather than in the Federal Circuit Court of Appeals. The Federal circuit has a terrible track record on whistleblower cases. Allowing other courts around the country to hear whistleblower cases will provide a check on the monopoly the Federal circuit has held for many years. The bill would also authorize the Office of Special Counsel to manage appeals of the Merit Systems Protection Board to any appeals court辖区 with jurisdiction.

This bill was listed on the Project On Government Oversight’s list of legislative reforms Congress should enact in 2017. Protecting whistleblowers is not a partisan issue. It is a patriotic issue. Mr. Speaker, I hope my colleagues will support this bipartisan legislation.

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

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS), ranking member of the full Oversight and Government Reform Committee.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

I introduced the All Circuit Review Act. Mr. Speaker, to send a clear message to all Federal employees who blow the whistle on wrongdoing that we here in Congress have their backs.

This bill would give Federal employees who face retaliation for blowing the whistle a more equitable playing field when they challenge that retaliation in court. Under the bill, whistleblowers could file appeals in the jurisdictions where they work or live, rather than having to file appeals in the Federal Circuit Court of Appeals in Washington, D.C. Whistleblowers who live outside of Washington, D.C., should have the same opportunities as those who live in Washington.

I want to thank Representative BLAKE FARENTHOLD for cosponsoring this bill with me. Representative FARENTHOLD has been a steadfast supporter of this basic due process right for Federal employees.

The bill we are considering today makes permanent a pilot provision that is inside the Whistleblower Protection Enhancement Act, which was signed into law in 2012. That pilot provision will expire in November if we do not send this bill to the President before then.

Without this bill, whistleblowers could appeal a decision of the Merit Systems Protection Board only to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit. The Federal circuit has historically been overly restrictive of whistleblower rights.

According to the Merit Systems Protection Board, 29 cases have been appealed to courts other than the Federal circuit since 2012. The Project On Government Oversight sent a letter to the Oversight and Government Reform Committee on May 2, 2017, in strong support of this bill. Executive Director Danielle Brian wrote as follows: ‘The pilot program has been a success. It has not resulted in a flood of whistleblowers appealing as components of the program asserted it would, and it allows for potential circuit splits, which encourage sister circuits to review the laws and allows for possible Supreme Court review. It is working exactly as intended and should be made permanent before it expires in November 2017.’

The bill was approved by the Oversight and Government Reform Committee without opposition in May. Two years ago, Congress approved an extension of the All Circuit Review Extension Act pilot program in 2014 without a single negative vote.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this whistleblower bill.

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

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. RUSSELL. Mr. Speaker, I wish to thank Chairman GOWDY for his support of this legislation, and for the hard work of Ranking Member CUMMINGS of Maryland and Mr. FARENTHOLD of Texas for all that they have done to bring this needed bill to the floor.

Mr. Speaker, I urge adoption of the bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

**FRÉDÉRIC DOUGLASS BICENTENNIAL COMMISSION ACT**

Mr. RUSSELL. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2989) to establish the Frederick Douglass Bicentennial Commission, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill. The text of the bill is as follows:

> H.R. 2989
> 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 “Frederick Douglass Bicentennial Commission Act”.

**SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

Congress makes the following findings:

(1) Born into slavery on the Eastern Shore of Maryland and given the name Frederick Augustus Washington Bailey after his mother Harriet Bailey, Frederick Douglass has been called the father of the civil rights movement.

(2) Douglass rose through determination, brilliance, and eloquence to shape the American Nation. He was an abolitionist, human rights and women’s rights activist, orator, author, journalist, publisher, and social reformer.

(3) Taught basic reading skills by his mistress until she was forced to stop, Douglass continued to teach himself to read and write and taught other slaves to read despite risks included death.

(4) During the course of his remarkable life Frederick Douglass escaped from slavery, became internationally renowned for his eloquence in the cause of freedom, and helped recruit African-American troops for the Union Army, including two of his sons, Charles and Lewis Douglass. His personal relationship with Abraham Lincoln helped persuade the President to make emancipation a cause of the Civil War.

(5) Forced to leave the country to avoid arrest as an escaped slave, he returned to become a staunch advocate of the Union cause and helped recruit African-American troops for the Union Army, including two of his sons, Charles and Lewis Douglass. His personal relationship with Abraham Lincoln helped persuade the President to make emancipation a cause of the Civil War.

(6) With the abolition of slavery at the close of the Civil War, Douglass then turned his attention to the full integration of African-Americans into the political and economic life of the United States. Committed to freedom, Douglass dedicated his life to achieving justice for all Americans, in particular African-American minority groups. He envisioned America as an inclusive Nation strengthened by diversity and free of discrimination.

Mr. Douglass served as an advisor to Presidents Abraham Lincoln referred to him as the most meritorious man of the nineteenth century. Douglass was appointed to several offices. He served as the United States Marshal of the District of Columbia under Rutherford B. Hayes’ administration; President James Garfield appointed Douglass the District of Columbia Recorder of Deeds in 1889; and President Benjamin Harrison appointed Frederick Douglass to be the United States minister to Haiti. He was also appointed by President Grant to serve as Assistant Secretary of the Commission of Inquiry to Santo Domingo.

(7) Douglass lived in the District of Columbia for 23 of his 57 years as a free man, and in recognition of his leadership and continuous fight for justice and freedom, his home, Cedar Hill, was established as a National Historic Site in Anacostia, in Southeast Washington, DC.

(8) The statue of Frederick Douglass in the United States Capitol is a gift from the almost 700,000 residents of the District of Columbia.

(9) All Americans could benefit from studying the life of Frederick Douglass, for Douglass dedicated his own life to ensuring freedom and equality for future generations of Americans. This Nation should ensure that his tireless struggle, transformative words, and inclusive vision continue to inspire and sustain us.

(10) The year 2018 marks the bicentennial anniversary of the birth of Frederick Douglass, and a commission should be established to plan, develop, and carry out, and to recommend to Congress, programs and activities that are fitting and proper to celebrate the anniversary in a manner that appropriately honors Frederick Douglass.

**SEC. 3. ESTABLISHMENT.**

There is established a commission to be known as the Frederick Douglass Bicentennial Commission (referred to in this Act as the “Commission”).

**SEC. 4. DUTIES.**

The Commission shall have the following duties:

(1) To plan, develop, and carry out programs and activities that are fitting and proper to celebrate the bicentennial of the birth of Frederick Douglass.

**SEC. 5. APPROPRIATIONS.**

There are authorized for the Commission—

(1) To plan, develop, and carry out programs and activities that are fitting and proper to celebrate the bicentennial of the birth of Frederick Douglass.

**SEC. 6. TERMINATION.**

The Commission shall terminate upon the date on which it completes its duties.
Mr. Speaker, I speak in support of H.R. 2989, the Frederick Douglass Bicentennial Commission Act, introduced by Ms. Norton of the District of Columbia and Mr. Harris earlier this year.

New year will mark the 200th anniversary of the birth of Frederick Douglass, a man who has been called the father—and rightfully so—of the civil rights movement.

Douglass was born into slavery in Maryland around 1817 but escaped by the age of 21. Douglass went on to publish an autobiography documenting his life as a slave, called, "Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass," while a fugitive slave.

Throughout his remarkable life, Douglass advocated for justice for all Americans, encouraging President Lincoln to make emancipation a cause of the Civil War, and advocating for the full integration of African Americans into political and economic life in the United States both during and following the war.

H.R. 2989 establishes the Frederick Douglass Bicentennial Commission to recommend the best ways to celebrate the legacy of a man who dedicated his entire life to ensuring freedom and equality for all Americans.

H.R. 2989 would do this by creating a 16-member commission to plan, develop, and coordinate activities fitting and proper to honor Mr. Douglass. The commission will submit recommendations to Congress with recommendations for activities, programs, and other important information. The commission will end 30 days after the submission of its final report.

The amended text considered today adds a new section clarifying that the commission will not receive additional authorized funds and will, instead, rely on private funds for its operations.

The commission presents an important opportunity to recognize and support Frederick Douglass' leadership and body of work. He was a phenomenal man, and I am proud to also be a cosponsor of this important bill.
I would like to thank Ms. Norton, Mr. Harris, and the other cosponsors for their hard work on this bill in honor of Frederick Douglass.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I thank the lead sponsor of this bill, Representative Andy Harris, for working closely with me on the bill of which I am a cosponsor, and I want to thank my good friendRepresentative Russell, who is managing on the other side, for also being a cosponsor of this bill.

My thanks also to Chairman Trey Gowdy, Ranking Member Elijah Cummings, and Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy for bringing this bill to the floor in time to begin the commemoration, in 2018, of the bicentennial of the birth of Frederick Douglass.

I am pleased that this bill has not only bicameral support. Senators Chris Van Hollen and Ben Cardin have introduced the companion bill in the Senate.

Mr. Harris. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to honor Frederick Douglass and the resounding impact his work has had on modern American culture by passing this legislation.

Ms. Norton. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speech, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. Russell. Mr. Speaker, I would like to echo all of the comments that we heard. It is important that all of us take time and pause to recognize the tremendous work that Frederick Douglass did not only in his life, but how he impacted the United States of America.

Mr. Speaker, I urge adoption of the bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. Russell) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2989, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

TSP MODERNIZATION ACT OF 2017

Mr. Russell. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3031) to amend title 5, United States Code, to provide for flexibility in making withdrawals from a Thrift Savings Plan account and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

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 ‘‘TSP Modernization Act of 2017.’’

SEC. 2. THRIFT SAVINGS PLAN ACCOUNT WITHDRAWAL FLEXIBILITY.

(a) POST-SEPARATION PARTIAL WITHDRAWALS.—Section 8433(c) of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)—

(A) by striking ‘‘and who has not made a withdrawal under subsection (h)(1)(A) may make one withdrawal’’ and inserting ‘‘may make one or more withdrawals’’; and

(B) by striking ‘‘as a single payment’’ and inserting ‘‘in the same manner as a single payment is made’’; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:—

‘‘(5) Withdrawals under this subsection shall be subject to such other limitations or conditions as the Executive Director may prescribe by regulation.’’.

(b) LIMITATION ON RETURN OF PAYMENT RELATING TO A CHANCE IN ELECTION.—Section 8433(d) of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by inserting ‘‘, except that in the case of an election to receive an annuity, a former employee or Member may not change an election under this section on or after the date on which an annuity contract is purchased for the annuity elected by the former employee or Member’’ after ‘‘this subsection’’; and

(2) in paragraph (2)—

(A) by striking ‘‘change an’’ and inserting return a payment that was made pursuant to an’’; and

(B) by striking ‘‘or after’’ and all that follows through ‘‘the former employee or Member’’.

(c) ELIMINATION OF AUTOMATIC ANNUITY IN ABSENCE OF ELECTION.—Section 8433(f) of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking ‘‘by an annuity’’ and inserting ‘‘by the former employee or Member’’;

(2) by redesigning paragraphs (3), (4), and (5) as paragraphs (2), (3), and (4), respectively; and

(3) in paragraph (3), as so redesignated, by inserting ‘‘or before’’ or ‘‘conditions’’.

(e) TECHNICAL AMENDMENT.—Section 8432b(h)(2)(A) of title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking ‘‘section 8433(d), or paragraph (1) or (2) of section 8433(h)’’ and inserting ‘‘subsection (d) or (f) of section 8433’’.

(f) REGULATIONS.—As soon as is practicable, as determined by the Executive Director of the Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board, but not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Executive Director shall prescribe such regulations as are necessary to carry out the amendments made by this section.

(g) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on the date on which the regulations prescribed under subsection (f) take effect.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. Russell) and the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. Norton) each will control 20 minutes.

Mr. Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oklahoma.

Mr. Russell. Mr. 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 bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 3031, the TSP Modernization Act of 2017, introduced by Ranking Member CUMMINGS from Maryland and Mr. MEADOWS from North Carolina earlier this year.

Federal employees enrolled in the Federal Employees Retirement System—known as FERS—enjoy the benefits of a three-part retirement structure. Those are a defined benefit pension plan, Social Security, and a 401(k)-style defined contribution plan known as the Thrift Savings Plan, or TSP.

With its low administrative costs and simple design, the TSP is an ideal retirement vehicle. Participants can choose from a variety of investment options, including index funds designed to track the Standard & Poor’s 500 Index, the Dow Jones U.S. Completion Total Stock Market Index, and the Conservative Index, which tracks the Dow Jones U.S. Completion Total Stock Market Index, the Dow Jones U.S. Completion

Employees have a lot of options when investing their TSP funds, but when it comes to withdrawing their funds, the options are much more limited. This is because current statutory rules preclude employees from taking multiple post-service partial withdrawals. Employees cannot request a partial withdrawal from their TSP account after making a periodic payment withdrawal election.

Statutory rules also require the purchase of an annuity if a participant fails to make an election by age 70½. The rules also restrict an employee’s ability to make multiple in-service, age-based withdrawals.

The Board conducted a study in 2013, which found that separated participants moved $9 billion from the TSP fund to low-cost, no-load, after-market institutional funds. Nearly one out of every three of these participants cited a desire for additional withdrawal flexibility.

The study also found that, among currently employed participants, the same ratio of participants requested additional withdrawal flexibility for age-based withdrawals to address life events that arise. This bill would afford those additional flexibilities to address those concerns.

The bill provides more control to Federal employees over their own retirement by allowing for multiple post-separation partial withdrawals and in-service, age-based withdrawals. H.R. 3031 allows employees to change withdrawal elections as they grow older, and it allows the Board to avoid purchasing expensive annuities if a participant fails to make an election by age 70½.

This bill puts power and control in the hands of the employees that make our Federal Government run to make retirement decisions based on their personal situations.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 3031, the TSP Modernization Act of 2017.

I am proud to be a cosponsor of this legislation, which would help modernize the Federal Government’s Thrift Savings Plan by aligning it with current practices for private sector 401(k)s.

I thank Ranking Member CUMMINGS and Chairman MEADOWS for their work on this important, bipartisan bill that would give TSP participants more flexibility in making withdrawals from their accounts.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 3031, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as I may consume to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS), who is the ranking member of the full committee.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 3031, the TSP Modernization Act of 2017.

I thank the Government Operations Subcommittee chairman, Mr. MEADOWS, for working with me in a bipartisan manner on this commonsense, good government bill. I also thank the Oversight and Government Reform Committee chairman, Mr. GOWDY, for his support of this legislation.

Congressman MEADOWS and I introduced this legislation to make the Federal Government’s Thrift Savings Plan more closely align with private sector best practices by allowing TSP participants more flexible withdrawal options.

In 2013, the Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board found that employees who separated from Federal service transferred $9 billion out of their TSP accounts to other financial institutions. TSP participants do this because private sector 401(k) plans provide more flexibility, and they wanted more options for withdrawing money in case they needed it.

A 2014 survey of TSP participants who withdrew funds showed that more than 50 percent reported that they wanted more flexibility to withdraw funds to address life events.

Current law limits participants to only one withdrawal from their TSP accounts while in Federal service after reaching age 59½, and participants who make this type of age-based withdrawal cannot take another partial withdrawal once they separate from service.

Similarly, participants who are separated from Federal service and who have not made a previously designated withdrawal are restricted to making only one partial separation withdrawal.

H.R. 3031 would eliminate these restrictions and allow participants to make multiple age-based and post-separation withdrawals from TSP accounts. The bill also would allow participants to elect to combine partial withdrawals with an annuity. It also would eliminate automatic annuities as a default option in the absence of an election by participants.

By providing greater withdrawal flexibility, studies show that participants would be more likely to keep their assets in their TSP accounts. For example, a study issued by Vanguard in 2013 found that 50 percent more participants and assets remain in retirement plans when partial disbursements are allowed.

Providing more withdrawal options for Federal employees and retirees in the TSP may help their financial security since administrative fees for the TSP are much lower than fees charged by other financial institutions.

This legislation is supported by the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association, the American Federation of Government Employees, and the National Treasury Employees Union.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I support this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. RUSSELL. Mr. Speaker, I wish to thank Chairman GOWDY, Ranking Member CUMMINGS, and Chairman MEADOWS for their outstanding work in addressing the needs of Federal employees who give selfless public service to our Nation and should have this flexibility in their retirement planning.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the adoption of the bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill. H.R. 3031, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, H.R. 3031, as amended, was passed.

Mr. RUSSELL. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3243) to amend title 40, United
States Code, to eliminate the sunset of certain provisions relating to information technology, to amend the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2015 to extend the sunset relating to the Federal Data Center Consolidation Initiative, and for other purposes.

This text is the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3243
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 “FITARA Enhancement Act of 2017”.

SEC. 2. ELIMINATION OF SUNSET RELATING TO TRANSPARENCY AND RISK MANAGEMENT OF MAJOR INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY INVESTMENTS.
Subsection (c) of section 11302 of title 40, United States Code, is amended by striking the first paragraph (5).

SEC. 3. ELIMINATION OF SUNSET RELATING TO INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY PORTFOLIO, PROGRAM, AND RESOURCE REVIEWS.
Section 11313 of title 40, United States Code, is amended—

1) by redesignating the second subsection (c) as subsection (d); and
2) as so redesignated, by striking paragraph (6).

SEC. 4. EXTENSION OF SUNSET RELATING TO FEDERAL DATA CENTER CONSOLIDATION INITIATIVE.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) and the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oklahoma.

Mr. RUSSELL. Mr. 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 bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I speak in support of H.R. 3243, the FITARA Enhancement Act of 2017, introduced by Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. ISSA, Ms. KELLY from Illinois, and Mr. MEADOWS earlier this year.

Today, the Federal Government spends more than $90 billion on Federal IT, with approximately 75 percent of this money spent on archaic and legacy IT. This means we are paying more for less: less capability and less security. Meanwhile, major Federal IT investments often result in multimillion-dollar cost overruns and delays.

This year’s Senate hearings led the Government Accountability Office to designate Federal IT acquisition and management as high risk in 2015, meaning this area is at high risk of waste, fraud, abuse, and mismanagement.

In 2014, Congress passed the Federal Information Technology Acquisition Reform Act, otherwise known as FITARA, to address some of these IT challenges.

Congress has maintained a watchful eye to ensure agencies fully implement the requirements of FITARA and use it as a vital oversight tool. In fact, the Oversight and Government Reform Committee has held five hearings on FITARA implementation.

The committee also created a FITARA scorecard to hold Federal agencies accountable for meeting FITARA requirements, some of which sunset in the near term.

This bill will help us facilitate Congress’ oversight efforts by extending key FITARA requirements to improve Federal IT.

For example, this bill extends requirements for agencies to publicly report IT centralization, cost savings, and to assess the risks of major IT investments. This bill also extends requirements for each agency to regularly assess its IT portfolio, look for opportunities to reduce duplication, and find savings.

Finally, the bill will help us continue to hold agencies accountable for consolidating and optimizing their data centers by extending these requirements—and GAO’s verification of these requirements—through 2020.

The GAO, which has been instrumental in assisting Congress oversee FITARA implementation, supports extending the FITARA sunset dates.

Mr. CONNOLLY from Virginia and Mr. ISSA from California have been the key leaders on the original FITARA law, and they have come together again to sponsor this bill, along with Representatives MEADOWS and KELLY.

The FITARA Enhancement Act is truly a bipartisan effort in making sure Federal agencies get their information technology management and acquisition houses in order.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY), the sponsor of the bill.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentlewoman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL), the co-sponsor of this bill and the co-sponsor of the original FITARA; and my good friend from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) for his able management today.

The Federal Information Technology Acquisition Reform Act, or FITARA, was enacted 3 years ago. It represented the first major reform of the laws governing the procurement and management of Federal IT since the Clinger-Cohen Act of 1996.

FITARA is the framework for IT procurement and ensures the Federal Government is making smart and effective investments to modernize its IT, which is badly needed.

It has seven pillars:

First, it enhances CIO authorities, responsibilities, and accountability.

Second, it enhances transparency and improves risk management by requiring detailed information on investments to be published on the IT dashboard.

Third, we increased the frequency of portfolio reviews from annual to quarterly and included key decisionmakers from the agency and GAO to not only look for ways to increase efficiency, but to eliminate duplication.

Fourth, we built on the Federal data center consolidation effort to push agencies to realize big savings from this low-hanging fruit.

Fifth, people. Recognizing that Federal IT success is only as good as the people behind it, FITARA calls for expanding the training and use of IT professionals.

Finally, FITARA advances a government software purchasing program to allow for purchasing licensing agreements that can be made available for use by all Federal agencies.

FITARA is a rubric for IT procurement that, hopefully, someday enables initiatives like the Modernizing Government Technology Act to build on our success of improving how the government acquires and modernizes IT.

Information technology stakeholders met on Federal IT from government agencies and industry, both Mr. ISSA and I constantly were reminded of why previous major IT reform efforts had fallen short of their potential: the lack of robust implementation plan and congressional oversight.

As Mr. RUSSELL indicated quite clearly, in that latter regard, we have robust oversight, and it will continue.

One of the things that is in FITARA were some sunset provisions. In the hope and expectation that, by having that, we would encourage cooperation and implementation. That cooperation and implementation is uneven throughout the Federal Government.

The GAO, or Government Accountability Office, recommended that we have this bill to extend those sunset provisions to buy a little bit more time to get with the program for those Federal agencies.

So that is what this bill does, but it builds on FITARA, which is the framework for IT procurement and modernization.

Mr. Speaker, I urge passage of the bill.

Mr. RUSSELL. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA), an original cosponsor of this bill and also the former chairman of the Government Accountability and Oversight Reform Committee.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, no one has ever had a better partner on a piece of...
legislation than I have had. The best way I can describe Mr. CONNOLLY is, like anyone else who came to a realization of something, he came to it with a great deal of zeal. This partnership, which began before the passage in 2014, to modernize a 1996 initiative that had fallen short, has been his passion and mine.

Normally, when you are chairman, people talk about what divides the committee. But nothing united us more than recognizing that over $80 billion was being spent—and much of it needlessly. We don't achieve what we want to because there is never enough. Part of it is how we procure.

Prior to the passage of this legislation, it certainly was possible to have major pieces of procurement have somebody in charge who could not, in fact, change or drop the expenditure and who could not simply say: This isn't working. On top of that, often the people who did have the authority lacked the expertise. This has been true in all sorts of areas. There is much more work to be done.

Unlike Clinger-Cohen, which went on for 18 years before being updated, we were just 3 years past the implementation of this bill. With Congressman CONNOLLY's effort, we are coming back and making real changes—ones that can continue the process and speed it up.

Obviously, there are some areas like the IT dashboard and others that simply need to be continued to be renewed. This bill does that.

When I first talked to Mr. CONNOLLY, he was the best known for absolutely wanting to consolidate processing centers; consolidate these server farms that had proliferated. The number he had at the time turned out to be, although exorbitant, less than a quarter of the number we found. So there is more work to be done.

Procurement to be done smart and is often consolidated. With the help of my colleague and Senator WARREN and is often consolidated. With the number we found. So there is more work to be done.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to strongly support this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time. Mr. Speaker, I urge adoption of the bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3243.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The yeas and nays were ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 418, nays 0, not voting 15, as follows:

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Montana (Mr. Goyer) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 418, nays 0, not voting 15, as follows:

Mr. Speaker, I urge passage of the SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Montana (Mr. Goyer) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill.

Mr. Speaker, I urge passage of the SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Montana (Mr. Goyer) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill.
So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

FITARA ENHANCEMENT ACT of 2017

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3243) to amend title 40, United States Code, to eliminate the sunset of certain provisions relating to information technology, to amend the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2015 to extend the sunset relating to the Federal Data Center Consolidation Initiative, and for other purposes, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELLE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 418, nays 0, not voting 15, as follows:

(Roll No. 563)

YEAS—418

Mr. ELLISON changed his vote from "nay" to "yea."
ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Ms. GRANGER. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to make votes. Had I been present, I would have voted “yea” on rollocall No. 562, and “nay” on rolcall No. 563.

LIMITING TO A CERTAIN DATE APPLICABILITY OF PROVISIONS OF SECTION 7 OF THE WAR POWERS RESOLUTION TO HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 81

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the provisions of section 7 of the War Powers Resolution (50 U.S.C. 1546) shall apply to H. Con. Res. 81 not earlier than November 2, 2017, but on the same terms that would have adhered on October 13, 2017.

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

There was no objection.

REMEMBERING SERGEANT DUSTIN WRIGHT

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

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of a Toombs County native. Twenty-nine-year-old Staff Sergeant Dustin Michael Wright was one of the three U.S. Army Green Beret soldiers killed in the line of duty last week.

The U.S. Africa Command says Dustin was part of a team assisting in advising local forces in southwest Niger at the time of the ambush.

A 2007 graduate from Toombs County High School, Dustin joined the Army soon after graduation, following in the footsteps of his parents and his brother. His family remembers him as a beloved jokester and was always making people laugh. He took great pride in serving the country, and I am so proud to see the Toombs County community coming together to paint the town red, white, and blue in honor of Dustin’s life. Dustin was truly a hometown hero, and Toombs County will remember him often.

As Jesus said: “Greater love has no one than this, to lay down one’s life for his friend.”

Dustin sacrificed his life for his brothers and sisters in service to this great country. I will never forget our freedom fighter from Toombs County.

MaST COMMUNITY CHARTER SCHOOL NAMED A 2017 BLUE RIBBON SCHOOL OF EXCELLENCE

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

Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize MaST Community Charter School, an incredible institution in my district that was just named a 2017 Blue Ribbon School of Excellence by the Department of Education.

MaST is a groundbreaking educational community that emphasizes collaborative, technology-driven, hands-on learning. They are preparing the next generation of American leaders and visionaries who will change the future in ways we can only imagine.

Blue Ribbon schools are characterized by the highest level of academic excellence and by their success in closing achievement gaps across student populations.

These elite institutions are a gold standard of instruction, inclusion, and innovation. MaST Community Charter School was one of only 342 schools across the country to earn this honor this year.

I want to congratulate the teachers, staff, administrators, parents, and students of the MaST Community Charter School on their remarkable and well-deserved achievement.

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF JESUS A. PERMUY

(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. Mr. Speaker, I rise to announce the introduction of H.R. 3979, bipartisan legislation that reauthorizes the National Wildlife Refuge System Volunteer, Community Partnership, and Education Program.

This program ensures public access to refuges for exploring, hunting, fishing, and studying wildlife.

Refuges have a tremendous impact, even in Brooklyn, where Fish and Wildlife Service staff and volunteers work with local public schools to cultivate the next generation of conservationists and wildlife enthusiasts through hands-on learning.

Carmen Wheeler, a second grade student in Brooklyn, recently wrote to me and said: “I think we should keep the wildlife refugees safe, even if they are far away, because they will always keep our world healthier.”

We are with you, Carmen.

GIVING TO CHARITY IS CRUCIAL

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

Mr. WALKER. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to announce the introduction of the Universal Charitable Giving Act. Many Americans believe that people, not the government, offer the best solutions to solve the ailments that face our society. Strong families, strong churches, and strong communities are the foundations of our Nation. By supporting charities, we can make our communities and our country a better place for Americans from all walks of life.

Giving to charity is crucial for economic prosperity, happiness, and the success of our people, but for too long only the most wealthy have been incentivized to give to the causes they believe in.

The Universal Charitable Giving Act incentivizes charitable giving for low- and middle-income taxpayers. It would allow everyone to deduct charitable giving, regardless of itemizing status.

With tax reform, our aim is to increase take-home pay for middle America. With my bill, our goal is to increase support for all charities.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the great work of our faith-based and charitable organizations by supporting this bill.
NAFTA RENegotiations BEGIN

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

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, this week, the fourth round of NAFTA renegotiations will begin. President Trump will have an opportunity to deliver on his promise last year to get a better deal for American workers. I hope he does.

Our current trade deals are rigged in favor of the largest corporations in this country and against working people. In my home State of Rhode Island, we have lost 31,000 manufacturing jobs since NAFTA and the WTO took effect. That is more than half of the manufacturing jobs in my State. The folks who kept their jobs have seen their paychecks get smaller.

Rhode Islanders know, most importantly, that we need a trade deal that is fair; but they know that trade deals that we have now help powerful corporations, but they are killing American jobs, helping corporations outsource jobs at the expense of working people.

This week I am asking President Trump to demand a new NAFTA agreement that has strong labor and environmental protections, that end foreign tribunals that allow corporations to sue the U.S. Government and force taxpayers to pay the bill, that has better Buy American requirements, that has strict protections against currency manipulation, that has strong rules of origin on manufactured goods, and that has provisions that bring down the cost of prescription drugs.

These are commonsense provisions that will empower American working families, and they should be included in any new trade agreement.

HOPE FOR TRAFFICKED VICTIMS

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, for years, Lynda could not bring herself to speak about her past turmoil and nightmares.

Lynda is finally telling about her tortured life. When she was 16, two neighborhood boys drugged and sexually assaulted her. Highly drugged, the boys convinced her to have sex for money just once. But it wasn’t for just one time, Mr. Speaker. They set up online advertisements to sell her and other girls.

When one of the other girls tried to escape, they tied her to a chair and beat her up mercilessly. They mixed drugs into the food to maintain control over the girls. It was years before Lynda finally escaped her turmoil.

Today the rape and torture still haunt Lynda. She works every day to become a survivor. I recently introduced the Abolish Human Trafficking Act that provides grants to ensure that victims like Lynda get help and services, such as mental health counseling, legal aid, job training, things that they deserve from us. This will help trafficking victims put their broken lives back together.

Trafficking is a scourg, and we need to send a message to everyone that our kids are not for sale.

And that is just the way it is.

WHITE HOUSE IMMIGRATION PRINCIPLES

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

Ms. JAYAPAL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to the cruel immigration proposal unveiled by the White House this week. This proposal goes beyond some of the worst immigration bills. It demands billions more for border security, tightens asylum standards, cuts off legal immigration, and implements a faulty points-based system that undermines our core values as a country and destroying our economy and our future.

Mr. Speaker, two-thirds of all immigrants to the United States are women and children, and these policies will disproportionately harm them. A points-based system eliminates family-based immigration, and it is insulting to the valuable contributions of women, especially.

Nearly 70 percent of all women immigrants with legal status obtained it through the family system, and many are stuck in visa backlogs waiting years and even decades to reunite with their families.

Mr. Speaker, immigration has never been just about immigration. It has always been about who we are as a country and what we are willing to stand up for. I believe the majority of my Republican colleagues want to pass the Dream Act, and I ask them to join us in rejecting these anti-immigrant poison pills and proposing real solutions that benefit the American people and unify our country.

RECOGNIZING JEREMY RICH, NEW YORK’S 2017 NATIONAL DISTINGUISHED PRINCIPAL

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

Ms. TENNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Jeremy Rich, the principal at Barringer Road Elementary School in Ilion, a constituent of the 22nd Congressional District. For his stellar record of service, professionalism, and contributions to the educational profession, Mr. Rich was named the 22nd District’s 2017 National Distinguished Principal by the National Association of Elementary School Principals.

In 2013, Mr. Rich became the principal of Barringer Road Elementary. Since that day, he has arrived at school promptly at 6:30 a.m. each morning, bringing a positive attitude and inspirational words to each morning announcement.

Prior to his service at Barringer Road, Mr. Rich served as principal at the now-closed Remington Elementary School, where he was integral in facilitating the successful merger of the Mohawk and Ilion school districts.

During his time as principal for High School, he served as the principal, the dean of students, and an English teacher.

Mr. Rich’s commitment to his role is unparalleled. Both teachers and parents alike describe Mr. Rich as comforting, helpful, and passionate. One teacher described him as a “superstar principal and a fantastic human being.” Mr. Rich’s record exemplifies his clear dedication to public education, his students, and our community.

Please join me today in congratulating this well-respected educator and beloved member of the 22nd District.

FOCUS ON THE PAIN THAT PEOPLE ARE SUFFERING

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, let me first of all say what the world is coming to and how much our friends, our neighbors in America have had to go through: the most recent tragedy and massacre in Las Vegas, and now the horrendous, unspeakable tragedy by fires in California. I offer my sympathy to my friends, MIKE and JARED, Congresspersons in California, and we look forward to working with them, and offer our sympathy for those who are lost, those who are missing.

I think it is important, as we have these natural disasters, that we really attentively work on the pain that people are suffering; that is on the back side of Puerto Rico, where there is no power, and we don’t know the assessment of loss of life, there is no housing; from Florida to the U.S. Virgin Islands, where people are still waiting for relief, and the attention is not at the peak that it should. Then, in my own community, we are in desperate need of housing. We have senior citizens, after Hurricane Harvey, being dismissed and out of their homes.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, we are looking for a new disaster supplemental food program. We have the okay from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. We have the State of Texas ready to work with us, but we must make sure that our local officials realize that this is a disaster and that they move forward quickly to serve the people who are hungry and who are in need.
So, Harris County, you need to move faster to use the Federal funds that we now have.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF TOM PETTY

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

Mr. YOHO. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the life and legacy of Gainesville’s native son, Mr. Tom Petty.

Thomas Earl Petty was born on October 20, 1950, and, over a career that spanned five decades, collected 28 top 10 hits, the most of all time.

But his contribution cannot be measured in hits or awards. He wrote America’s soundtrack. Tom Petty’s story sounds familiar. He grew up in a small town, struggled, persisted, and then succeeded—a true American Dream story.

But it is not what he did; it is how he did it that strikes us. It is the honesty, wit, and sentimentality that made his music special. Every hit Tom Petty crafted became an anthem, each song a score to the memorable moments of our lives. His life would be much diminished without his work.

Jefferson and Madison wrote our system. Twain wrote our story that described Early American folklore. Petty wrote our songs. The songbook of America is bigger and brighter because of him.

Rest in peace as you continue “Runnin’ Down a Dream.”

REPUBLICAN STUDY COMMITTEE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. TAYLOR). Under the Speaker’s announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. WALKER) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. WALKER. Mr. Speaker, we are here today because, almost 11 months ago, the American people voted to give Republicans control of unified government. They were tired of being crushed by rising healthcare costs due to ObamaCare. They wanted America’s economy to prosper again. They wanted a secure border.

During the months that followed, Congress worked with President Trump to sign over 50 bills into law. On top of that, the House passed over 270 laws that now sit in the Senate awaiting action.

Despite this legislation, there is a unified voice that is loud and clear arriving daily from our base, saying, “Get something done.” The reason for that call is because Americans continue to be crushed by government policies, something that is very evident. These are the same policies that drove them to vote for us in the first place.

Americans are scarred by the broken promises of the former administration. They could not keep their doctor, even though they were told by the former President they could. Their premiums did not go down $2,500, and their exchanges did not work.

ObamaCare resulted in fewer options and increased costs for many Americans. Out-of-pocket costs continue to soar, with average deductibles for bronze plans topping $6,000 in 2017.

Some States, like Arizona, faced premium increases of 116 percent; Oklahoma, 69 percent. Tennessee faced a 63 percent increase. One-third of counties have only one insurer offering coverage on the exchange. Some entire States like Wyoming, right below me, South Carolina, Oklahoma, and Alaska only have one insurer.

Think about that. This trend is predicted to worsen, with half of American counties only having one insurer in 2018.

As we have come to almost 8 years with the ACA, or ObamaCare, we run a risk of thinking that it is normal. Our healthcare system is not perfect before. We are not making that case. But ObamaCare made what was already bad even worse.

We cannot think of these stats as mere numbers. Americans are really suffering under this law. Just because Senate Majority Leader MCCONNELL gave up on repealing ObamaCare in the Senate does not mean Americans will give Congress and Republicans a pass. We cannot and we must not give up on this important promise.

The burden of ObamaCare is only made worse by the lackluster growth of the economy in recent years. During the Obama administration years, the economy failed to grow even once at the historic goal of 3 percent a year, something we just saw in our last quarter.

Americans are as industrious and innovative as ever. Americans’ work ethic is not the problem. It is our anti-tax attitude that has been bogged down over the years by regulators and lobbyists.

Since our last major rewrite of the Tax Code 31 years ago, the same year that “Top Gun” was number one in the box office, 1986, our Tax Code has added over 35,000 pages. Think about that—35,000 pages. That is about three changes per day. Each page is another cutout or a loophole for the well connected, leaving the rest of the economy behind.

Our companies are at a disadvantage internationally, as our tax rate stands at 35 percent, the highest, as we know now, in the industrialized world.

Families continue to be punished with a marriage penalty.

Our Tax Code should be a competitive advantage for our companies competing with the world. It should encourage innovators to push the boundaries and find success.

The call to get something done that we hear loud and clear from Americans is also coupled with a call to make sure that we are doing our very best to secure the border. Perhaps there is no more vocal call from the past year than to build that wall.

In 2016, the United States saw a surge in illegal border crossings, with 46,000 illegals apprehended in that October alone. This is both a fiscal and a security issue.

Border security is more than just the border, though. Visa overstays are responsible for up to 40 percent of illegal immigration. We need a solution, and we need an action to this problem if we are truly to secure the border.

To add to these problems, more than 100 sanctuary jurisdictions have enacted policies which restrict cooperation with ICE, allowing potentially dangerous illegal immigrant criminals to remain in our country.

I am confident that the American people will deliver their final grade on Republicans over the next 3 months simply based on the three issues, the three promises that I am speaking about today: number one, continuing to work and replace and repeal ObamaCare; number two, reforming the Tax Code; and, number three, securing the border. In short, repeal, reform, secure. We need to fulfill these promises in the next 3 months. The urgency and the time is now.

As I said before, the status quo on these policies is literally crushing America, and this is why we elected Republicans. In fact, since 1913, when Republicans expanded, or when the House expanded the 387 Members to 435, this is the only time in history when back-to-back Congresses, the Americans have elected 240 or more Republicans, and it is time we did our job.

We need to keep our promises to the American people.

I am pleased to be joined by members of the Republican Study Committee today to talk about the importance of keeping these promises. That is why it is my privilege to introduce one of our newer members from Kansas, Representative RON ESTES.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. ESTES).

Mr. ESTES of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, after a decade of inadequate economic growth across America, there is new growing optimism that our economy is about to be set free again. Consumer confidence in the economy is the highest it has been since 2000. Why? I believe this is because the American people expect us to reform our broken Tax Code, and they are excited about it.

Outdated and ineffective Tax Code has held our economy down for the past decade. It is time we fix this and empower working families in America.

Real tax reform will be the best way to help America climb up the economic ladder. A stronger economy will bring higher wages and better jobs. The goal is to make our Federal Code simple and to make it fair.
hire an army of lawyers to protect their interests. This is why Republicans are looking to enact real reform for all Americans. The argument against tax reform is this: the plan is just a tax cut for the rich.

The reality is, this tax reform framework is focused on helping middle class families. The tax system is laid out by Republicans that allows low- and middle-income workers to keep more of their hard-earned paychecks in order to save for their children’s college, for their retirement, or any other things that they want.

I implore my colleagues across the aisle to do what is right and help to fix our antiquated Tax Code.

Mr. Speaker, if you were trying to do my own taxes, and I think that is true for millions and millions of Americans. There is a frustration with that, and there have been quick results.

The Davis-Oliver Act provides tools to crack down on dangerous sanctuary city policies and contains much-needed changes to protect American communities from unlawful immigrants who commit crimes in the United States, or are gang members.

The Davis-Oliver Act also enhances national security by improving our Nation’s first line of defense, the visa issuance process. It provides thorough screening of foreign nationals seeking to enter the United States in order to prevent terrorists from entering our country. The bill also ensures the rule of law and removes the ability of any President to unilaterally shut down immigration enforcement by granting States and localities the authority to voluntarily assist in the enforcement of Federal immigration law and to enforce their own immigration laws consistent with Federal practices.

The House Judiciary Committee has also approved bills to reform the asylum and refugee programs to curtail rampant fraud, while ensuring that our Nation continues to be a safe haven for those persecuted around the world. The surge of Central American unaccompanied alien minors and family units seeking to enter the U.S. illegally at our southern border put a strain on manpower and resources. It also exposed loopholes in our Nation’s immigration laws that are being exploited by smugglers and others seeking to game the system.

The Asylum Reform and Border Patrol Act makes a number of improvements to our Nation’s laws to prevent fraud and abuse in the system and assure that asylum is reserved for those truly fleeing persecution in their home country.

Further, the Protection of Children Act makes sure that unaccompanied alien minors who make the dangerous journey to the United States are swiftly and safely returned home. For those who stay with a sponsor in the United States while awaiting their immigration hearing, the bill provides for greater transparency and safety to these minors to ensure that they are not inadvertently delivered into the hands of criminals or abusers.

The Refugee Program Integrity Restoration Act reforms the refugee program by curbing fraud, increasing public safety and national security. It also provides States and local governments the power to decide if refugees are to be resettled within their communities and gives Congress, not the President, the authority to set the overall refugee ceiling for each year.

The House Judiciary Committee also plans to bring up a bill that protects jobs for citizens and legal workers, the Legal Workforce Act. This bill requires all U.S. employers to check the work eligibility of all future hires through the tried and tested E-Verify system. E-Verify quickly confirms 99 percent of work-eligible employees and takes less than two minutes to use.

Over 740,000 American employers currently use E-Verify, and 83 percent of America’s employers support a mandatory electronic verification system. While many aspects of our Nation’s immigration system need to be improved, including our guest worker program for American agriculture, we must strengthen the enforcement of our immigration laws. Immigration enforcement is crucial to maintain our sovereignty, to protect national security, and to restore the rule of law.

Mr. Speaker, I call on Congress to take up the House Judiciary Committee’s immigration enforcement bills soon.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DeSantis), a colleague and one of the sharpest, most intellectual Members of Congress.

Mr. DeSANTIS. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend from North Carolina for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, if you were trying to do damage to the United States and you wanted to design a Tax Code that hindered economic growth, that diverted a lot of productive energy, that basically kept America from reaching its economic potential, you probably couldn’t do much worse than designing the code that we have.

It is enormously complex—70,000 plus pages. I confess, there is no way I can do my own taxes, and I think that is true for millions and millions of Americans. There is a frustration with that, but it also costs massive amounts of money and diverts energy. We are talking about hundreds of billions of dollars that get diverted to complying with the Tax Code, and that is not optimal for economic growth.

It repels capital and incentivizes companies to relocate overseas and take jobs overseas. You see companies reincorporating in Ireland or Canada. Illegal because they have the highest corporate tax rate in the industrialized world. We are almost trying to send businesses overseas.
It doesn’t allow middle class families to keep enough of the money they earn. If you look over the past decade or so, family income really hasn’t risen by that much, yet the cost of living has gone up. So by taking more and more from taxes, it makes it harder for middle class families to make ends meet.

So reforming the Tax Code, doing a nice, big tax cut, I think is long overdue. It would be a boon to our economy. You would have a simple system—no more 70,000 pages. Fill out your return. That not only is more economically efficient, it gives people a lot of peace of mind to know they can do their taxes themselves. It is going to incentivize us to bring all of the trillions of dollars in overseas profits, and bring it back to the United States so that we can invest it here through our companies and create more jobs here.

It will make our American businesses more competitive. Our business tax system is the worst in the world. It is uncompetitive. This, I think, will change a lot of that by having a competitive business tax rate, and I think that that will mean more economic growth.

So I think all that is pretty obvious to most people. Now let’s look at this in a fair way. The question for us now is, we have to produce this bill. We have been talking about tax reform for a long time this year, and I think that is great, but it is time right now for us to produce this bill and debate it here in the House, pass it, and send it over to the United States Senate.

I am not encouraged when, given the urgency of this, we are going on a recess next week. The House is not going to be here. You are not going to have a tax bill marked up in the Ways and Means Committee or unveiled to the public. Members are not going to be debating that. I think it is time that we do that, and I think there should be a sense of urgency here.

We have got to get our job done. I think the bill should have been passed by now, but let’s get it done. Send it to the Senate. I don’t think you would probably have very smart money to bet that the Senate is going to come through in the clutch. They haven’t shown they can do that yet. But this is going to be a big question for them: Can you get anything done in the U.S. Senate? This is something that we know we need to do. It will be good for our economy.

All of the Republicans have said that our Tax Code is a disaster. So if we send them a good bill, this is going to be a major test. Can you apply the majority that the voters gave us? Can you honor your promises and do something good for taxpayers? I hope the answer is yes. But I think in this body we have got to be focusing on, let’s put the Senate to the test. Let’s draft, debate, and pass a strong, bold, tax cut and tax reform.

Mr. WALKER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his comments. I always appreciate the contribution that the gentleman makes to the House and to the American people. I could not agree more. For those who may be listening or watching, you may have seen, in the last few months, a heightened energy, or an urgency when it comes to doing our job. But I see the Senate’s ability to move and to begin to act—not just on things like repealing the healthcare, ObamaCare, but also moving, getting ready to move, hopefully, on tax reform.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. NORMAN), a brand-new Member who came in from a special election to replace OMB Director Mick Mulvaney when he took the position with President Trump’s administration. He has got to speed quickly and is a huge asset to the Republican Study Committee and to the House Republicans as a whole.

Mr. NORMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support the Republican Study Committee’s three promises in 3 months’ pledge to repeal ObamaCare, secure the border, and enable comprehensive tax reform. I applaud RSC’s Chairman Mike Walker for his leadership on this and the RSC’s three promises to repeal and secure, the House has begun to deliver by passing the American Health Care Act and providing $1.6 billion in border wall funding.

Tonight, I want to focus on the third promise: passing comprehensive tax reform. Our Nation’s Tax Code affects every family, business, and worker and is a key driver behind America’s economic competitiveness. Congress has not passed comprehensive tax reform since 1986. That is 28 years.

The average cost of a new house then in the United States was $89,430. For a new Ford F–150 pickup truck, the average price was $33,500. Mr. Speaker, it has been way too long before we have taken comprehensive tax reform into consideration.

Since then, the number of pages in the IRS code has increased by nearly 50,000 pages. The corporate tax rate is at 35 percent, which is the highest in the industrialized world. Ireland’s, to 12 percent. This is something that we know we need to do. It will be good for our economy.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. YOHO). Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the chairman’s leadership on this. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the three promises, 3-month initiative that you have outlined here, and I think it is so important that we follow through with this.

I want to start with tax reform. Members can say: Why do we need tax reform? I think it is self-evident. Our Tax Code, as you heard, is the most burdensome in the world. It stifles economic growth, entrepreneurship, and it creates noncompliance. So we need to simplify it. We have told the American people we were going to do that. If we get it in charge.

I think the repeal of ObamaCare—some people get offended if we call it ObamaCare, so I will refer to it as the Affordable Care Act. It has disrupted over 20 percent of our economy, and I think it is not affordable. We can talk to so many different people. I know our premiums went up $11,000 since I have come to Congress. In fact, our policy got canceled when I came to Congress because of ObamaCare.

Then I think the third part of that is we promised the American people that we would repeal this in its entirety and fix healthcare so that people have access to healthcare, it is affordable, and that it is quality care is the part that gets left out.

Then I want to touch on border security. This is something that we have all run on. Any nation needs a secure border. A sovereign nation has to have a sovereign nation. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his comments. As you see, three promises, 3 months; October, November, December, three promises, 3 months; repeal, reform, and secure. That is the promise from the Republican Study Committee and looking up 157 members, 17 of the 20 chairmen.

Now it is in our ability to make sure this gets through the Senate and passed into law by the President. We can’t force all that, but what we are committed to is doing our part and doing our job to get these pieces of legislation through regular order to the House for a vote to fulfill the promises that most of us ran on over the last several elections.

It is also a wonderful privilege tonight to introduce our House veterinary—Mr. Speaker, the gentleman can do anything that as he would need if we need a House veterinarian—but the great Representative from central Florida who does fine work in the House, Dr. Ted Yoho. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. YOHO).
I applaud President Trump for releasing a set of principles which I fully endorse and his priorities that are focused on making our borders more secure. President Trump’s consistent message calling for better enforcement of our immigration laws and improving border security is one of the main reasons he won the Presidency.

President Trump is sticking to his campaign promises, which is refreshing to see in Washington, D.C., these days, a town where too many times there is an aversion to tough, worker-focused, innovative policies. The United States House.

Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to yield to the fine gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SANFORD).

Mr. Speaker, one of the most accomplished men, sometimes a person whom we refer to as “Governor” around here when it comes to political minds, is the gentleman from South Carolina, Representative MARK SANFORD. Week in and week out, he is a very diligent and great leader in this House.

Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to yield to the fine gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SANFORD).

Mr. SANFORD. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I would make two quick points on the importance of tax reform. One, I would refer to an editorial that appeared in yesterday’s Wall Street Journal. What it talked about was the nexus between deficits and tax reform. What it pointed to in this editorial was that a good part of the reason why deficits have escalated has been tied to anemic economic growth and that, unlike other recoveries that had been more robust in nature, the revenues had not come in as they have in past recoveries. As a consequence, deficits have exploded.

Two, what we oftentimes forget in the debate on tax reform is how important it is that we encourage and, in essence, complement the efforts of those who are out there risking on a daily basis. So with that in mind, it is important that we have tax reform that includes people who are actually, again, building businesses.

Think about this: the top 25 percent of the earners out there pay 90 percent of the taxes; the top 10 percent pay 60 percent of the taxes. Now, let’s add that for just a second. If you are in the top 25 percent, that begins at $77,000. If you are in the top 10 percent, you are at $333,000.

Now, tell me this: When I talk to a truck driver and a schoolteacher at home, their combined income could be around $100,000. Are they rich? I would say no. But they are out there making the kinds of risks that are necessary to the building of capital that was exactly what The Wall Street Journal talked about.

If we want to do something about deficits, and if we want to do something about capital formation that is so necessary to raising wages, then we have got to do something about this equation. It is important that those earners and those small-business people not be left out, as is the case right now. That is yet another reason why tax reform is so important this year.

Mr. WALKER. Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative SANFORD; I appreciate the gentleman’s good words, experience, and knowledge.

Mr. Speaker, speaking of Congress as a whole, it is well past time to make sure that tax reform and tax relief gets across to the American people.

A lot of times we talk about classes. The truth is it is probably better terminology to talk about income levels, lower, middle, and higher income levels. That is one of the reasons why we are proceeding forward with the Charitable Giving Act, which is something that impacts both the lower and middle income levels.

We believe that is something that needs to be connected to tax reform to make sure that those folks who come from a background of teachers and truck drivers as we just heard about, but also other areas of the middle class and maybe lower income levels, something that they have a way where they are able to make sure that every dollar and every sacrifice they give back to a charitable organization—whether it is a local church or whether it is to the United Way—to make sure that every dollar is counted.

Now, let’s define something that has been going on way too long. As we know, there are 75,000 pages right now of IRS Tax Code regulations. If the IRS wants to come after a private citizen, the private citizen doesn’t have much of a reference. There is something different. The other is with physical capital. One person with a bulldozer can move a lot more dirt than one person with a shovel.

Yet what we oftentimes forget in the debate on tax reform is how important it is that we encourage and, in essence, complement the efforts of those who are out there risking on a daily basis. So with that in mind, it is important that we have tax reform that includes people who are actually, again, building businesses.

Think about this: the top 25 percent of the earners out there pay 90 percent of the taxes; the top 10 percent pay 60 percent of the taxes.

Now, let’s add that for just a second. If you are in the top 25 percent, that begins at $77,000. If you are in the top 10 percent, you are at $333,000.

Now, tell me this: When I talk to a truck driver and a schoolteacher at home, their combined income could be around $100,000. Are they rich? I would say no. But they are out there making the kinds of risks that are necessary to the building of capital that was exactly what The Wall Street Journal talked about.

If we want to do something about deficits, and if we want to do something about capital formation that is so necessary to raising wages, then we have got to do something about this equation. It is important that those earners and those small-business people not be left out, as is the case right now. That is yet another reason why tax reform is so important this year.

Mr. WALKER. Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative SANFORD; I appreciate the gentleman’s good words, experience, and knowledge.

Mr. Speaker, speaking of Congress as a whole, it is well past time to make sure that tax reform and tax relief gets across to the American people.

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make you want to get up every day and continue to pursue that American Dream.

But not only from the individual side of this—certainly very important—but what about this corporate tax rate, this business rate that we talk constantly about that almost has become Washington jargon talking points? Why is that so important?

Over the years since the 1930s and 1940s, our corporate business rate has climbed to the highest in the industrial world.

Why is that? Why would we make it tougher on our manufacturers and our companies to have a higher tax rate? What incentive is it to stay here? We could track company after company.

I come from the State of North Carolina where textiles and furniture used to be two of our top three job providers. A lot of those companies now you will find in Vietnam or other places.

That corporate tax rate that literally has gone through the roof, why wouldn’t we want to reduce that business rate? Why wouldn’t we want to incentivize companies to begin to bring those jobs back to the United States?

I think, and I think it is something that all of us should have the energy and the ability to be able to get behind and really push forward.

We have been promising this for how long? Sixteen years? I was a junior in high school. Thirty-two years this has been on the docket, and the moment is now for us to deliver. If it is not now, as Reagan used to say, then when? Then how?

What should we be doing if it is not fulfilling the very promise that we have made to the American people, and that is that we are going to provide genuine—not some kind of phony legislation, not some kind of showboat, but genuine tax reform and tax relief for the American people?

Now, you may hear sometimes that, hey, the Republican plan is only for the most wealthy. Let’s look at the numbers. Let’s put a little math equation up, if we could, please.

Let’s say, if you go to that middle-income family, two parents working as hard as they can, they are bringing about $50,000 a year annually, yet their tax break, their tax benefit is 10 percent. Now, math tells me that is only $5,000 compared to the $10,000.

So you may say the spin from time to time, well, the wealthier are getting the higher tax break, the wealthier are getting the higher tax credit. Listen, when it comes to dollar for dollar, the impact that that makes to the middle and lower-income families is drastic. I will tell you this. Every time we turn around, every time that each Member goes back and forth to his district, he is hearing the same message: “Get something done.”

Tax reform is one of those areas where, specifically, we are being compelled, we are being urged, and we are being called. My fellow Members in the House, please hear those urgent voices right now. Even if we don’t want to move past the tax relief and the humanitarian component, is it not politically strategic for us to do what we have promised to do on behalf of the American people?

As I said in my opening, I am confident that the American people will deliver the final grade over the next 3 months. The 115th Congress, what kind of grade will we have over the next 3 months if we do not deliver on these three promises?

I am hoping that that urgency is resonating. Repealing and replacing, continuing to fight to repeal and replace ObamaCare, to make sure that we are continuing to reform and do everything that we can to work on the Tax Code. Finally, the promise that we have been making year after year is to make sure that we are protecting the American people by securing our border.

I understand that each of these items is a major legislative item in its own right. To be frank, we should have been delivering on them throughout the year. It is October, the 10th month of the year. It is high past time. We only have such a busy agenda this late in the game because we haven’t delivered on our promises.

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I want to thank my colleagues and fellow Republican Study Committee members tonight for joining us this evening.

I would ask the American people to continue to support and continue to urge their Members of Congress to deliver on these promises.

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

REAUTHORIZE CHIP

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker’s announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. O’HALLERAN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. O’HALLERAN. Mr. Speaker, as a Member of Congress, as a father, and as a grandfather, nothing I do is more important than ensuring every child in Arizona and America has the opportunity to live up to their God-given potential. No matter where they live, kids deserve to grow up healthy, with every chance to succeed.

That is why it is beyond unacceptable that, for the first time ever, Congress missed the deadline to reauthorize the Children’s Health Insurance Program.

For decades, CHIP has been a bipartisan program and has been reauthorized with broad support, until now. It has now been 11 days since CHIP expired. This is an outrage for children across the Nation who depend on the affordable, quality care they receive, thanks to CHIP. It is especially troubling for Arizona.

Arizona has had the unfortunate distinction of being one of the worst States for healthcare access for children. Until last year, it was the only State in the entire Nation without an active Children’s Health Insurance Program.

Two years ago, Congress reauthorized CHIP and included enhanced match rate funding for States under the Affordable Care Act. Thanks to advocates on the ground and with bipartisan support in our State legislature, this enhanced funding finally paved the way for our State to reopen KidsCare.

Last year, KidsCare began enrolling children—over 23,000 so far. We have just begun the hard work of educating and reaching out to the working families who qualify for coverage.

Arizona is one of a handful of States, as you can see here in this chart in blue, that would run out of Federal funds to cover children by December of this year, absent congressional action. Families in these States are the most at risk for losing critical access to care, until Congress steps up to the plate and passes a robust reauthorization with enhanced rate funding.

I have met and heard from many of these families and their providers. I know what it is stake for them.

Cate Arnquist is a mother from Tucson, Arizona, whose 8-year-old son, Zachary, was approved for coverage through KidsCare last month. This is a huge relief to her family: “I recently moved to Arizona with her husband and works at a local elementary school. Cate said:

It’s important for me to know that if I need to take him to the doctor, I will be able to take him. As a parent, your kids are always your biggest priority. I think every parent wants to make sure their kids are healthy.

Cate, I couldn’t agree with you more. Kids like Zachary deserve to know that their elected officials here in Congress are looking out for them.

Graciela is a working single mom who lives in Phoenix. Her 17-year-old daughter, who suffers from high blood pressure, relies on KidsCare coverage. Graciela says:

I just pray and ask everybody who is behind CHIP to think about it. They don’t know how hard it is sometimes when you are running your small business and you don’t have the money. Should I put a plate of food on the table or should I take my kid to the doctor?

These are questions no parent in Arizona or in America should have to ask themselves. Doctors in our community agree.

A pediatrician practicing in Gilbert, Arizona, shared an important story.
with us about a family with five children in her practice. The father works as a grocer, but makes $20 too much to qualify for Medicaid. That is $20.

One of the children has significant developmental delays and another child has a serious neurological disease. When this child was born, it became clear that he most likely had the neurological disease as well.

The doctor referred this child for evaluation, but the family was unable to take him to the neurologist because they could not afford the office visits and diagnostic testing necessary. Had KidsCare been open at the time, the family could have applied for coverage, since they qualified, based on their income.

This story and our experience in Arizona should be a cautionary tale for the rest of the States who may freeze their program if Congress fails to reauthorize CHIP now.

No family should be put at risk when they need help for their kids. Working families like these are doing their best to make ends meet and raise healthy kids.

Reauthorizing CHIP isn’t just the right thing to do morally, but it is the smart, economic decision for our communities. I understood that when I was a Republican State legislator and fought for KidsCare, and I understand it now here in Congress.

We know that when children have meaningful access to quality, affordable, comprehensive healthcare coverage, our schools, families, and our State’s bottom line all win.

Healthy kids have a better shot in school and grow up to be healthy adults. When we invest in them, when we invest in their families, we are investing in their futures and our future.

We must do better. Instead of playing partisan games and spending time on bills that make coverage and affordability worse for Americans, we need to make CHIP reauthorization front and center of our focus.

While I am pleased that the Senate Finance Committee and the House Energy and Commerce Committee have started to take up action, it is past time to get a robust bill to the President’s desk.

CHIP has long been a bipartisan program, and I will keep working with anyone of good will or party, to make sure our kids have the care they deserve. They are counting on us. We cannot let them down.

I am pleased to be joined this evening by my colleagues who are committed to fighting for kids in our communities. I want to thank them for joining this Special Order hour to fight for CHIP and a strong reauthorization process.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Rhode Island, Mr. CICILLINE.

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Arizona for yielding and for his leadership in organizing this Special Order hour.

There is no more sacred responsibility that we have than to ensure that the children in this country have access to quality, affordable healthcare. So I rise this evening to speak in support of the vital Children’s Health Insurance Program, also known as CHIP.

As it stands, CHIP authorization expired on September 30, 2017—this past September. This program assures that 9 million children, including 27,000 children and pregnant women in my home State of Rhode Island, are provided with low-cost health insurance, which covers essential services such as routine checkups, immunizations, doctor visits, prescriptions, dental and vision care, inpatient and outpatient hospital care, laboratory and x-ray services, and emergency services.

This historically bipartisan program has been successful in lowering the percentage of children who are uninsured from nearly 14 percent when it started in 1997 to 4.5 percent in 2015.

In fact, the Kaiser Family Foundation recently concluded that, without an extension of CHIP, “States would face budget pressures, children would lose coverage, and implementation of the Affordable Care Act would result in increased costs and administrative burden for States as well as confusion for families.”

If not extended by Congress soon, many States will no longer be able to fund the program and will begin limiting coverage, some as early as the end of this year.

In May, the Center for American Progress released a report that shows if CHIP were to expire, over 9 million children would lose coverage.

This story and our experience in Arizona should be a cautionary tale for the rest of the States who may freeze their program if Congress fails to reauthorize CHIP now.

Mr. Speaker, simply put, it is hypocritical for you to say that life ends as soon as the umbilical cord is cut. And, Mr. Speaker, your actions prove it.

You know, I am of the mindset of one of our news reporters, Rachel Maddow, that we ought to just watch what you do and not what you say.

Almost 9 million children depend on CHIP for healthcare; 9 million children from low- to moderate-income families who will lose access to vaccinations, routine checkups, dental care, mental healthcare, prescriptions, and some of these children are profoundly disabled.

Mr. Speaker, what is going to happen to the 24 percent of the children enrolled in CHIP that have special needs?
healthcare needs, including asthma and learning disabilities?

The health of our children depends on this program, yet, Mr. Speaker, all you can do to muster up a reauthorization for CHIP is to fund it by increasing Medicare—Medicaid, a program designed for people over 65—and cutting the Prevention and Public Health Fund.

All you can do, Mr. Speaker, is to pit old people against our babies in order to provide basic healthcare to children. This sounds really Faustian, and it is unimaginable, yet this is the reality that we are working with.

Mr. Speaker, it is now time to put these politics aside and to reauthorize CHIP now for 5 years. This is a disgrace not only in this Nation, but internationally. I, as an American, don’t want to be judged by putting our kids last.

Mr. O’HALLERAN. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentlewoman from Wisconsin for her comments.

Mr. Speaker, I am kind of new to this body, but when I came here, I came with the same intention as I did when I first got into the Arizona State Legislature. One of the first issues I worked on was CHIP, a program that helped kids stay healthy, a program so that they could be successful at school, a program that is imperative. Yet, today, millions of people around this country, millions of families around this country, are asking themselves: What are they going to do about my children’s health? What is going to happen? Who is going to be there for my child?

When I was a police officer, I had, sadly, the ability to see people in poverty day in and day out, what it meant to their families, but especially what sick children look like, what it means to see children taken out of homes in ambulances instead of having preventative care, what it means for a child to have to be in a hospital instead of having the ability to have preventative care, what it means to a child with disabilities to have to go through that process and not have the physical therapy that is needed...

This happened time and time again before CHIP became reality. I don’t think America wants to go back there. I think America wants to move forward and make sure our children are healthy and to withstand the issues in our society that lead us to make sure that they do.

I cannot understand, for the life of me, why we would keep these families waiting, we are willing to sit back and not understand the core issues of what it means to those families to have to suffer through this process of the unknown of their child’s future healthcare.

I have to say that this is an issue that most Americans and most of this body agree to. I don’t know why we have gone down this path of taking money—or thinking of taking money away from the children. But I do know that we should get this dealt with quickly and make sure the families in America that need it can provide for their children’s health.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to Representative LANGEVIN, the gentleman from Rhode Island.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman for yielding. I appreciate all his time and effort he is putting into bringing attention to this issue. I also would like to thank him this evening as we highlight the imminent need to pass a full reauthorization of the Children’s Health Insurance Program.

Now, I represent the great State of Rhode Island, a State with over 27,000 children and pregnant women at risk of losing healthcare if CHIP is not fully funded. It is deeply troubling to me and many of my constituents, my colleagues in government, and we fought hard to make sure that we did better by our young people, by the most vulnerable, and by pregnant women in making sure that they had the healthcare coverage that they desperately need and deserve.

Instead of proactively crafting legislation to ensure 9 million low-income children and families maintain access to affordable, high-quality healthcare, Republicans focused their efforts on gutting the Affordable Care Act to the exclusion of everything else. Now, instead of putting their political priority to eliminate coverage for 23 million, they are passing on an opportunity to govern on multiple healthcare fronts. Rather than work to find meaningful bipartisan solutions, Republicans still seek ways of systematically unauthorizing ACA protections and have only offered untenable options to offset the cost of CHIP. That is no way to govern responsibly or to even remotely do it in a bipartisan way, which they could do.

Now, the plan to phase out healthcare for one population by stripping access to healthcare from another is wrong. This approach of robbing Peter to pay Paul does nothing to build a foundation for a healthier future, nor does it protect the communities with sufficient healthcare access today.

Proposing to slash the ACA’s Prevention and Public Health Fund and creating a greater financial burden on seniors by suggesting destructive Medicare care changes are not acceptable ways to bring Democrats to the table and pass a CHIP reauthorization with bipartisan support. Which, by the way, I am sure my colleagues who were speaking tonight, when CHIP was first authorized, it was done collaboratively in a bipartisan way at a contentious time in Congress, back when it was first enacted. But they found a way to do the right thing for vulnerable individuals, particularly our children, and we need to come together again.

We have a responsibility to move quickly, to ensure our children continue to have access to high-quality, affordable care, and CHIP is a program so vital that it is imperative. We need to come together in a bipartisan way. Let’s do the right thing for our children, and I look forward to reaching out across the aisle and cover our children.
Mr. Speaker, I thank again Mr. O’HALLERAN for his leadership on this vital issue, and I look forward to continuing to work with him as we reauthorize CHIP, hopefully in the very near future. Again, we got to do this together.

Mr. O’HALLERAN. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Rhode Island not only for his discussion today, but also for all his work on behalf of the children of America. I think that his record speaks for itself, and I am obvious that what we just heard came from his heart. So I thank the gentleman for his remarks.

I asked my fellow colleagues, when they start to work on this bill again—hopefully, they do it in a speedy fashion—that when they wake up in the morning, they think of what it means to have their child potentially without healthcare, what it means to have the unknown that we don’t know if next month or the month later they will lose that coverage because Congress has failed to address the issue that they have all agreed on for 20 years. We have to and we must find a way to come to an agreement.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. Norman). Under the Speaker’s announced policy of January 3, 2017, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. Gohmert) for 30 minutes.

Mr. Gohmert. Mr. Speaker, I yield to my good friend, Mr. Higgins from Louisiana.

The Flight of the Citizens of Louisiana Impacted by Hurricane Harvey

Mr. Higgins of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise unscripted to bring to the attention of the entire Nation the plight of the good citizens of Louisiana who were impacted by Hurricane Harvey last month. Beside me at this graph shows the rainfall, the water event of Hurricane Harvey as it impacted Texas and Louisiana.

As anyone can see, it was a tremendous water event, unprecedented rainfall, that overwhelmed any water management that one can see, the parishes of southwest Louisiana were impacted, as well as many counties in Texas, yet, as we discuss disaster relief, Louisiana is absent from our conversation. I point out, to all who wish to witness the State line of Louisiana, as defined by the Sabine River, and the impact of Hurricane Harvey.

Mr. Speaker, Hurricane Harvey did not recognize the artificial State boundaries, that we have created as a Republic, nor should we as we provide disaster relief for our citizens. Just after Hurricane Harvey had impacted Texas and Louisiana, my office drafted a letter to the executive branch to a President that I admire and respect, advising him of the impact, and begging his expedited approval of the disaster status once the formal request had been submitted by our Governor.

Sometime later, just 2 weeks ago, that formal letter was submitted by the Governor of our State. Just after that submission, my office drafted and submitted a second letter requesting expedited approval of disaster status for these citizens of Louisiana, who were clearly just as impacted by this storm as many citizens in Texas.

Tomorrow, we shall send a third letter, this time signed by the entire Louisiana delegation. I ask that the Nation recognize the plight of the people I represent. The good and patriotic citizens of southwest Louisiana are suffering. I respect and admire my President, I support him, I have supported him since day one, and I support him still. But it is important that we, as representatives of the people, communicate clearly our intent and our service.

I beg that the leaders of the executive branch level would witness this clear evidence of the need for disaster declaration for south—of course, for southwest Louisiana. And I beg that this message is received with the spirit with which it is delivered, which is respectful, yet in determined service of the citizens whom I have sworn to represent.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for yielding these precious moments to me.

Mr. Gohmert. Mr. Speaker, we had some interesting days here, but, over the weekend, being back in Texas, I am hearing the cries from people all over east Texas. There is a small number that say: Hey, I am not making much, and I am getting a subsidy from the government, so I am okay on my healthcare, I am young, I have no health problems, and that is fine.

But over and over, there is a cry going out around America that says: We elected Republicans in the majority in the House and the majority in the Senate to help us with our healthcare—with really health insurance. Everybody can get healthcare. You can just go to the emergency room, whether you have money or not.

This is really more about health insurance. Some of us have not wanted health insurance to make our major decisions for us on our own healthcare. We haven’t wanted the government to make major decisions on our healthcare, but both are making those decisions for people across the country today.

Unfortunately, there are people telling me they are paying $8,000, $10,000, $12,000. I heard one for $20,000 yesterday from Texas, $20,000 for the family’s insurance, and they have a $12,000 deductible, and they can’t afford either one. They expected help.

President Trump is not the Congress. He has pushed, shoved, cajoled, done everything he could to try to get Congress moving in the House after a back and forth, wailing, gnashing of teeth. We got a bill. It wasn’t perfect by any stretch. But at least it would have given people relief from high premiums, most Americans. Hopefully, Republicans and Democrats at the other end of this building are doing everything they can to prevent confirmation of President Trump’s appointees.
to those departments so they can start getting things done.

It is amazing when one party like that can hold the ability, because of the filibuster rule, because of the requirement for 60 votes, apparently, they can hold up these appointees. To me, that is all the reason to go ahead and say: Do you know what, you are demanding action from people who you have not confirmed yet, so we are not going to let you play that game anymore. You have people saying: "Oh, bring on the defence," the departments aren't getting decisions made, aren't getting their work done," and all the while you are holding them back from being able to do it by not confirming the people who need to be doing that work.

The Senate ought to just say: We are not playing that game, we are not letting you play that game, we are going to call the game off, we are going to get serious about America's problems, and we are going to confirm Trump's nominees with 51 votes, not just judges, we are going to confirm his nominees with 51 votes. We cannot tolerate people—really it is fraudulent activity to hold back the nominees from being confirmed, and give them the administration for not getting the work done that those nominees who hadn't been confirmed will have to do.

The Senate needs to respond. The Senate did not respond to the bill we sent to them. They already were sitting around, thinking of games to play. In my 12 years here, I have never seen a situation like that, Mr. Speaker, where some of us got calls from people in the Senate who don't normally get calls, and that included people from the Tuesday Group, the Freedom Caucus, the Republican Study Committee, and the Republican leadership. They all were asking the same question: Okay, would you please promise us that if we pass this health care bill, that you won't take it up and pass it in the House? Because it is only if you guys promise us, the Republicans promise us, you won't pass the bill that we have down here—apparently, it was so bad—that we will let it go to committee, or you will amend it, but you just promise us you won't pass the bill if we pass it.

Well, as far as I know, everybody I talked to gave reassurance to the Senators who called them and said: No, we promise, we won't pass your bill, it is terrible, we won't, we can assure you. Even with those assurances, just the effort to get something passed so that we can come together in a conference between House conferees and Senate conferees, just to come together for the chance to get the Senate to get people down there working up to have some skinny repeal, they called it, of ObamaCare, and at least some measure of change to the suffering that people are enduring right now, and they still couldn't get 51 votes. Rich is all they needed under the reconciliation process.

Even when they were assured: We promise you, we won't pass this bill, you will get another chance to vote, just help the process, let's get it to conference, so we can get some relief to the American people who are suffering, suffering so much that they would go so far as to give us the majority in the Senate after they have given us the 51 votes to pass the Senate after they have given us the 51 votes to pass the White House as a Republican Party— incredible.

But the American people are still suffering. And the budget apparently does not provide for ObamaCare to be repealed and replaced. As the design is not re-reconciliation for the next 12 months. So unless the Senate feels enough heat from the American people—the Republicans that is—they are not going to do anything about ObamaCare that they promise to repeal and replace.

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Apparently, it is going to have to get pretty hot in the kitchen down in the Senate to give us something that worked up enough to finally give the American people the relief that the Senate Republicans promised.

Now, I don't like talking about this, despite what some may think. It is much nicer to go along and get along, but people are suffering because we haven't kept our promise. The Senate couldn't pass anything that would get the American people some relief from all the suffering from ObamaCare.

For those who are not aware, yes, there were bailouts for the monopoly insurance companies. Some made record profits, and yet they are still, under ObamaCare, the way it was written, supposed to get bailouts. So it appears pretty clear the design of ObamaCare was to make it fail. Apparently, people at the top of some of these insurance companies have not been smart enough to figure out that they signed their own death warrants when they embraced ObamaCare, but it appears it was designed to make people angry at the greedy, allegedly corrupt health insurance companies.

I don't think they are corrupt, but there sure was a lot of greed there between some of the pharmaceutical companies and the health insurance companies signing on. Some of them tried to say: Well, oh, but we needed to be at the table.

We are going: Not if you are on the menu you didn't want to be at the table.

I am sure the executives that have their golden parachutes leave the health insurance companies after 5, 6, 7 years with their incomes.

The design was the health insurance companies make a fortune, people's premiums kept going through the roof, deductibles kept going through the roof, bailouts were provided to insurance companies that had record profits, and then the design ultimately would be the American people getting so angry that they flush it out and say: Enough already. I never thought I would say this, but anything has got to be better than these insurance companies, the handful that are left, so let's just let the government take care of everything.

Then we get a system that is twice as bad as the VA for all Americans, so all Americans can suffer fairly, equally, instead of getting what was used to be some of the most healthcare ever in the history of the world.

We have another issue I want to touch on. Our Taxed Enough Already Caucus had a meeting yesterday and heard from Luke Rosiak, who has done more investigating on the FBI scandal here on Capitol Hill, apparently done more investigation than anybody at the FBI. We keep hearing rumors that the FBI is reporting there is nothing to this, kind of like the Clinton scandal, the money that the Clinton Foundation got from the stockholders of Uranium One—she approves the sale of 20, 25 percent of America's uranium production; it ends up going to the Russians—the email scandal, that obviously forces to destroy and obfuscate evidence that was being sought, and Comey went out of his way to protect Ms. Clinton. There is just so much there that needs to be investigated.

Our Attorney General apparently can't investigate because of his own recusal. Mr. Rosenstein is sure not going to investigate it and thinks Mueller will do it.

Mueller is disqualified from doing it. As the Washingtonian reported back in 2013 in this long expose they did on glorifying Mr. Comey and Mr. Mueller's relationship, that Comey knows that basically, in essence, if the world were on fire, the one person who would be there with him, protecting him, standing with him, would be Mr. Clapper, and Mueller cannot investigate anything in which Comey is a witness. He can't:

So what does he do? Comey goes and hires more lawyers. He has already had more lawyers than anybody I am aware of—ever. He is already exceeding the very general charge he got, going back years before he needed to. I mean, this is just incredible.

They were a problem 10 years ago. The Obama administration had 8 years to get it into. Mueller, as FBI Director, had plenty of time to get into it.

So there is only one thing we can be looking at, and that is a vendetta by Robert Mueller after some people. He is clearly disqualified. Comey is in it up to his eyeballs. We have got to have a special prosecutor that will look into the matters that should be investigated.

Then we have this issue on Capitol Hill. We need to know how compromised our computer system, our IT system, on the Hill has been.

We had a guy named Imran Awan working on Capitol Hill, started working with Democrats' computer systems
12 years or so ago. He was not even an American citizen at the time.

Apparently, if there has ever been a background check on Imran Awan, it certainly was not adequate, because in the Imran Awan family and cohorts, you knew she would disrupt you to get massive indebtedness; there was money received by one of the team, $100,000 or so, from a known consort with Hezbollah.

Then we find out yesterday—or I did; I had the record of this before—I met Imran Awan, for parts of the year, would not even be here in Washington. He would be in Pakistan servicing up to dozens of our Democratic colleagues' computer systems from Pakistan, making the maximum that somebody working on Capitol Hill could by working for different Members of Congress, and then you add the partial salaries together until you get around $160,000.

We heard yesterday that as he would get one person up to $160,000 working for doing this, then three or four, then add another to the payroll and get them up to $160,000. One of the group owed another individual $100,000. So with no indication that that individual who was owed $100,000 ever even came to Capitol Hill or did any work here, he got put on the House payroll and made a couple hundred thousand dollars in return for the hundred thousand that he had loaned to one of the Awan team.

It is just almost inconceivable that we would have some working with some of the highest privileged material. It seems to me the courts made it clear the speech or debate privilege to protect constituent information, information that people provide to us as whistleblowers, that is probably more constitutionally protected than the attorney-client privilege. It is that important.

Yet knowing there are countries, there are companies that would pay larger than life, and some Members of Congress' schedule, have access to all their emails, see what they are saying about different bills, what they want to do, that is some valuable stuff. And yet, in some years, we were told yesterday, that Imran Awan was servicing Capitol Hill computers from Pakistan.

Now, I don’t know how secure the Pakistani internet systems are, but it is kind of hard to believe that the American interests would be as protected in Pakistan as the Capitol congressional computer system would be protected as it is going through the Pakistani internet to be serviced.

We also heard that Imran Awan, from some of the emails that WikiLeaks put out, we don’t know if he worked for the Democratic National Committee when they were hacked, but we know there were emails where someone was saying: We need to get into the chairman’s laptop. We need her password. Oh, well, Imran Awan has all of her passwords, so check with him.

So we don’t know the extent that he could have compromised things, with all the indebtedness he had and the car dealership that he never reported. Anybody that makes over $120,000 from Capitol Hill has to report any outside income. He never reported those things.

In fact, it appears to be a crime when he failed to even report that he had his wife on the payroll making money on Capitol Hill in those financial disclosures he filed. We also know that he had some history of violence complaints. His stepmother complained of being kidnapped by him and forced to sign documents that would turn over money and property that Imran’s father supposedly had coming. We know that he has now been indicted simply on a bank fraud charge for lying in order to get a bank loan, the money from which was sent overseas.

We also learned that they were sending technological equipment over to Pakistan. They were fraudulently filling vouchers showing that $800 iPads only cost under $500 so they wouldn’t have to be listed on inventory. That obviously makes things more easy to steal.

There were reports, in fact, by the person who rented his house when he and his wife appeared to flee—he was trying to flee when he was stopped at the airport. There were hard drives, all kinds of things.

We know that he and possibly some of those working—maybe they didn’t work. We don’t know. But $6 million to $7 million was paid to him and his family and his cohorts during the time they were working here, and yet he was downloading from Members of Congress’ clouds or from their own servers all of their information into a spot where people who weren’t authorized could access those Members of Congress’ accounts.

This has got to be investigated more thoroughly than it has been.

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

## HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker’s announced policy of January 3, 2017, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. Soto) for 30 minutes.

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, it is Hispanic Heritage Month, and I want to take this time to honor some great heroes in my district of Hispanic descent, who range from reporters to civil rights heroes, to community organizers, to businessmen and women, and I am just proud to be here tonight to be able to do that.

HONORING DANIEL BARAJAS

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, the first gentleman I want to talk about is Daniel Barajas, the executive director of the Young American Dreamers.

Daniel Barajas was born in Winter Haven, Florida, to a family of migrant workers. Growing up, he worked in the orange groves of Florida. There, he witnessed firsthand how farmworkers were exposed to dangerous pesticides while working for poverty wages. He also learned about the long-term effects of failed immigration policies, seeing his own father be deported during a local operation.

As a teenager, Daniel saw his friends join gangs to survive poverty and defend themselves against deeply rooted racism within their communities. He joined this path this path this was dubbed “Lucky” because he survived.

Barajas dropped out of school in the ninth grade but earned his GED in 2001. During an incarceration in 2009, he noticed that inmates had no access to books or to reading glasses. It was then that Daniel founded the Library of Hope to collect books and reading glasses to donate to inmates.

Daniel’s younger sister, Maria Isabel, founded the Young American Dreamers in 2010 to help local immigrant youth. Maria Isabel passed away in a car accident, tragically, in 2012, and to honor her legacy, Daniel joined YAD and was voted executive director in 2013.

Barajas also continues to fundraise for annual scholarships to local students and participates in philanthropic events in the community.

Daniel now speaks at high schools across Polk County, talks to students about his life, and shows them that one is not defined by their past, and that breaking down barriers is possible.

He also closely works with the Polk County Supervisor of Elections Office to help register voters, increase voter turnout, and distribute clemency applications to help felons restore their civil rights. Daniel is an example of one who could turn their life around and benefit the community as a whole, and he works with the Polk YAD to help local immigrants in Orlando to do community workshops to teach immigrant families of their constitutional rights.

Thank you, Daniel, for your contributions.

HONORING ERICKA GOMEZ-TEJEDA

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, next is Ericka Gomez-Tejeda with Vamos4PR, Florida chapter. She is the civic engagement coordinator at 32BJ SEIU.

Ericka Gomez-Tejeda came from Colombia to the United States with her mom when she was 8 years old. Moved by her lifelong commitment to her birth country, Ericka moved to Medellin, Colombia, in 2009 and began a master’s in theology.

Upon her return to the U.S. 2 years later—she moved to Florida and was elected vice president of SEIU Local 1199 United Health Care Workers East for the Florida nursing home division, representing 11,000 nursing home workers in the State.

Upon her return to the U.S. 2 years later—she moved to Florida and was elected vice president of SEIU Local 1199 United Health Care Workers East for the Florida nursing home division, representing 11,000 nursing home workers in the State.
City security division, leading the field of operation for the division’s first citywide contracts.

In 2016, Erica moved back to Florida and became the 32BJ civic engagement coordinator and organizer of Vamos4PR, Florida division. With 40 percent of the Orange County Public Schools community speaking primarily Spanish, Vamos4PR parents, teachers, students, and organizations successfully worked with the Orange County Public Schools to ensure English-learning parents get information, orientations, and translation.

The coalition is currently focusing on offering immediate lifesaving resources to Puerto Rico and the cancellation of crippling debt, while working locally to open doors for the newly arrived Puerto Ricans to our region so they can use their knowledge and skills to integrate and contribute to the local economy and society from the day they arrive. HONORING ESTEBAN GARCES

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, next I would like to highlight Esteban Garces, Florida State director of Mi Familia Vota.

Esteban directs the Florida operation of Mi Familia Vota, managing strategy, policy development, campaigns, civic engagement, organizing efforts, and nonpartisan electoral work.

Esteban’s career was set in motion at an early age as a victim of landlord abuse who worked to immigrate, education, and racial injustices spurred his interest in social justice. He began his career in social justice organizing, and then electoral organizing.

He joined Mi Familia Vota in 2015 to continue working to create positive change. He was previously the immigration campaign director for SEIU Local 615.

HONORING FRANK LOPEZ

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, next I would like to honor Frank Lopez of the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Central Florida.

Frank Lopez is the president of the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Metro Orlando. Lopez is passionate about what he does, and nothing is more fulfilling to him than being part of a team with similar interests of an organization that is philanthropic and mission driven, and that values and pays tribute to those communities he serves.

Lopez has been successful in creating substantive underwriting support to develop and sustain innovative youth learning and entrepreneurship services. These programs have produced an impressive array of community-building benefits, such as workforce readiness and leadership development, youth entrepreneurship experimental training camps, mentoring and coaching programs, community-based technology, and wealth-building programs.

Lopez served as a member of the U.S. Hispanic Council on Federal Employment that advises the Director of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management on strategies for improving access of Latinos to the Federal workforce.

Lopez has also served as a founding member of the National Hispanic Outreach Advisory Council, established by Intuit Corporation, focusing on diversifying and increasing the expanding penetration of equitable tax-filing practices within growing Latino communities across the country.

Lopez is also a former president and CEO of U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Foundation, developing strategic services to Latino entrepreneurs from across the Nation.

Throughout his career, Frank has served several philanthropic and social service governing boards, most recently with SourceAmerica, an organization created by Congress that manages over $2.5 billion in Federal employment-producing contracts administered locally by affiliated nonprofit agencies across the United States and Puerto Rico.

HONORING INGRID MORFA

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, next I would like to honor Ingrid Morfa, immigrant, attorney, and activist, a leader in immigration law in central Florida.

Ingrid Morfa is an attorney and first-generation American. Her parents migrated from the Dominican Republic in the 1970s. As a mother of four, she is a firm believer that educating our community and being well informed will make the United States a better place for her children and grandchildren for years to come.

Her studies at Harvard University, Barry University School of Law, Cambridge College in the U.K., Kaplan University, and the New York City of Technology College have equipped Ingrid Morfa to help those around her.

As a member of the National Caribbean Leadership Team and the Democratic Hispanic Caucus of Florida, an advocate for domestic violence prevention with Nuevo Sendero, and an attorney who assisted more than 2,000 naturalization applicants and dozens of green card applicants who are victims of domestic violence and crime at no cost, she has shown a devotion to the community that is only surpassed by her love that she has for her family.

HONORING JIMMY TORRES

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, next I would like to honor Jimmy Torres, community organizer and activist, and also a major member of the SEIU union.

Jimmy Torres Velez grew up in Puerto Rico, where he went to public school. After he finished his bachelor’s degree in labor relations at the University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras Campus, he went to work with migrant families in southern New Jersey and Pennsylvania.

Since then, he has worked for various unions in many States and in Puerto Rico. In those years he has held various positions, including trustee, secretary-treasurer, organizing director, and AFL-CIO State director.

As part of his work, he has created and developed relationships with various Puerto Rican communities. After years organizing public and private sector employees, Jimmy organized and managed the State legislative office for SEIU in Puerto Rico, and co-founded with the establishment of the legislative coordinating body for the AARP as well.

After moving to Florida to help with retired members of the Service Employees International Union, he continues his activities of the Puerto Rican community and Latino community overall.

To improve the Latino representation in our area, he organized and coordinated the Boricua Vota movement. This movement is a nonpartisan educational and mobilization tool to improve activism and civic engagement and participation of Puerto Ricans in the political process. Jimmy also organized and became president of the Puerto Rico Action Institute.

To respond to Hurricane Irma, Jimmy has helped to organize a coordinated group called Aid, Support, and Help Coordinating Group, otherwise known as CASA. When Maria devastated the island, CASA galvanized enthusiasm and desire of the Puerto Rican community in central Florida to help their fellow compatriots—my fellow compatriots—on the island and has collected and has sent hundreds of thousands of dollars of goods and merchandise to Puerto Rico.

HONORING JORGE ESTEVEZ

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, next I would like to honor Jorge Estevez, WFTV news anchor and journalist in Orlando. Jorge Estevez is an anchor for the evening newscast of Eyewitness News at 10 p.m. on WRDQ TV 27. He also anchors and reports newscasts on WFTV Channel 9.

Jorge first came to WFTV in 2001 and covered the attack of 9/11 and how they impacted central Florida’s tourism industry.

During the next 5 years as an anchor and reporter for WFTV and WRDQ, Jorge worked on major news affecting the various counties that make up our central Florida community. Jorge anchored several major local stories, including the severe hurricane season of 2004, during which several storms impacted the Orlando area.

Since his return to central Florida, Jorge has been sent to cover major stories. His most recent trip was to Atlanta, where he interviewed Ronny Ahmed, one of three students injured when a shooter stormed the campus of Florida State University in 2014 and started firing at random.

The son of Cuban immigrants, Jorge is from West New York, New Jersey, where he graduated from Rutgers University, like myself, with a dual degree in journalism and communication. Now he is back in central Florida, where he enjoys the change of seasons each year. He enjoys the warm weather because it gives him a chance to leave.
the gym to take his 5-mile runs outdoors, where he can really break a sweat.

Thank you, Jorge, for your contributions.

HONORING JOSEPHINE BALZAC, ESQUIRE

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, next I would like to honor Josephine Balzac, Esquire, attorney, writer, and professor at Rollins College, specializing in environmental law.

Josephine M. Balzac is currently a visiting assistant professor in the Department of Business, teaching in the social entrepreneurship major. She has had the honor of being part of Rollins College since 2014. Her greatest honor is receiving two teaching awards from the students: a student government association's Outstanding Faculty Award, and the Walter E. Barden Distinguished Teaching Award. Throughout each of her classes, she makes sure to engage with the local community by bringing her legal professionals and organizations as guest speakers.

Professor Balzac is a licensed attorney admitted to practice law in Florida and the U.S. District Court Middle District of Florida.

In May of 2017, the Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University, FAMU, College of Law presented her law office with the Distinguished Alumni Award and Professional Excellence Award, Solo Practitioner.

She is also a community rights staff attorney for the Center for Earth Jurisprudence. During the summer, she is an adjunct law professor at Barry University School of Law, teaching sustainability in business.

Professor Balzac previously worked as an associate attorney at an AV-rated trial litigation firm and worked for a food safety regulatory consulting group.

Ms. Balzac is actively involved in the local community, frequently educating and advocating as an avid speaker on environmental justice, sustainable development, climate change, human rights, food, and social justice issues.

Thank you, Josephine, for your contributions.

HONORING LUIS PASTRANA

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, next I would like to honor Luis Pastrana, attorney, activist, and professional at Ana G. Mendez University.

Luis Pastrana was born in Puerto Rico. He received his bachelor's degree in business administration from the University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras Campus, while simultaneously being commissioned from the Army ROTC as a second lieutenant in the artillery branch.

He taught at the Puerto Rico Junior College for 10 years. Mr. Pastrana and his family later moved to Guaynabo, where he worked for years in Spain and in many other parts of the globe. After retirement, he began to pursue law at the University of Puerto Rico.

He has worked in banking as vice president for investments of the Cooperative Bank, as a general manager for a newspaper in San Juan; he was a candidate for the PPD's 2016 House director of finances for the Popular Democratic Party, trial attorney and senior partner of the law firm Pastrana, Perez, Martinez and Quevedo, executive director of the Puerto Rico Federal Affairs Administration for the Southeast of the United States, and now professor of law of the bachelor's degree in criminal justice for the Orlando campus of the Ana G. Mendez University. He published five books, all honoring his Puerto Rican roots.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Luis for his contributions.

HONORING NANCY ALVAREZ

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, next I would like to honor Nancy Alvarez. Nancy was part of the Spanish anchor team on an English language TV station in central Florida. Along with Jorge Estevez, her coanchor, she brought the 10 o'clock news on Channel 27 TV to number one for the first time in more than 30 years.

Alvarez joined the team at the ABC affiliate in May 2010 and currently coanchors Eyewitness News This Morning, alongside Jamie Homes. She is the daughter of Cuban immigrants and was born and raised in south Florida, although she considers Orlando a second home.

Alvarez has spent most of her journalism career in central Florida, where she has been front and center for every major news event in the last 15 plus years.

She spent years covering the space program at Kennedy Space Center, and was also in central Florida for hurricanes Charlie, Frances, and Jean, reporting nonstop during the now-infamous 2004 hurricane season.

In recent years, Alvarez was a central part of her station's coverage of the Pulse Nightclub shooting tragedy and covered various stories during the community's journey toward healing. She was also on the air for continuous coverage of Hurricane Irma and traveled to Puerto Rico to report on the devastating impacts of Hurricane Maria.

Alvarez is also a graduate of Florida's Atlantic University, with degrees in communications and history. She has dedicated her career to giving a voice to people in need and using honest journalism as a tool for community service.

Alvarez, a mother of two who is married to a news photographer, has dedicated her life to honoring the sacrifices made by her parents when they came to the U.S. from Cuba. It is her hope that her life, career, and impact have made the hardships they have endured worth it.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Chief Rolon for his contributions.

HONORING ORLANDO ROLON

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, next I would like to honor Orlando Rolon. Orlando Rolon was born in Bayamon, Puerto Rico, and has lived in central Florida since 1977. After high school, he served in the United States Marines Reserves for 4 years.

In 1992, Orlando Rolon was hired by the Orlando Police Department. In 1997, Officer Rolon was promoted to sergeant, and, in 1999, he was selected as the first full-time bilingual public information officer in the history of the Orlando Police Department.

In 2003, Sergeant Rolon was promoted to lieutenant. He served as the liaison to the mayor and, during that time, was named adviser for Hispanic Affairs for the City of Orlando. In 2010, he was selected as the special operations traffic enforcement section commander.

In 2013, Lieutenant Rolon was promoted to the rank of captain. He served as a patrol division commander and the crisis negotiation team commander. Prior to his appointment as deputy chief, he was serving as the professional standards division commander, which included internal affairs, planning, fiscal, and training under his command. In 2013, he was named as one of the 25 Most Influential Hispanics in central Florida.

In 2014, Mayor Buddy Dyer appointed Captain Orlando Rolon to the rank of deputy chief.

In 2016, Deputy Chief Rolon was then assigned to patrol services bureau command, with nearly 400 of the department's sworn staff officers under his command.

Deputy Chief Rolon is a graduate of the Southern Police Institute Command Officers Development Course, the FBI National Academy Session 263, and the Major Cities Chiefs Association Police Executive Leadership Institute IV session.

Deputy Chief Orlando Rolon is a member of the FBI National Academy Associates, Florida Police Chiefs Association, International Association of Chiefs of Police, Major Cities Chiefs Association, and the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Metro Orlando.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Chief Rolon for his contributions.

HONORING ROXY SANTIAGO

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, next I would like to honor Roxy Santiago, board of directors for the Little Center of Central Florida and board of the Pulse Foundation.

Roxy Santiago was born in Old San Juan, Puerto Rico, and has lived in Orlando for over 30 years. Roxy has worked for over 12 years at Walt Disney World in numerous management roles and had the privilege of being a personal tour guide for former Presidents and other high-profile individuals.

Roxy was a partner with Phish Phest Entertainment for 10 years. The organization held dozens of events, raising more than $150,000 for charity over the past decade.
Roxy was Tri-Chair Federal Club Steering Committee member for Human Rights Campaign, in 2006 through 2009; and in 2014 to present, she is currently serving on the Web Communications Steering Committee and Committee Engagement.

In 2014, she was honored with being selected among 50 distinguished local LGBT leaders by entering her biography and accomplishments in the U.S. CONGRESSIONAL RECORD; and here it is happening again.

In 2015, she became a member of the Democratic Hispanic Caucus of Central Florida and assists in their web communications. In 2015, Roxy also became a volunteer at the American Red Cross of Central Florida. In the aftermath of Pulse, she was hired by the Red Cross in the position of community partnership.

In 2016, she was selected by the National Human Rights Campaign, with 19 other women around the U.S., to attend a workshop for Women and Leadership: Equality for the 21st Century.

In 2016, Roxy became a board member for the LGBT Center of Central Orlando, and serves as their secretary on the board.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Roxy for her contributions. 

HONORING TIRSO MORENO

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, next I would like to honor Tirso Moreno. Tirso was born in Mexico and came to this country in his family to do farm work. He is currently the director of the Farmworker Association of Florida.

In 1982, he became the lead organizer for the Farmworker Project of the Office for Farm Ministry, during which time he and several other farmworkers initiated the Farmworker Association. Under his leadership as general coordinator, the association has grown from a local to statewide organization with over 10,000 members.

Tirso is a cofounder and board member of the Farmworker Health and Safety Institute and serves on the boards of Southern Partners Fund, Domestic Fair Trade Association, National Immigrant Farming Initiative, and the Rural Coalition. He also advocates for farmworkers’ and immigrants’ rights in national and international meetings.

The Farmworker Association of Florida or FWA has five offices throughout central and south Florida. The mission of FWA is to build power among farmworker and rural, low-income communities to respond to and gain control over the social, political, economic, workplace, health, and environmental justice issues that impact their lives.

FWAF’s core strategy is to help farmworkers realize their power to be effective agents of social change and personal change by validating and strengthening the experience and understanding of farmworkers; building farmworkers’ capacity to participate in decisionmaking processes that affect their lives; and raising consciousness about and advocating for farmworkers’ and immigrants’ rights.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Tirso for his contributions.

HONORING WILLIAM DIAZ

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, I would like to honor William Diaz, Spanish radio host. Identified as a consistent community leader and insightful journalist, William Diaz’s passion to help fellow citizens in life’s struggles has been evidenced in the last 28 years of his residency in central Florida.

William’s activism in favor of Latin-American political development has granted him daily recognition with most of the Latin-American community in central Florida who listen to him and read his articles.

A native of Cumana, and raised in Caracas, Venezuela, he developed a natural way to start friendships and show loyalty and support for all humanitarians.

William was the recipient of a scholarship that brought him to the United States to obtain his postgraduate diploma. In 1991 at the University of Texas at Austin gave him a master’s degree in mass communications.

William served as a Venezuelan diplomatic official in Europe, when he was designated as general coordinator of GMA Foundation and the educational attaché to the Venezuelan Embassy in Paris, France.

Founder and president of several community organizations in his native Venezuela, in 1989, William brought all of his experience to the U.S. Since then, he has been very active within the Latino community, specifically advising and counseling new nonprofit organizations.

At this time, William is full-time with his radio show, “Cara a Cara con William Diaz,” which broadcasts in 18 different counties, founder of Casa de Venezuela, 15 years ago, which gathered most of the Venezuelans in central Florida and a shareholder in the Compute Business Club, dedicated to developing networking and promotions of products and services for Venezuelan businessmen and professionals, and current executive secretary of MUD Central Florida, the political organization that hosts and coordinates most of Venezuela’s opposition political parties.

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

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. MARINO (at the request of Mr. MCCARTHY) for today and for the balance of the week on account of personal reasons.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to accordingly (at 7 o’clock and 26 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, October 12, 2017, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

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 Ms. SANCHEZ (for herself, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. SCHNEIDER, and Mr. LANCE):

H.R. 4006. A bill to establish a Community-Based Institutional Special Needs Plan demonstration program to target home and community-based care to eligible Medicare beneficiaries for specified purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, 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. DENT (for himself, Mr. LUCAS, Mr. ROHRER, Mr. BUCSHON, Mr. CARTER of Georgia, Mr. COLLINS of New York, Mr. COSTILLO of Pennsylvania, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. HARPER, Mr. HUNTER, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. KATKO, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. KINZINGER, Mr. KNIGHT, Mr. LONG, Mr. MULLIN, Mr. NEWMAN, Mr. REED, Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, Mr. CURRILLO of Florida, Mr. SIMPSON, Ms. STFINAN, Mr. STIVORS, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. TURNER, Mr. UPTON, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. BARLETTA, and Mr. REICHERT):

H.R. 4007. A bill to revise the quorum requirements for the Board of Directors of the Export-Import Bank of the United States; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN:

H.R. 4009. A bill making additional supplemental appropriations for disaster relief requirements for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2018, and for other purposes; to the Committees on Appropriations, and in addition to the Committee on the Budget, 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. SAM JOHNSON of Texas (for himself, Mr. COLE, and Ms. MATSUO):

H.R. 4010. A bill to authorize the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution to plan, design, and construct a central parking facility on National Zoological Park property in the District of Columbia; to the Committee on House Administration, and in addition to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, 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. ISSA (for himself, Mr. GOODLATTE, Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mr. SESSIONS, and Mr. FARRNDOHL):

H.R. 4011. A bill to amend the Revised Statutes of the United States and title 28, United States Code, to enhance compliance with requests for information pursuant to legislation, to the Committee on House Administration, and in addition to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, 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. UPTON (for himself and Mrs. BASS):

H.R. 4021. A bill to require a National Intelligence Estimate on Iranian proxy forces, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Intelligence (Permanent Select), and in addition to the Committee on Foreign 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 Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, and Ms. ELLISON, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. GALLAGHER, Ms. MICHELLE LIJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, and Mr. CONOLLY:

H.R. 4013. A bill making appropriations for the Bureau of the Census for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2018; to the Committee on Appropriations.

By Mr. CICILLINE (for himself, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. GUILALVA, Mr. CONOLLY, and Mr. DOOCY):

H.R. 4014. A bill to amend chapter 5 of title 31, United States Code, to require publication of information relating to regulatory conflicts of interest, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. DUFFY:

H.R. 4015. A bill to improve the quality of proxy advisory firms for the protection of investors and the U.S. economy, and in the public interest, by fostering accountability, transparency, and competition in the proxy advisory firm industry; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. GALLEGEO (for himself, Mr. DENT, Mr. DEVITO, Mr. KOCH, Mr. GOYAL, Mr. GALLAGHER, Mr. GALLAGHER, Mr. SMITH of New York, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. MILLER, Mr. GREEN, Mr. PAYNE, Ms. TITUS):

H.R. 4016. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to eliminate the recoupment of separation pay, special separation benefits, and voluntary separation incentive payments from members of the Armed Forces who subsequently receive disability compensation under laws administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs to impose certain limitations on the authority of the Secretary of Defense to recoup any such pay from members who subsequently receive military retirement or other pay; to the Committee on Armed Services, and in addition to the Committee on 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. REICHERT (for himself and Mr. MAST):

H.R. 4017. A bill to authorize the President to take actions to ensure Israel is prepared for all contingencies to develop a nuclear weapon after expiration of certain provisions of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHI:

H.R. 4018. A bill to provide for a 3-day waiting period before a person may receive a handgun, with exceptions; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. TED Lieu of California (for himself, Mr. CURRILLO of Florida, Mrs. LOVE, and Mr. LEE):

H.R. 4019. A bill to provide grants to States and Indian tribes to reform their criminal justice system to encourage the replacement of the use of payments of secured money bail as a condition of pretrial release in criminal cases, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. MICHELLE LIJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico (for herself and Mr. ROYAL Davis of Illinois):

H.R. 4020. A bill to authorize the Emergency Food Assistance Act of 1983 relating to the distribution of food; and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture.

H.R. 4021. A bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to provide funding for public transportation services offered by high-performing public and private systems, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. REICHERT (for himself, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Ms. LEE, and Mr. DONOVAN):

H.R. 4022. A bill to implement a strategic approach for providing foreign assistance in order to prevent child and maternal deaths globally within a generation, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. RYAN of Ohio (for himself, Mr. TONKO, and Mr. REED):

H.R. 4025. A bill to make appropriations for the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to award grants to States educational agencies and local educational agencies to support, develop, and implement formal and informal engineering education programs in elementary schools and secondary schools; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Ms. SPEICHER (for herself, Mr. BRYER, Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. TED Lieu of California, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. GHJALVA, Mr. NICOLOTA, Mr. GARAMMENDI, Ms. LAWRENCE, Mr. COSTA, Ms. LEE, Mrs. LOWEY, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE Johnson of Texas, Mr. SCHLOTA, Mr. SLAUGHTER of Tennessee, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. POLIS, and Mr. JONES):

H.R. 4024. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, and title 39, United States Code, to provide the United States Postal Service with the authority to mail alcoholic beverages, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, and in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary, 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 Mrs. TORRES (for herself, Mr. SCHNEIDER, Mr. ENGEL, and Ms. TITUS):

H.R. 4025. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to expand to all firearms the requirement that Federal firearms licensees report sales of 2 or more handguns to the same unlicensed person within 5 consecutive business days; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. VARGAS (for himself and Mr. COOK):

H.R. 4026. A bill to take certain land located in San Diego County, California, into trust for the benefit of the Pala Band of Mission Indians, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mrs. WAGNER (for herself, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, and Mr. GALLAGHER):

H.R. 4027. A bill to promote a global economic and political pressure to support diplomatic denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, including through the imposition of sanctions with respect to the Government of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea and any enablers of the activities of that Government, and to reauthorize the North Korean Human Rights Act of 2004, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committees on Financial Services, and Intelligence (Permanent Select), 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 Ms. BASS (for herself, Mr. GUILALVA, and Mr. EYENAS):

H.R. 4027. A resolution expressing support for the physician assistant (PA) profession and the designation of the week of October 6
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. RASKIN:
H.R. 4006.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, section 8, clause 18: Congress shall have Power—To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department of Officer thereof.

By Mr. ISSA:
H.R. 4010.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, clause 5; Article III, Section 1; and Article III, Section 2, clause 2 of the Constitution, which grant Congress authority to over the federal courts. In addition, the Necessary and Proper Clause of Article I, section 8 grants Congress the authority to issue subpoenas incidental to its legislative power and require compliance with such subpoenas.

By Mr. UPTON:
H.R. 4012.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Clause 7 of Section 9 of Article I states “No Money shall be drawn from the Treasury, but in Consequence of Appropriations made by Law . . .”

By Mr. SCHNEIDER:
H.R. 4013.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8.

By Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York:
H.R. 4014.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, section 8 of the U.S. Constitution.

By Mr. DUFFY:
H.R. 4015.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, clause 1 (relating to the general welfare of the United States).

By Mr. GALLEGO:
H.R. 4016.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, clause 18.

By Mr. GOTTTHEIMER:
H.R. 4017.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the power of Congress to “provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States,” together with the foregoing powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department of Officer therein.

By Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas:
H.R. 4018.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, clause 3 (relating to the powers vested by this Constitution in the judicial Department). In addition, clause 1 of section 8 of Article I of the Constitution (the spending power) provides “The Congress shall have Power . . . to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States; and . . . to make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the Powers vested by this Constitution.”

By Mr. RYAN of Ohio:
H.R. 4019.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, clause 1 (relating to the general welfare of the United States), and Article I, section 8, clause 3 (relating to the power to regulate interstate commerce).

By Mr. KELLOGG:
H.R. 4020.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, subsection 3: To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.

By Mr. TED LIEU of California:
H.R. 4021.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, clause 1; and Article I, Section 8, clause 18.

By Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico:
H.R. 4022.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the United States Constitution.
HONORING FALLEN KISSIMMEE POLICE OFFICER MATTHEW BAXTER

HON. DARREN SOTO
OF FLORIDA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, October 11, 2017

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor and privilege to recognize the life of fallen Kissimmee Police Officer Matthew Baxter, who passed away August 18, 2017. Matthew and his supervisor, Sergeant Sam Howard, were fatally wounded while responding to a shots-fired call in the northern area of Kissimmee. Both officers sacrificed their lives in the line of duty protecting a woman, whose own statement said, “without question,” the two men were responsible for saving her life.

Matthew lived and served honorably, proving that no matter where you come from or where you are going, you can make a difference. Matthew was born in Baltimore, Maryland. Throughout his youth Matthew demonstrated his enormous personality by not only becoming a role model in the community through his participation in athletics like basketball, football, and wrestling. His motto was “pursue the dreams closest to the heart and never giving up,” led to his graduation from Jefferson High School in 2003, graduation from Valencia College with a degree in Criminal Justice, and his pursuit of a graduate program at Eastern Florida State College.

Matthew joined the police academy to give back and help his community. Through his participation in programs such as Big Brothers and Big Sisters, and through his role as a police officer, Matthew was able to mentor youth. Instilling in them his dedication to pursue a path of helping those around them for the betterment of the community.

Matthew’s message of love, encouragement, strength, and community live on in every one of the people he touched in the community and with his family; which includes his wife, Sadia Baxter, and his four daughters Sariah, Isabella, Zarah, and Sofia. For those who put the wellbeing of others before their own, they will never be forgotten.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MAC THORNBERRY
OF TEXAS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, October 11, 2017

Mr. THORNBERRY. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, October 10, 2017, I was unable to be in Washington D.C. due to a roll call vote on No. 558. To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 4514 Williamson Trail in Liberty, Pennsylvania, as the Staff Sergeant Ryan Scott Ostrom Post Office, and No. 559, To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 25 New Chardon Street Lobby in Boston, Massachusetts, as the John Fitzgerald Kennedy Post Office. Had I been present, I would have voted Yes on both bills.

IN HONOR OF EVAN MALISSA WILLIAMS

HON. JIMMY PANETTA
OF CALIFORNIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, October 11, 2017

Mr. PANETTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Ms. Evan Malissa Williams on her retirement from the Presidio of Monterey. Ms. Williams leaves behind a distinguished career in public service.

Ms. Williams has worked for the Federal Government for 37 years, providing exceptional service to the Presidio of Monterey as a Contract Officer with Mission and Installation Contracting Command, Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center, and Installation Management Command. As a Contract Officer, Ms. Williams established a pattern of consistent merit, and her hard work served as an example to others. She excelled in her responsibilities of independently planning, directing, and executing many complex contract actions while executing her duties promptly and professionally. It has been Ms. Williams’ duty to ensure compliance and continuity in the office, even extending her retirement date six months later than planned to help meet great contracting demands.

Through her rigorous and thorough monitoring of purchasing and coordination efforts, Ms. Williams ensured critical deadlines were met while providing excellent service. Ms. Williams held many key contracts, enabling many projects supporting our service members.

Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to recognize Ms. Evan Malissa Williams. I ask my distinguished colleagues to join me in recognizing Ms. Williams’ outstanding service.

RECOGNIZING MS. DIONE BUONTO

HON. RICE
OF SOUTH CAROLINA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, October 11, 2017

Mr. RICE of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Ms. Dione Buonto, CEO of the Grand Strand Boys and Girls Club, for being selected to win the 2017 Maytag Dependable Leadership Award. As one of only 10 recipients of this award nationwide, Ms. Buonto is among the best of the best and is truly deserving of this recognition.

In order to receive this award, recipients must possess three key traits: dependability, reliability, and leadership. Throughout her time at the Grand Strand Boys and Girls Club, Ms. Buonto has exemplified all of these traits and more.

To see why she is so deserving, look no further than the success of the Club and the youth that are a part of it. Under the direction and leadership of Ms. Buonto, the Grand Strand Boys and Girls Club has become an award-winning program for students, with a dozen Club graduates currently attending college on scholarships made possible by their involvement in the Club.

Ms. Buonto makes it her mission to invest in every student. She is a true credit to the youth she coaches and to the entire Grand Strand community. Because of her leadership and being honored with this award, the Grand Strand Boys and Girls Club will now have the opportunity to continue to invest in and change the lives of youth all across the Grand Strand. Congratulations to Dione, and I thank her for all she does.

HON. DARREN SOTO
OF FLORIDA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, October 11, 2017

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor and privilege to recognize the life of fallen Kissimmee Police Sergeant Sam Howard III, who passed away August 19, 2017. Sam and his fellow officer, Matthew Baxter, were fatally wounded on August 18, 2017, while responding to a shots-fired call in the northern area of Kissimmee. Both officers sacrificed their lives in the line of duty protecting a woman, whose own statement said, “without question,” the two men were responsible for saving her life.

Sam was born on September 20, 1981, in Bartow, Florida. Raised in Central Florida, he graduated from Osceola High School in 2000. Shortly after graduating, Sam joined the Florida Army National Guard and served in Iraq from December 2003 to March 2005. Fulfilling a goal his wife, Billie Jo Howard, says was always on his mind; to serve and protect.

After his military service, Sam’s desire to serve and protect led to his pursuit of joining the Kissimmee Police Department on January 22, 2007. Sam was a Detective Corporal, Street Crimes Corporal, Traffic Homicide Investigator, DUI Officer, Motors Officer, and S.W.A.T. Sniper. On July 7, 2017, his impressive work effort and dedication led to his promotion to the rank of Sergeant.

Sam’s sense of duty also carried over to his responsibilities as a father and husband. Sam had always kept his promise to be a role model and good father to his daughter, Unique. Through hard times and good, Sam always put Unique as his priority; as he would always attend her sporting events. Sam’s wife would say “everyone should be blessed to have a father like Sam.”

Sam was not only a leader of our community in Kissimmee, but he was also a good person and friend to those who knew him.
Through Sam’s passion for cars and athletics, his positivity brought joy to those around him. As a leader, Sam only wanted what was best for the community, and to make sure the people knew he was there to help those in need. For those who guard over us are our fellow brothers and sisters, who give their hearts to the communities they serve.

The government of Myanmar must begin taking concrete steps to stop the downward spiral of sectarian violence, which imperils the safety of upwards of a million Rohingya Muslims.

More than half a million Rohingya have fled Myanmar since major clashes occurred on August 25, 2017. Using satellite imagery, Human Rights Watch has documented more than 700 buildings in the Rohingya Muslim village of Chein Khar Li have been burned, accounting for more than 99 percent of the village. An additional 450 buildings were recently spotted smouldering in Maungdaw, the administrative capital of Maungdaw. This destruction suggests a coordinated effort to drive the Rohingya population out of the country.

There are divergent reports regarding who is to blame for the chaos in Western Myanmar. Refugees blame the Myanmar military while the government blames the militant Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA). For this reason, it is imperative that the government permit entry of a U.N. Human Rights Commission Fact Finding Mission to impartially document and assess the violence occurring in Rakhine State. Timely and accurate information about the crisis is especially crucial in this conflict because Myanmar has cracked down on the media, using all the draconian tools at its disposal to keep criticism hidden from public view. The government has actually prosecuted scores of individuals under an egregious defamation law that has criminalized social media postings that merely express the plight of the Rohingya people. The international human rights community has criticized Myanmar’s Telecommunications Law for its vagueness, its seriousness of punishment, and its sweeping chilling effect on freedom of expression.

The government of Myanmar should begin adopting the recommendations of the Kofi Annan Foundation Advisory Commission on Rakhine State contained in the August 2017 Final Report, which was released the day before violence in the region erupted. These recommendations include providing dignified living conditions in camps for internally displaced persons and granting national and international humanitarian groups full access to the communities of Rakhine State. The continued censorship of the media suggests that the government does not want the world to witness the crimes that are being perpetrated in the Rakhine State.

It is my hope that Myanmar will begin taking substantial and sustained steps to prevent any further violence in Rakhine State. I urge my colleagues to join me in calling on Myanmar to take meaningful action to desegregate the Rohingya Muslim population, repeal its repressive criminal defamation law, and permit human rights observers access to monitor the situation.

### Medical Advocacy and Outreach

**HON. TERRI A. SEWELL**
**OF ALABAMA**
**IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**
**Wednesday, October 11, 2017**

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, today I am proud to recognize Medical Advocacy and Outreach (MAO) for 30 years of dedicated service to the rural and underserved communities of Alabama. MAO, formerly known as Medical AIDS Outreach and Montgomery AIDS Outreach, is a private, non-profit, Rural Health and Wellness Organization and Community Based AIDS Service Organization in Montgomery, Alabama. It was founded in 1987 by a group of volunteers who were both directly and indirectly affected by HIV/AIDS.

In 1994, after being awarded Ryan White Care Act Part C funds, MAO transitioned from a volunteer education and service organization to a full-time, health care facility. Because of the hard work of many working together on the local, state and federal level over the years, MAO now operates the largest HIV-specific health care facility by geographic area within the state of Alabama, the Copeland Care Clinic. I am inspired by the small group of volunteers, many who are still involved and supportive today, who have been responsible for the growth of this organization over the past 30 years. Today, MAO provides education services to members of the community and medical and social services to those living with and affected by HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis C, and Diabetes. MAO and the Copeland Clinic currently provide services to over 1600 patients who live in Montgomery and 28 surrounding counties in Southeast Alabama.

In addition, MAO provides an array of comprehensive services and resources to individuals living with HIV/AIDS, including: medication assistance, pharmacist consultations, housing services, an on-site food pantry, mental health counseling/case management, patient education, prevention education, free HIV and Hepatitis C testing, PEP and pre-exposure prophylaxis services for Spanish-speaking individuals and the hearing impaired. Through their Telehealth Resource Center, they assist other providers with the integration of telemedicine technology into patient-centered environments in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, New York, South Carolina, and Tennessee.

In addition to providing direct health care services, MAO educates the public about HIV/AIDS and related illnesses and how to prevent transmission of infection. To this end, the organization has made significant progress in educating the public on the reality that a person living with HIV who has an undetectable viral load cannot transmit the virus to their partners. This is why the staff at MAO also works so hard to ensure that individuals living with HIV receive regular treatment. As a matter of fact, MAO has a new initiative called “Zero by 2020.” The targeted goal is to have no new HIV diagnoses in Lowndes County, Alabama in the year 2020. I truly believe this can be done if we support organizations like MAO that provide free testing and educate citizens on the importance of getting regular health screenings.

MAO has two full service health and wellness clinics in Montgomery and Dothan where specialty care and related primary and dental care is provided to individuals living with HIV, Hepatitis C, and Diabetes. In addition to these full service facilities, MAO operates 10 rural telemedicine sites throughout Alabama in the following locations: Marengo County; Lowndes County; Dallas County; Perry County; Barbour County; Escambia County; Conecuh County; Covington County, Henry County; and Pike County. As the Member of Congress that represents the Black Belt, I am honored to be able to work with
KEITH SWERDFEGER TRIBUTE

HON. SCOTT R. TIPTON
OF COLORADO
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, October 11, 2017

Mr. TIPTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Keith Swerdfeger of Pueblo, Colorado, who has been honored with the Lifetime Business Achievement Award from the Colorado State University—Pueblo.

Keith Swerdfeger was born and raised in Pueblo, Colorado, and has had a lifelong passion to start a business and make a contribution to his hometown. In 1968, Keith realized his dream of becoming a business owner, opening Swerdfeger Construction, Inc. with his wife Sharon. This was the beginning of a very successful business venture. Today, Swerdfeger Construction, Inc. is a vital part of Pueblo’s economy as well as in Southern Colorado and six other states, employing 500 people. Keith readily gives all of the credit to his employees for his company’s success, while continuing to strive to create more jobs and opportunities.

Keith is passionate about investing in the Pueblo community and firmly believes that part of his company’s success has come as the result of the work he, his family and employees have done to give back. Keith has been very active with the Pueblo Economic Development Corporation, Pueblo County United Way, the Colorado Contractors, the Distribution Contractor Association, the Greater Pueblo Chamber of Commerce, and other civic and industry associations. Keith represented Colorado House of Representatives District 47 from 2011 to 2013 where he served on the Economic and Business Development Committee, the Finance Committee and the Local Government Committee. He was a strong advocate for his District and the community of Pueblo—and worked diligently to bring jobs and economic opportunities to the people of southern Colorado.

Mr. Speaker, Keith Swerdfeger has been a long-time business leader and tireless civic volunteer for his hometown of Pueblo, Colorado. I’m fortunate to consider him a dear friend. When we tell younger generations of Puebloans that the keys to a successful life are dedication and a strong work ethic, we can point to Keith as an example. Pueblo is grateful to have Keith Swerdfeger as one of its sons.

HON. DARREN SOTO
OF FLORIDA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, October 11, 2017

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, Soto amendment, Soto number 11 to Division H, the Department of Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2018, increased funding to the Housing for the Elderly Program by $2,500,000. It did so by shifting $2,500,000 from the Policy Development and Research, Research and Technology account within HUD.

I support increased funding for the Housing for the Elderly Program and thank Chairman DIAZ-BALART and my colleagues for their support of my amendment.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE ALABAMA OUTSTANDING YOUNG FARM FAMILY FOR 2017

HON. MIKE ROGERS
OF ALABAMA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, October 11, 2017

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I ask for the House’s attention to recognize the Alabama Outstanding Young Farm Family for 2017, the Lovvorn Family.

The Lovvorn’s, Eric, Carley, Chole (2) and Landon (3 months), live in near Ranburne, Alabama, and have a four-house poultry farm and cattle. They also grow hay and are owners of LHT Trucking, a poultry house clean-out business.

Eric grew up around poultry farming and by the age of 12 had decided chicken houses wouldn’t be in his future. That changed when he bought his first poultry farm in Cleburne County at the age of 20. Eric and Carley met in 2008 at a University of Georgia football game and were married in 2011. Carley works at Georgia Power Company.

The Lovvorns love farming and want their children to know how important farming is. Eric serves as the Cleburne County Young Farmers chairmen and participated in the Agricultural Leaders for Agriculture program.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in recognizing the Alabama Outstanding Young Farm Family for 2017: Eric, Carley, Chole and Landon Lovvorn.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JAMES B. RENACCI
OF OHIO
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, October 11, 2017

Mr. RENACCI. Mr. Speaker, had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 558, and YEA on Roll Call No. 559.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF TRINITY UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, TAMPA

HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT
OF PENNSYLVANIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, October 11, 2017

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Trinity United Church of Christ, Tampa which is celebrating its 150th anniversary this year. For a century and a half, Trinity has served as a place of worship and community for the residents of Tampa, from the early German settlers of the region to modern congregants from diverse backgrounds.

In 1835, Trinity’s parent church, St. John’s Evangelical Lutheran and Reformed Church, was founded by the German population of Tamaqua. In 1867, twelve men and their families left the congregation of St. John’s to form Trinity Church under the guidance of Reverend Levi K. Derr. One of the original twelve, Daniel Shepp donated land to build the church at the corner of Lafayette and Washington Streets. In September 1868, Reverend I.E. Graeff became the first full-time pastor, serving until March 1873.

In 1961, the present church was dedicated and, over the following decades, improvements were made to the building and grounds. The church’s distinctive exterior is marked by the Trinity chime, a landmark in Tamaqua. Additionally, Trinity is unique in that it is one of the very few churches that have its own hymn.

In 1942, Rev. Dr. Henry A. W. Shaeffer wrote the words, and Mrs. Gertrude Wagner wrote the music to the signature piece.

Today, Trinity, under the leadership of Pastor Darry Kensainger, celebrates a diverse, vibrant congregation dedicated to serving Tampa and the surrounding community in the tradition of the United Church of Christ, known for being open minded, inclusive, and welcoming.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LUIS V. GUTIERREZ
OF ILLINOIS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, October 11, 2017

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably absent in the House chamber for votes Tuesday, October 10, 2017. Had I been present, I would have voted “Yea” on roll call votes 558 and 559.
TAX COUNSELING FOR THE ELDERLY IN THE DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2018

HON. DARREN SOTO
OF FLORIDA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 11, 2017

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, Soto amendment, number 27, makes three amendments to Division D, the Department of Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2018, increased funding to the Tax Counseling for the Elderly Program by $1,000,000. It did so by making an additional carveout of money from the overall Taxpayer Services Account.

I support increased funding for the Tax Counseling for the Elderly Program and thank the Tax Counseling for the Elderly Program by Appropriations Act, 2018, increased funding to

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2018

SPREE OF HON. CEDRIC L. RICHMOND
OF LOUISIANA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 4, 2017

Mr. RICHMOND. Mr. Chair, I include in the RECORD a letter a letter from the National Education Association.

NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION,

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of the more than thirty million members of the National Education Association (NEA), and the 50 million students they serve, we urge you to Vote No on the FY 2018 budget resolution (H. Con. Res. 71) being brought to the House floor this week, and offer our views on the alternatives to the budgetary expenditures that have been proposed.

The budget should reflect the priorities of our nation and should especially meet the needs of children and those most in need. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 1 in 7 children lives in poverty. America’s mortgage crisis is growing, with millions of families spending more than one-third of their income on housing costs and for its unique village character, eventually becoming one of its staunchest defenders. His understanding of Carmel-by-the-Sea, and his many contributions have proven to be indispensable to the city’s officials and residents.

Don has built strong ties that have benefitted Carmel. His counsel, guidance, and support to the City Council, city employees, and the community have made him a valued colleague. His historical and institutional knowledge will be missed by those who will carry on the work of the City of Carmel.

HONORING THE LIFE OF ROBIN MADSEN—LABOR LEADER AND FRIEND

IN HONOR OF DONALD G. FREEMAN
OF CALIFORNIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 11, 2017

Mr. PANETTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Donald G. Freeman, a constituent of California’s Twentieth Congressional

HONORING THE LIFE OF ROBIN MADSEN—LABOR LEADER AND FRIEND

IN HONOR OF DONALD G. FREEMAN
OF CALIFORNIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 11, 2017

Mr. PANETTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Donald G. Freeman, a constituent of California’s Twentieth Congressional

on the occasion of his retirement. Don began his tenure as City Attorney for the City of Carmel-by-the-Sea in 1983. Since then, he has worked with seven mayors and is the longest serving city attorney in the city’s history. During his tenure, he has provided a full range of legal services as the chief legal advisor to the city council, city administrator, the city’s departments, boards and commissions. He has consistently provided sound legal advice to the council during the course of innumerable meetings and has served as counsel for several special districts, including the Carmel Valley Wastewater and Water Development Agency. He is also an active member of the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments, as well as the Mayor’s Water Authority. He has also gone out of his way to provide the council, city staff, board and commission members with mentoring and training in areas of ethics, conflicts of interest, and the Brown Act.

In the performance of his duties, Don regularly evaluated projects that involved complex legal issues, recommended options to minimize risk, and ensured due process in city decisions. As he managed and guided the city through various types of litigation, he demonstrated a mastery of negotiating lease agreements, and drafting ordinances and resolutions that helped protect and preserve the character and integrity of Carmel-by-the-Sea.

In addition to the vital role he played in service to the City, Don maintained a strong belief in public service, helping others, fundamental fairness, and the importance of law and education. Over time, he developed a keen appreciation for the history of Carmel and for its unique village character, eventually becoming one of its staunchest defenders. His understanding of Carmel-by-the-Sea, and his many contributions have proven to be indispensable to the city’s officials and residents.

Don has built strong ties that have benefitted Carmel. His counsel, guidance, and support to the City Council, city employees, and the community have made him a valued colleague. His historical and institutional knowledge will be missed by those who will carry on the work of the City of Carmel.

In honor and recognition of his service, I would like to express my gratitude and appreciation to Donald G. Freeman for his more than 33 years of counsel, advice, and dedication to the City of Carmel-by-the-Sea. I ask that my colleagues join me in wishing Mr. Freeman the very best in his future endeavors, and a very happy retirement.
a champion for children, and one of the kindest souls you could ever meet.

For thirty-six years Robin drove the St. Paul Public Library bookmobile. She was the “bookmobile lady” to thousands of children who were able to explore their interests, new ideas, and the world because Robin’s bookmobile came to their neighborhood.

Robin also became the president of AFSCME 1842 where she served as a committed advocate for workers, public employees, and political candidates who were willing to invest in community services to meet the needs of families and children.

From my first campaign for Congress in 2000 I was honored to have Robin as a friend and supporter. She helped organize a Woman of Labor effort and was never shy about speaking her mind or helping behind the scenes. Robin was all about getting results without worrying about getting credit.

Robin Madsen was a true friend and a strong advocate who I admired and respected greatly. My prayers and condolences are with Robin’s children, grandchildren and countless friends.

Robin will be missed.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DAVID ROUZER
OF NORTH CAROLINA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, October 11, 2017

Mr. ROUZER. Mr. Speaker, on October 10, I was attending the funeral of a friend. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 558 and YEA on Roll Call No. 559.

HUANGLONGBING MULTI-AGENCY COORDINATION EFFORTS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2018

HON. DARREN SOTO
OF FLORIDA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, October 11, 2017

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, Soto amendment, Soto number 24 to Division B, the Department of Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2018, moved $1,900,000 from the Office of the Economist account to the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service’s Specialty Crop Pest Program, specifically the Huanglongbing Multi-Agency Coordination Efforts.

I support increased funding for the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service’s Specialty Crop Pest Program’s Huanglongbing Multi-Agency Coordination Efforts and thank Chairman GARBERT, Jr., and my colleagues for their support of my amendment.

HONORING THE LIFE OF DELEGATE LACEY E. PUTNEY

HON. BOB GOODLATTE
OF VIRGINIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, October 11, 2017

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I, along with my colleagues, Representatives ROBERT J. WITTMAN, H. MORGAN GRIFFITH, DAVE BRAT, THOMAS A. GARRETT, JR., and SCOTT TAYLOR, rise today to honor the life and service of Lacey E. Putney, a dear friend and the longest-serving state legislator in Virginia’s history.

Born on June 27, 1928, Lacey passed away on August 26, 2017, at the age of 89. He was born and raised in Big Island, Virginia, and remained a well-respected member of the community his entire life. After earning his undergraduate degree in 1950 from Washington and Lee University, Lacey enlisted in the United States Air Force where he served for four years. In 1954, he married Pamela Green, a native of Washington and Lee, and they went on to practice law for more than 55 years in Bedford.

Lacey was first elected to represent the 19th District in the Virginia House of Delegates in 1961. During his time in office, he held many important leadership positions, including Chairman of the House Appropriations Committee, Chairman of the Privileges and Elections Committee, and as acting Speaker of the House in 2003. Lacey was a true force in the state legislature, and he knew how to get things done. Anyone who worked with him witnessed that firsthand, and his hard work can be seen throughout western Virginia. He was instrumental in establishing the Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine and Research Institute in Roanoke and the new Health Sciences Center in Lexington, creating the National D-Day Memorial in Bedford, and restoring Thomas Jefferson’s Poplar Forest. He led many successful legislative initiatives during his tenure, including the creation of the Virginia Tuition Assistance Grant program, the Virginia Retirement System, and the Virginia community college system. In 2013, Lacey retired from public service after 52 years. It was only fitting that upon his passing Lacey lie in state in the rotunda of the State Capitol.

Lacey’s legacy is one of service, kindness, and action. He was trusted by the people he represented and respected by his colleagues. He exemplified the role of a citizen legislator and set an example for all of us through his passion for serving his fellow Virginians. We are honored to have known Lacey Putney over the years. The Commonwealth of Virginia is better because of individuals like him. With his passing, Virginia lost one of its greatest treasures.

We offer our condolences to his beloved wife, Carmela, as well as the entire Putney family. Our prayers are with them as they mourn this loss and celebrate his life. May God give them comfort and peace. While he may be gone from this earth, there is no doubt that his legacy will live on.

TRIBUTE TO JERRY KLECZKA

HON. GWEN MOORE
OF WISCONSIN
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, October 11, 2017

Ms. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Jerry Kleczka. He was a true public servant and legislator. He passed away on October 8, 2017. He was 73 years old.

Jerry Kleczka grew up in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. He graduated from Don Bosco High School, attended the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee for two years, worked as an accountant and served in the Wisconsin National Guard. Jerry Kleczka was elected to the Wisconsin State Legislature at age 24 where he served in both the Assembly and Senate. In 1984, he won a special election to replace Clement Zablocki in Congress and served for over two decades until his retirement in 2005.

In 1992, I had the honor of serving my first term in Congress with Jerry Kleczka. Jerry was a valued member of the House Ways and Means Committee; he formed a warm and lasting friendship with Representative JOHN LEWIS during that tenure. He twice voted against going to war—the Gulf War in 1991 and the invasion of Iraq in 2003. Some of his signature legislation included support for seniors and preventing “drive-through” baby deliveries when insurance companies forced some women to leave hospitals too soon after giving birth.

Jerry Kleczka was a serious, hard-working legislator with a strong work ethic. He took pride in being the guy from the south side of Milwaukee.

When my alma mater, Marquette University, began an internship program in Washington, D.C., in 1984 for students interested in careers in government and public service, Kleczka was a strong supporter. Jerry Kleczka donated his campaign funds of $300,000 to endow what became in 2005 the Kleczka Internship Program. He was awarded an honorary doctorate of law degree in 2005 by Marquette University. Many of the interns serving in my office were members of this program; they are the living testament to Jerry Kleczka’s lasting legacy to the entire community.

Upon his retirement, Jerry moved to Midland, Minnesota. Midland was Bonnie’s, his wife of 39 years, hometown. He lived quietly and was busy with hobbies that included gardening, woodworking and remodeling projects.

Mr. Speaker, Jerry Kleczka was a valued member of Milwaukee, the 4th Congressional District, and the entire State of Wisconsin. I applaud and value his stewardship. I urge you and my colleagues in the U.S. House of Representatives to join me in a salute to the late Jerry Kleczka.

CONGRATULATING DR. R.W. BOBBY MARTIN ON A LIFETIME OF CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP AND SERVICE

HON. KENNY MARCHANT
OF TEXAS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, October 11, 2017

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Dr. Bobby Martin on his retirement from the Dallas Baptist Association. For the past 48 years, Dr. Martin has devoted his time and efforts to providing Christian leadership and education to churches.

Dr. Martin has demonstrated a lifetime of passion for Christian education, including his own. Dr. Martin earned his Bachelor of Arts degree at Lamar University in 1972 and went on to earn his Master of Religious Education and Doctor of Educational Ministry both from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. In 1976, Dr. Martin married
Jennifer Langston, and together they have two children, Todd and Brandon, a daughter-in-law, Casey, and a grandchild, Kate.

In 1969, at the age of 19, Dr. Martin answered God’s call to ministry by joining Rosedale Baptist Church in Beaumont, Texas as a part-time Minister of Music and Youth. By 1974, Dr. Martin joined Fletcher Emanuel Baptist Church in Lumberton, Texas as the full-time Minister of Education and Youth. In 1982, Dr. Martin moved to South Main Baptist Church in Houston, Texas as the Church Business Administrator. Soon after, Dr. Martin moved his young family to North Texas to start his service at First Baptist Church of Carrollton.

For 16 years, Dr. Martin served as the Associate Pastor at First Baptist Church of Carrollton. During Dr. Martin’s tenure at First Baptist Carrollton, the church was one of the largest and fastest growing congregations in the nation. He guided the total education program including Sunday School, discipleship training, missions and weekday education.

In 1999, Dr. Martin joined the Dallas Baptist Association as the Director of Leadership Development. Dallas Baptist Association serves over 500 churches in 40 different languages with the main goal of multiplying disciples, ministries, and churches throughout Dallas and Rockwall Counties. Over the last 18 years, Dr. Martin has been charged with equipping Christian leaders with the tools they need for Bible study and discipleship. Dr. Martin’s years of service at Dallas Baptist Association helped the organization grow and prosper. Throughout his tenure, he earned the reputation as a steadfast spiritual leader and an effective advocate who is dedicated to Christian education and spiritual advancement.

Dr. Martin has committed his time and energy to service in his community in different ministry outreach positions. Since 1997, Dr. Martin has served as the Lead Chaplain for the Carrollton Police Department. From 2001 to 2010, Dr. Martin served on the Board of Directors of the DFW Airport Interfaith Chaplaincy. He participated in organizing chaplaincy programs for military members returning home for “rest and relief” from Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom. In 2008, Dr. Martin joined the Federal Bureau of Investigation’s Dallas Division as Chaplain. He has been a Chaplain at the FBI Academy at Quantico, Virginia, and part of the FBI’s Critical Incident Team.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the 24th District of Texas, I would like to thank Dr. Bobby Martin for his lifetime of Christian leadership and service. I ask all my distinguished colleagues to join me in wishing Dr. Martin continued success as he enjoys his retirement.

HON. DARREN SOTO
OF FLORIDA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, October 11, 2017

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, Soto amendment, Soto number 23 to Division B, the Department of Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2018, moved $500,000 from the Office of the Secretary account to the Grassroots Source Water Protection Program. I support increased funding for the Grassroots Source Water Protection Program and thank Chairman Garamendi and my colleagues for their support of my amendment.

HON. MARC A. VEALEY
OF TEXAS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, October 11, 2017

Mr. VEALEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of a community trailblazer, father, husband, and man of God, the Reverend Dr. A.V. Fisher.

The Reverend Dr. A.V. Fisher was born the sixth of seven children to Essie J. and Corine Caraway Fisher in 1933 in Marshall County, Texas. After graduating from Pemberton High School, Reverend Fisher charted his own path to become the first male student to graduate Cosmetology at Valarie Hurd Beauty College. In 1958, Reverend Fisher brought his expertise and work ethic to Fort Worth where he founded his own beauty salon. Reverend Fisher later converted his salon into a community salon that attracted the attention of Ebony and Beauty Trade Magazines, ranking him as one of the Top 100 Beauty Operators in the United States. The Texas Legislature joined his high praise by honoring Reverend Fisher for 50 years as a Hair Stylist and Beauty Owner.

Following his successful barbershop career, Reverend Fisher decided to embark on a new chapter of his life by transitioning into ministry. He entered the Gospel Ministry in 1963 under the spiritual guidance of Reverend James Warren and Dr. M.R. Lester, and later became pastor of the Salem Missionary Baptist Church. As a Reverend, Dr. Fisher has welcomed hundreds to his church; baptized many, ordained over 300 deacons, and installed over 200 preachers as pastors all over the United States. Additionally, Reverend Fisher’s service did not waiver. He founded the Black Pastor’s Association, coordinated the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Service and Prayer Breakfast for 30 years, and helped launch the First Fort Worth Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance. Reverend Fisher graduated from the New World Bible Institute, and has received numerous awards including an honorary doctorate. He has preached all over the United States and the Bahamas. Reverend Dr. A.V. Fisher passed away on Tuesday, October 3, 2017 and is survived by his wife, Verdell Knighten, and their three beautiful daughters, Avis Michelle, Ava LaNell, and Adrian Van.

I honor and celebrate the life of a dedicated community servant, Reverend Dr. A.V. Fisher.

HON. MICHAEL F. DOYLE
OF PENNSYLVANIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, October 11, 2017

Mr. DOYLE of Pennsylvania.

I support increased funding for the Grassroots Source Water Protection Program. I support increased funding for the Grassroots Source Water Protection Program and thank Chairman Garamendi and my colleagues for their support of my amendment.

HON. MICHAEL F. DOYLE
OF PENNSYLVANIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, October 11, 2017

Mr. DOYLE of Pennsylvania.

I support increased funding for the Grassroots Source Water Protection Program. I support increased funding for the Grassroots Source Water Protection Program and thank Chairman Garamendi and my colleagues for their support of my amendment.

HON. GRATIE MENG
OF NEW YORK
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, October 11, 2017

Ms. MENG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today along with my colleague, The Honorable Joseph Crowley, to recognize the 80th anniversary of Queens College, an institution of higher education in Queens that provides an exemplary education to nearly 20,000 students annually. Queens College opened its doors on October 11, 1937, and ushered in the first class of students to the first public college in Queens. On the first day of classes, Queens College President Paul Klapper remarked, “We are the pioneers of a new institution. We have no history to look back to, but we can look forward to progress.”

Mr. Speaker, I believe that President Klapper would be proud to see the remarkable progress that Queens College has made. The Princeton Review has continuously commended the college for offering a world-class education by an illustrious faculty for an affordable price. It is no wonder that it places in the top 1 percent of colleges that successfully move its students from the bottom-fifth income distribution percentile to the top-fifth income distribution percentile. In its eighty years, 160,000 students have become alumni. Some have earned Pulitzer Prizes, Emmy Awards, becoming CEOs, or achieved scientific breakthroughs. As an alumnus himself, I know that Congressman Crowley is proud to join me in commending Queens College for its steadfast commitment in ensuring that students reach their potential.

Queens College has not only cultivated a reputation for investing in student success, but also for being one of the most diverse colleges in the country. Students who are currently enrolled are from 170 countries and speak over 110 languages. Queens College offers 89 undergraduate programs in the arts and sciences. In its eighty years of operations, the college has become a cultural hub for students to pursue and achieve academic success in Queens.

I am proud to stand with Congressman Crowley to commemorate Queens College’s 80th anniversary. I look forward to seeing what the future will bring for this trailblazing beacon of higher education.
IN RECOGNITION OF THE 100TH BIRTHDAY OF THELMA G. GOLDSTEIN

HON. WILLIAM R. KEATING
OF MASSACHUSETTS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 11, 2017

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Thelma G. Goldstein, a resident of Falmouth, Massachusetts, who would have turned 100 years young on October 12th. Thelma was born in Manhattan. Her family persevered through the Great Depression supported by her father’s ice cream factory. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s government interventions during that period served as an inspiration that led her to discovering a passion for public service. Her other great passion was her family and no matter how busy she got, she always made time for family and she raised four children with her husband, a career military doctor.

Thelma was a devoted Democrat since she cast her first ballot in 1940. Her belief in community engagement followed her through life and led her to becoming the co-chairman of the Falmouth Democratic Town Committee. A local legend in Falmouth, Thelma is remembered for her tireless efforts to improve the Democratic Party and as a strong advocate for women in politics. In her nineties, she also served as a member of the Democratic Convention just one week earlier.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to honor the life of Thelma G. Goldstein on this occasion of her 100th birthday. I ask that my colleagues join me in recognizing her many years of dedication to the community.

INVASIVE SPECIES IN THE DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2018

HON. DARREN SOTO
OF FLORIDA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 11, 2017

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, Soto amendment, Soto number 49 to Division A, the Department of Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2018, moved $500,000 from the United States Fish and Wildlife general administration account to the National Wildlife Refuge System program, specifically for the Wildlife and Habitat Management of invasive species.

I support increased funding for the Wildlife and Habitat Management efforts to combat invasive species and thank Chairman CALVERT and my colleagues for their support of my amendment.

IN HONOR OF THE CAPITOLA BEGONIA FESTIVAL

HON. JIMMY PANETTA
OF CALIFORNIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 11, 2017

Mr. PANETTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an important milestone in my district. The Capitola Begonia Festival has recently completed its 65th and final year. This event has provided family friendly fun in the beautiful village of Capitola for thousands of people in our neighborhood and beyond. It has brought hundreds of families together and has created memories that will always be remembered.

The Capitola Begonia Festival has been a cherished event in our community since it began in 1952. The begonias have been donated by several growers in our community, including the Antonell, Vetterle, and Reinelt families. The Golden State Bulb Growers provided additional support that helped keep the tradition alive for 65 years. The begonias provided by all of these growers have been a part of one of the largest prized events of the weekend, the Nautical Parade of begonia adorned floats. Each year, volunteers head down to the city of Marina in the early morning to collect the blooming begonias to adorn the floats. While begonias once grew abundantly in Capitola by the 1970’s, they were eventually only to be found in Marina.

The Begonia Festival has allowed us to encourage imagination in our community. We have seen a giraffe created out of begonias for the 2007 "Jungle Safari" theme and witnessed the sunshine yellow form of SpongeBob SquarePants come alive for the 2008 "It Came From the Sea" theme. Whether it is creative ideas or creative structures, the Begonia Festival has been an incredible outlet for art, creativity, and imagination here in our community.

Along with the Nautical Parade, there have been many other activities created to help celebrate this special weekend. Among these, some favorites stand out, including the Horse-shoe Coast, Fishing Derby, and the Sand Sculpture Contest, where art is created from one of the finest mediums found on the Central Coast of California. All of these events are open to the community and beyond, making Capitola a warm and welcoming environment. These cherished events will be remembered fondly for creating a family friendly and historical tradition for Labor Day weekend in our community.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of the 80th birthday of Juanita Varnado Pierce.

IN HONOR OF THE 80TH BIRTHDAY OF JUANITA VARNAODO PIERCE

HON. MIKE ROGERS
OF ALABAMA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 11, 2017

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I ask for the House’s attention to recognize the 80th birthday of Juanita Varnado Pierce.

Juanita was born to the late Howard and Maggie Lee Varnado and grew up in McComb, Mississippi. She graduated from Tuskegee Institute, now Tuskegee University, in 1974 with a B.S. in Early Childhood Education and from Auburn University with a Master’s in Early Childhood Education in August of 1975.

Juanita was married to the late Booker T. Pierce, Sr., and was blessed with three children: Booker T. Pierce, Jr. (Nashville, Tennessee), Vincent B. Pierce (St. Louis, Missouri) and Lisa P. Grant (Alexandria, Virginia). They have two grandchildren, Dominque Pierce (Pompano Beach, Florida) and Nicholas B. Grant, who is a third year Mechanical Engineering Student at Georgia Tech.

Juanita started teaching 2nd grade at Dean Road Elementary School in Auburn in August of 1975 and continued teaching 2nd grade for 17 years. After completing her Administration Certification from the University of Alabama, she was hired as the Assistant Principal at Dean Road Elementary in Fall of 1992 and became Principal in Fall of 1996. She retired as Principal of Dean Road Elementary School in the Fall of 1998.

After joining Washington Chapel A.M.E. Church in 1960, she started teaching the preschool Sunday School class and remained the teacher for nearly 50 years. She still serves in the Cathedral Choir, as a member of the Stewardess Board and is active in Sunday School.

In Summer of 2005, Juanita founded the S.M.A.R.T. (Science, Math, Art, Reading and Technology) Camp. Funded by grants and donations, this free two-week camp was started at Washington Chapel A.M.E. Church with approximately 40 students. Today, it is held at George Washington Carver Elementary School due to size and nearby 100 applications.

A surprise Ladies’ Luncheon will be held with women who have blessed her life over the years on October 21st at O’Charley’s in Opelika, Alabama.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in wishing Juanita Varnado Pierce a very happy 80th birthday.

PATTI CHANCOLA TRIBUTE

HON. SCOTT R. TIPTON
OF COLORADO
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 11, 2017

Mr. TIPTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Patti Chancola, a well-respected veterinarian at Pueblo Animal Services. Patti was voted the 2017 American Humane Hero Veterinarian, which is a national honor bestowed upon an individual who improves the lives of animals and their owners in unheralded ways. Patti performs 3,500 to 4,500 spay and neuter procedures a year, as well as 200 other surgeries. She volunteers to take two criminal investigations. When off the clock, Patti operates Amazin’ Amos Pet Food Pantry, a nonprofit food bank, as well as St. Matthew’s Well Pet Clinic, an independent low-cost health center. Both of these organizations help pet owners with low socio-economic status provide their animals with the care and food they need.
As a child in Pueblo, Patti would bring home wounded cats, dogs, squirrels, and birds in need of assistance. Her love of animals has continued throughout her entire life. We are truly fortunate to have such an upstanding and dedicated member of our community and on behalf of the Third District I would like to thank Patti for her generous service to the community.

NATIONAL ESTUARY PROGRAM AND COASTAL WATERWAYS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2018

HON. DARREN SOTO
OF FLORIDA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, October 11, 2017

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, Soto amendment, Soto number 48 to Division A, the Department of Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2018, put the House on record of supporting a final funding amount of $27,191,000 for the National Estuary Program and Coastal Waterways. It does so by removing and then reapplying $468,000 within the $2.3 billion appropriation for the Environmental Programs and Management account within the Environmental Protection Agency.

I support increased funding for the National Estuary Program and Coastal Waterways and thank Chairman CALVERT and my colleagues for their support of my amendment.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate of February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the Congressional Record on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Thursday, October 12, 2017 may be found in the Daily Digest of today’s RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

OCTOBER 17
10 a.m.
Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions
To hold hearings to examine the cost of prescription drugs, focusing on how the drug delivery system affects what patients pay.

OCTOBER 18
10 a.m.
Committee on the Judiciary
To hold an oversight hearing to examine the Department of Justice.

OCTOBER 25
9:30 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on SeaPower
To receive a closed briefing on the major threats facing naval forces and the Navy’s current and planned capabilities to meet those threats.

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Daily Digest

Senate

Chamber Action
The Senate was not in session and stands adjourned until 8:30 a.m., on Friday, October 13, 2017.

Committee Meetings
No committee meetings were held.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action
Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 22 public bills, H.R. 4006–4027; and 2 resolutions, H. Res. 567–568 were introduced. Pages H7973–75

Additional Cosponsors: Pages H7975–76

Reports Filed: There were no reports filed today.

Speaker: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein he appointed Representative Newhouse to act as Speaker pro tempore for today.

Recess: The House recessed at 10:42 a.m. and reconvened at 12 noon.

Guest Chaplain: The prayer was offered by the Guest Chaplain, Rev. Molly Fraser, Gig Harbor United Methodist Church, Gig Harbor, Washington.

Privileged Resolution—Intent to Offer: Representative Al Green (TX) announced his intent to offer a privileged resolution.

Privileged Resolution: Pursuant to clause 2(a)(1) of rule IX, the Speaker designated this as the time for Representative Al Green (TX) to offer the resolution previously noticed. Subsequently, the resolution was not offered.

Dr. Chris Kirkpatrick Whistleblower Protection Act of 2017—Rule for Consideration: The House agreed to H. Res. 562, providing for consideration of the bill (S. 585) to provide greater whistleblower protections for Federal employees, increased awareness of Federal whistleblower protections, and increased accountability and required discipline for Federal supervisors who retaliate against whistleblowers, by a recorded vote of 234 ayes to 185 noes, Roll No. 561, after the previous question was ordered by a yea-and-nay vote of 227 yeas to 190 nays, Roll No. 560.

Suspensions: The House agreed to suspend the rules and pass the following measures:

National Institute of Standards and Technology Small Business Cybersecurity Act of 2017: H.R. 2105, amended, to require the Director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology to disseminate guidance to help reduce small business cybersecurity risks;

Small Business Innovation Research and Small Business Technology Transfer Improvements Act of 2017: H.R. 2763, amended, to amend the Small Business Act to improve the Small Business Innovation Research program and Small Business Technology Transfer program;

Power And Security Systems (PASS) Act: S. 190, to provide for consideration of the extension under the Energy Policy and Conservation Act of non-application of No-Load Mode energy efficiency standards to certain security or life safety alarms or surveillance systems;

National Clinical Care Commission Act: S. 920, to establish a National Clinical Care Commission;

Designating the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 259 Nassau Street, Suite 2 in Princeton, New Jersey, as the “Dr. John F. Nash, Jr. Post Office”: H.R. 2302, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at
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259 Nassau Street, Suite 2 in Princeton, New Jersey, as the “Dr. John F. Nash, Jr. Post Office”;

Page H7948

Bonuses for Cost-Cutters Act of 2017: H.R. 378, amended, to amend title 5, United States Code, to enhance the authority under which Federal agencies may pay cash awards to employees for making cost saving disclosures;

Pages H7948–50

Amending title 5, United States Code, to allow whistleblowers to disclose information to certain recipients: H.R. 2196, amended, to amend title 5, United States Code, to allow whistleblowers to disclose information to certain recipients;

Pages H7950–51

All Circuit Review Act: H.R. 2229, to amend title 5, United States Code, to provide permanent authority for judicial review of certain Merit Systems Protection Board decisions relating to whistleblowers;

Pages H7951–52

Frederick Douglass Bicentennial Commission Act: H.R. 2989, amended, to establish the Frederick Douglass Bicentennial Commission;

Pages H7952–54

Thrift Savings Plan Modernization Act of 2017: H.R. 3031, amended, to amend title 5, United States Code, to provide for flexibility in making withdrawals from a Thrift Savings Plan account; and

Pages H7954–55


Pages H7955–57, H7958–59

Recess: The House recessed at 4:14 p.m. and reconvened at 4:29 p.m.

Page H7957

Suspension—Proceedings Resumed: The House agreed to suspend the rules and pass the following measure. Consideration began Tuesday, October 10th.

Designating the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 324 West Saint Louis Street in Pacific, Missouri, as the “Specialist Jeffrey L. White, Jr. Post Office”: H.R. 452, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 324 West Saint Louis Street in Pacific, Missouri, as the “Specialist Jeffrey L. White, Jr. Post Office”, by a 2/3 yea-and-nay vote of 418 yeas with none voting “nay”, Roll No. 562.

Pages H7957–58

Directing the President pursuant to section 5(c) of the War Powers Resolution to remove United States Armed Forces from unauthorized hostilities in the Republic of Yemen: Agreed by unanimous consent that the provisions of section 7 of the War Powers Resolution shall apply to House Concurrent Resolution 81, directing the President pursuant to section 5(c) of the War Powers Resolution to remove United States Armed Forces from unauthorized hostilities in the Republic of Yemen, not earlier than November 2, 2017, but on the same terms that would have adhered on October 13, 2017.

Page H7959

Quorum Calls—Votes: Three yea-and-nay votes and one recorded vote developed during the proceedings of today and appear on pages H7935–36, H7936, H7957–58, and H7958. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 7:28 p.m.

Committee Meetings

EXAMINING THE 2017 AGENDA FOR THE COMMODITY FUTURES TRADING COMMISSION

Committee on Agriculture: Full Committee held a hearing entitled “Examining the 2017 Agenda for the Commodity Futures Trading Commission”. Testimony was heard from J. Christopher Giancarlo, Chairman, Commodity Futures Trading Commission.

EXAMINING HOW COVERED ENTITIES UTILIZE THE 340B DRUG PRICING PROGRAM

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations held a hearing entitled “Examining How Covered Entities Utilize the 340B Drug Pricing Program”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

MEMBER DAY: TESTIMONY AND PROPOSALS ON THE OPIOID CRISIS

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Health held a hearing entitled “Member Day: Testimony and Proposals on the Opioid Crisis”. Testimony was heard from Chairman Walden, Chairman Goodlatte, Chairman Brooks of Indiana and Representatives Pelosi, Pallone, Upton, Latta, Lance, Butterfield, Matsui, Bilirakis, Welch, Buschon, Mullin, Tonko, Johnson of Ohio, Hudson, Kennedy, Ben Ray Luján of New Mexico, Costello, Walberg, Rogers of Kentucky, Turner, Marshall, Strivers, Bustos, Esty, Jeffries, Wenstrup, O’Halleran, Pascrell, Jenkins of West Virginia, Love, MacArthur, Poliquin, Rouzer, Young of Iowa, Schneider, Crist, Handel, Faso, Katko, Blumenauer, Rochester, Fitzpatrick, Paulsen, Keating, Chu, Donovan,
Walorski, Rothfus, Hartzler, Carter of Georgia, and Clark of Massachusetts.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURE

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Communications and Technology held a markup on a bill to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to reauthorize appropriations for the Federal Communications Commission, to provide for certain procedural changes to the rules of the Commission to maximize opportunities for public participation and efficient decision making, and for other purposes. The bill to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to reauthorize appropriations for the Federal Communications Commission, to provide for certain procedural changes to the rules of the Commission to maximize opportunities for public participation and efficient decision making, and for other purposes, was forwarded to the full Committee, as amended.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES


CONFRONTING THE FULL RANGE OF IRANIAN THREATS

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Full Committee held a hearing entitled “Confronting the Full Range of Iranian Threats”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

U.S. POLICY TOWARD LEBANON

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa held a hearing entitled “U.S. Policy Toward Lebanon”. Testimony was heard from Michael Ratney, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, Department of State; and Jeanne Pryor, Acting Deputy Assistant Administrator, Bureau for the Middle East, U.S. Agency for International Development.

THE STATE DEPARTMENT AND USAID FY 2018 AFRICA BUDGET

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Subcommittee Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations held a hearing entitled “The State Department and USAID FY 2018 Africa Budget”. Testimony was heard from Donald Yamamoto, Acting Assistant Secretary, Bureau of African Affairs, Department of State; and Cheryl Anderson, Acting Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Africa, U.S. Agency for International Development.

TRANSFORMING GPO FOR THE 21ST CENTURY AND BEYOND: PART 4

Committee on House Administration: Full Committee held a hearing entitled “Transforming GPO for the 21st Century and Beyond: Part 4”. Testimony was heard from Karen Haas, Clerk, House of Representatives; Eric Peterson, Specialist in American National Government, Congressional Research Service; Robin Dale, Deputy Director for Library Services, Institute of Museum and Library Services; and a public witness.

LEGISLATIVE MEASURES

Committee on Natural Resources: Subcommittee on Federal Lands held a hearing on H.R. 219, the “Swan Lake Hydroelectric Project Boundary Correction Act”; H.R. 2630, the “La Paz County Land Conveyance Act”; H.R. 3373, to amend the District of Columbia Stadium Act of 1957 to extend for an additional 50 years the lease under which the government of the District of Columbia uses the ground under and the parking facilities associated with Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Stadium; and H.R. 3607, to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to establish fees for medical services provided in units of the National Park System, and for other purposes. Testimony was heard from Representatives Gosar and Young of Alaska; D.L. Wilson, Supervisor and...
Chairman of the Board of Supervisors, La Paz County, Arizona; Bob Vogel, Acting Deputy Director for Operations, National Park Service; and public witnesses.

LEGISLATIVE MEASURE

Committee on Natural Resources: Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources held a hearing on legislation to amend the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act to distribute revenues from oil and gas leasing on the outer Continental Shelf to certain coastal States, and for other purposes. Testimony was heard from Stephen Goldfinch, Senator, District 34, South Carolina; and public witnesses.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on Natural Resources: Full Committee held a markup on H.R. 3990, the “National Monument Creation and Protection Act”; H. Res. 555, of inquiry requesting the President and directing the Secretary of the Interior to transmit, respectively, certain documents and other information to the House of Representatives relating to the executive order on the review of designations under the Antiquities Act. H.R. 3990 and H. Res. 555 were ordered reported, as amended.

REVIEW OF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT’S ROLE IN PROTECTING INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Subcommittee on National Security held a hearing entitled “Review of the U.S. Government’s Role in Protecting International Religious Freedom”. Testimony was heard from Michael G. Kozak, Senior Advisor, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, Department of State; Kristina Arriaga, Vice Chair, Commission on International Religious Freedom; and public witnesses.

SECURITY CLEARANCE INVESTIGATION CHALLENGES AND REFORMS

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Subcommittee on Government Operations held a hearing entitled “Security Clearance Investigation Challenges and Reforms”. Testimony was heard from William Evanina, Director, National Counterintelligence and Security Center, Office of the Director of National Intelligence; Charles Phalen, Director, National Background Investigations Bureau, Office of Personnel Management; Garry Reid, Director of Defense Intelligence, Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence, Department of Defense; and a public witness.

NIST’S PHYSICAL SECURITY VULNERABILITIES: A GAO UNDERCOVER REVIEW

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology: Subcommittee on Oversight; and Subcommittee on Research and Technology held a joint hearing entitled “NIST’s Physical Security Vulnerabilities: A GAO Undercover Review”. Testimony was heard from Lisa Casias, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Administration, Department of Commerce; Kent Rochford, Acting Director, National Institute of Standards and Technology; and Seto Bagdoyan, Director, Audit Services, Forensic Audits and Investigative Service, Government Accountability Office.

EVALUATING THE PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT PART II: ARE BURDENS BEING REDUCED?

Committee on Small Business: Full Committee held a hearing entitled “Evaluating the Paperwork Reduction Act Part II: Are Burdens Being Reduced?”. Testimony was heard from Steven Fine, Acting Assistant Administrator, Acting Chief Information Officer, Environmental Protection Agency; Stephen D. Guertin, Deputy Director for Policy, Fish and Wildlife Service; Gundeep Ahuwalia, Chief Information Officer, Department of Labor; and Todd Simpson, Chief Information Officer, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services.

BUILDING A 21ST CENTURY INFRASTRUCTURE FOR AMERICA: HIGHWAYS AND TRANSIT STAKEHOLDERS’ PERSPECTIVES

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure: Subcommittee on Highways and Transit held a hearing entitled “Building a 21st Century Infrastructure for America: Highways and Transit Stakeholders’ Perspectives”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

LEGISLATIVE MEASURES

Committee on Veterans’ Affairs: Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity held a hearing on H.R. 815, to amend title 38, United States Code, to adjust certain limits on the guaranteed amount of a home loan under the home loan program of the Department of Veterans Affairs; H.R. 3018, the “Veterans’ Entry to Apprenticeship Act”; H.R. 3634, the “SERVE Act of 2017”; legislation to amend title 38, United States Code, to eliminate the applicability of certain provisions of the Administrative Procedure Act to housing and business loan programs of the Department of Veterans Affairs; legislation to amend title 38, United States Code, to make certain improvements to the use of educational assistance provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs for flight
training programs; legislation to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to make grants to eligible organization for the provision of transition assistance to members of the Armed Forces recently separated from active duty service; and legislation to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the designation of State approving agencies for multi-State apprenticeship programs for purposes of the educational assistance programs of the Department of Veterans Affairs. Testimony was heard from Representatives Rutherford, Himes, McSally, and Khanna; Major General Robert M. Worley II, U.S. Air Force (Ret.), Director, Education Service, Veterans Benefit Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs; and public witnesses.

OPPORTUNITIES TO EXPAND U.S. TRADE RELATIONSHIPS IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION

Committee on Ways and Means: Subcommittee on Trade held a hearing entitled “Opportunities to Expand U.S. Trade Relationships in the Asia-Pacific Region”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

Joint Meetings

No joint committee meetings were held.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR THURSDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2017

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

No meetings/hearings scheduled.

House


Committee on Foreign Affairs, Full Committee, markup on H.R. 535, the “Taiwan Travel Act”; and H.R. 1698, the “Iran Ballistic Missiles and International Sanctions Enforcement Act”, 9:30 a.m., 2172 Rayburn.


Committee on the Judiciary, Full Committee, markup on legislation on the Congressional Subpoena Compliance and Enforcement Act of 2017; H.R. 2228, the “Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness Act of 2017”; and legislation on the Protecting Access to the Courts for Taxpayers Act, 10 a.m., 2141 Rayburn.

Committee on Natural Resources, Subcommittee on Water, Power and Oceans, hearing on H.R. 3144, to provide for operations of the Federal Columbia River Power System pursuant to a certain operation plan for a specified period of time, and for other purposes; and H.R. 3916, the “FISH Act”, 10 a.m., 1354 Longworth.

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Full Committee, hearing entitled “Hearing on the 2020 Census”, 10 a.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Committee on Small Business, Subcommittee on Health and Technology, hearing entitled “Fostering Women’s Entrepreneurial Success”, 10 a.m., 2360 Rayburn.


Committee on Veterans’ Affairs, Full Committee, markup on H.R. 1066, the “VA Management Alignment Act of 2017”; H.R. 3122, the “Veterans Care Financial Protection Act of 2017”; H.R. 3561, to amend title 38, United
States Code, to permit appraisers approved by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to make appraisals for purposes of chapter 37 of such title based on inspections performed by third parties; H.R. 3562, to amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to furnish assistance for adaptations of residences of veterans in rehabilitation programs under chapter 31 of such title, and for other purposes; H.R. 3656, to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for a consistent eligibility date for provision of Department of Veterans Affairs memorial headstones and markers for eligible spouses and dependent children of veterans whose remains are unavailable; and H.R. 3657, to amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide headstones and markers for the graves of spouses and children of veterans who are buried in tribal cemeteries, 10 a.m., 334 Cannon.

Full Committee, hearing on legislation on the Asset and Infrastructure Review Act of 2017; and H.R. 2773, to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to sell Pershing Hall, 10:30 a.m., 334 Cannon.
Next Meeting of the SENATE
8:30 a.m., Friday, October 13

Program for Friday: Senate will meet in a pro forma session.

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
10 a.m., Thursday, October 12


Extensions of Remarks, as inserted in this issue

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Doyle, Michael F., Pa., E1360
Goodlatte, Bob, Va., E1359
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Keating, William R., Mass., E1361
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Renacci, James B., Ohio, E1357
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Thornberry, Mac, Tex., E1355
Tipton, Scott R., Colo., E1357, E1361
Veasey, Marc A., Tex., E1360

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