display his commitment and dedication as a U.S. officer. His actions in Lake Michigan reflect the marine motto ''Semper Fi''—or ''always faithful.'' I applaud Lieutenant Dominguez for making his country and his Corps proud.

ISRAEL'S RIGHT TO DEFEND HERSELF

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

Mr. DEUTCH. Mr. Speaker, in the past 24 hours alone, terrorists along the Gaza Strip have launched more than 250 rockets into southern Israel. That's 250 rockets in 1 day since Hamas began its strikes.

Imagine 250 rockets raining down in 1 day on your community anywhere in the United States. We would expect our government to act to protect our citizens. Israel is acting to protect her citizens. Israel has the right to protect her citizens from terrorist attacks. In the early hours of this morning, three Israeli civilians died when a rocket from Gaza struck the top floor of an apartment building. Later in the day, a rocket hit just 10 miles from Tel Aviv.

The United States mourns the loss of life at the hands of Hamas terrorists. We will not waver in our support of Israel's right to defend herself against these and other attacks. The right of any nation to defend its citizens can never be called into question. Mr. Speaker, at this challenging time for our great ally, the United States stands with Israel.

ISRAEL'S RIGHT TO DEFEND ITSELF

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

Mr. DOLD. I rise today to address the recent events in the Middle East. Our ally Israel, like every nation, must have the right to defend itself and its citizens against ongoing acts of terror.

We know now that the international community frequently looks for opportunities to delegitimize Israel's actions, which is why it is essential that we here in the United States of America loudly and publicly express our support for Israel's right to defend itself in the face of Hamas' terror.

Hamas is responsible for over 800 rocket attacks on Israel in 2012—with over 250 rockets indiscriminantly fired on Israel's citizens in the past 5 days alone. Because of this escalation, 1 million men, women and children in southern Israel have been forced to live under the threat of attacks and must now know where the nearest rocket shelter is located. As I speak, thousands of Israelis are sleeping in bomb shelters out of fear for their lives and the lives of their children.

Mr. Speaker, no nation would sit back and tolerate its population living under such threatening conditions. Certainly, we here in the United States would not.

PASS THE FARM BILL

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

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, it's time to get to work. When Congress recessed for the election, we left much undone, including the farm bill, which is critical to the economy of my district and to our country.

Just this weekend, The Fresno Bee got it right when they wrote:

> There are some in Congress who suggest delaying the farm bill until after new Members begin serving in January. That's the easy way out, but it does not serve the interests of the Nation's farmers.

It also doesn't serve the families in need and children who depend upon the nutrition programs in the farm bill. It's time to get back to representing the interests of our constituents, not partisan politics. Dairymen are having a tough time in California. Our farmers need certainty, and only a 5-year farm bill can provide that. Both versions of the farm bill also save billions of dollars.

We have bipartisan agreement on this bill. We need to pass this bill so that we can go to conference committee to resolve the differences.

□ 1210

WE CAN AVOID THE FISCAL CLIFF

(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, the American people are breathing a cautious sigh of relief now that the long election season is finally over. The House and Senate are both in session, and the American people are watching. We have much work to do and not much time to do it.

With unemployment hovering near 8 percent, our economy is still struggling. To get America back on track, we must work together, Democrats and Republicans, to find solutions to our economic challenges.

We all know it's not until small businesses begin growing and creating jobs that our economy will recover. The key to our future lies in new start-ups, innovators, and entrepreneurs.

Working together in a bipartisan way, we can avoid the fiscal cliff, provide certainty to these small businesses, remove barriers to success, and help renew the prosperity of the American people.

Last week our constituents spoke, and the mandate they gave us was a mandate to work together. We must listen to them and work with open ears and open minds to arrive at bipartisan solutions to the very serious issues facing our country.

THE COUNTRY NEEDS TAX RELIEF

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

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, we are indeed back here in a lame-duck session with the most important issue facing us, which is a deadline on taxes and revenue. By previous action, we have to act or certain conditions will be created that will cause us to lose jobs and hurt our economy and raise taxes on everybody.

The President, the Senate, the Democrats, and the House are all in agreement that 98 percent of the country needs tax relief that has been given through the Bush tax cuts, and they should be extended.

I think everybody agrees that we don't need to make draconian cuts to services for people, Social Security or Medicare, or defense. The only issue is my colleagues on the other side, the Republicans in the House, who seem to continue to want to give tax relief to the upper 2 percent. That's what divides this Nation and this Congress right now, tax cuts for the richest 2 percent.

I call on my Republican colleagues to work with Speaker BOEHNER and allow him to lead this country in working with President Obama and to resolve this situation.

RECOGNITION OF DAVE WHITE, CHIEF OF THE NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE

(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 to recognize Mr. Dave White, chief of the Natural Resource Conservation Service at the U.S. Department of Agriculture. After a career with NRCS that spanned nearly four decades, this week he announced his plans to retire.

Chief White has spent his career working to improve the Nation's land management policies and practices. Over the years, Dave has been an indispensable resource of experience and knowledge, from helping to craft the 2008 farm bill conservation title, to his leadership in implementing and improving these programs at NRCS.

Dave's work has helped the Nation achieve our shared objectives for sustaining agriculture and the natural resources upon which we all depend.

One area in particular is voluntary incentive-based conservation programs where Chief White has delivered a demonstrated track record in leveraging resources to maximize limited resources. In my home State of Pennsylvania, these efforts are helping to improve the health of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, while also keeping farms profitable and ensuring that these farms remain in agriculture over the long term.

I want to thank Dave White for his dedicated service. Best of luck in your retirement, Chief.

A TRAGIC MARKER: 2,000-PLUS U.S. FATALITIES IN AFGHANISTAN

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

Mr. McGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, on October 2, while Congress was campaigning, the Pentagon registered the 2,000th fatality in Afghanistan, the longest war in American history. Today, that number has risen to 2,026.

It is imperative that we all remember the terrible human price that has been paid, is being paid, and will continue to be paid by our troops in Afghanistan and their families.

This year there have been 60 so-called ''blue on green'' killings of U.S. troops by Afghan soldiers that we're training. Veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan kill themselves at a rate of one every 80 minutes. More Active Duty U.S. military personnel have died by suicide since the war in Afghanistan began than have died fighting there. Nearly 18,000 have been wounded in Afghanistan alone.

Let us bring them all home. Let us provide our veterans and active military the care and benefits that they have so bravely earned. Let's end the war in Afghanistan now.

DOING WHAT IS RIGHT FOR THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

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

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, we have just a few short weeks left in the 112th Congress, but our work here is far from done.

Sadly, partisan games and gridlock have made this Congress one of the least productive in history; but with the election finally behind us, I hope we will put aside our differences and get back to work.

That means passing a bipartisan farm bill to support our farmers and ranchers. It means extending the production tax credit to create jobs in a growing wind industry and reduce electricity bills for consumers. It means passing the Violence Against Women Act to protect women from abuse. And it means extending tax cuts for middle class families and small businesses now and passing a balanced plan to avert sequestration.

We must address these critical issues, and the only way to do that is by coming together and doing what's right for the American people.

Mr. Speaker, the election is over. It's time to get back to work.

LET'S GET THE PEOPLE'S WORK DONE

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

Ms. HANABUSA. Mr. Speaker, the election is over for this cycle, and it is time to do the people's work.

The President is reelected, and he is our President for the next 4 years. Our constituents are tired and upset with our dysfunction. They can't begin to comprehend how we've allowed the fiscal cliff to happen. Many of them don't even understand what the fiscal cliff is about. All they know is that things like unemployment can rise to 9.1 percent unless we act. It is time to put the elections behind us and work together.

Mr. Speaker, we must focus on the people, especially the constituents of our colleagues who are suffering from the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy. We have got to work together and do the people's work. Isn't that what we've been sent here to do?

Mr. Speaker, let's get the people's work done.

LET'S GET THIS THING DONE

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

Ms. HAHN. Mr. Speaker, last Tuesday, our President said something that I think this Congress needs to hear: the people of our districts sent us here to focus on their jobs, not our own.

We're racing towards a serious deadline, towards higher taxes on struggling families and slashed investments in things like food for mothers and infants, education, and our infrastructure. We're dragging people's jobs toward the brink and playing chicken with workers' and entrepreneurs' livelihoods.

I know I'm not the only one here who spent time with the families that missing this deadline will hurt. I know I'm not the only one who has visited the businesses that would collapse if this happened. The people in our districts need us to come together. They're counting on us to do the right thing, to leave our partisanship at the ballot box and to get to work.

So I say to all my friends and colleagues, Democrats and Republicans, let's get this thing done.

THE LEAST, THE LAST, AND THE LOST

(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, we hear a lot of talk about the consequences of the fiscal cliff on the wealthy, the well-off, the well-heeled, and the well-to-do. We don't hear a lot of talk about how it will impact the least, the last, and the lost. Permit me today to share just a bit of information.

Rental assistance for the poor would fall by $2.3 billion. Nutrition programs for women, infants, and children would lose $543 million. Those who provide services to persons who get Medicare—doctors—would lose about $4 billion.

Mr. Speaker, if we are to have an act of Congress, we have to have a Congress willing to act. It is time for us to act, to protect the least, the last, and the lost, as well as others.

□ 1220

AVOIDING THE FISCAL CLIFF

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

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise to urge Congress to deal with the fiscal cliff. The majority of Americans cast their ballots in support of the President and a balanced solution to our fiscal challenges that protects the middle class by asking everyone to pay their fair share.

Our job is to act. We should extend the middle class tax cuts now while we work on a long-term solution. We must work together because failure would have dire consequences for middle class jobs, the military, and crucial programs that help the middle class and the poor.

FIXING OUR ECONOMY

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

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, the election is over. The people of this country have spoken and said loudly and clearly that they want us to work together to create jobs and fix our economy.

I agree with economists who say that the threat of a fiscal cliff, like the need to immediately reduce the deficit, is being overblown. And it is done like the debt ceiling debacle to create a do-or-die situation where it is hoped that Democrats would agree to cuts in programs that would lose jobs and lock more people into poverty. That is unacceptable in this, the greatest country in the world, and we cannot agree to it.

We are being asked to cut the deficit by $4 trillion over 10 years. Through cuts and caps put in place already, over the next 10 years we are projected to cut that deficit by $1.7 trillion. That leaves $2.3 trillion. If we allow the growth in the economy to continue, even at its present slow pace, that can help to reduce the need for that level of cuts even more.

The poor and the middle class are already doing their part through the cuts that are already in place. Now it is time for everyone else to do theirs. The rest of the deficit reduction must come primarily from eliminating tax cuts for the wealthy who have continued to do very well during the recession while everyone else suffered.