

Back in 1993, this law was a big step forward for America. It guarantees workers job-protected leave when they need time off for family or health reasons, for a newborn child, to take care of a sick child or spouse. It's been used more than 100 million times over the last 20 years. Workers got to take off time to care for a newborn or sick spouse or to get an operation without fear of losing their job.

With the Family and Medical Leave Act, our country made it a priority to give workers the ability to balance the demands of work and family. It made the healthy development of babies, healthy families, and healthy workplaces a priority. It was a remarkable accomplishment at the time, but it was intended to be a first step, not the last.

Today, only half of all workers can take advantage of the Family and Medical Leave Act. The rest are ineligible because of their part-time status or who their employer is. Half of all workers don't have job protections to take time off to welcome a new baby to the family. They can't take time off to help an elderly parent without fear of losing their job.

Here's another serious idea to help working families: Extend the family and medical leave protection to all workers. And furthermore, let's guarantee paid leave under the law. The Federal Family and Medical Leave Act only guarantees unpaid job-protected leave. Too many families simply cannot afford to miss a day or two of work. That's why Congress should finally deliver on the paid leave that our Nation's workers deserve.

I recently heard from Matari Jones from San Antonio, Texas. While she said that the family and medical leave was a godsend when her children were born, taking unpaid time off to care for her newborns to heal from a complicated delivery was a significant financial struggle. Unfortunately, Matari was not alone. A working woman—or any worker, for that matter—shouldn't have to choose between family members they love or the paycheck they need.

California, the District of Columbia, Connecticut, Washington State, and New Jersey have taken steps for paid family and medical leave and sick leave. The policy is good for families, and it is good for business.

The least-paid workers in our society are also least likely to be able to afford a day off when they are sick. Many of those workers are behind the lunch counter or taking care of our older family members.

If Leader CANTOR and this House are truly serious about helping working families, then let's deliver on the full promise of workplace leave policies that properly value our Nation's families. Extend family and medical leave benefits to all workers, and look for ways to guarantee workers' access to paid family and medical leave and to sick leave.

There are other steps Congress should take to ensure that workers can

share the prosperity that they're helping to create. Let's make sure that women are paid based upon their worth by passing the Paycheck Fairness Act. Let's raise the minimum wage that will boost the economy by putting money into the pockets of millions of working people.

So I would say to my friend from Virginia, the majority leader, if he is serious about helping working families, then join with us and let's enact policies that put these families first in both the workplace and in their homes.

#### PRESERVING 6-DAY POSTAL SERVICE

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

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, the Postmaster General's announcement this past week that he intends to eliminate Saturday mail delivery is of great concern to my colleagues on both sides of the aisle.

Beyond the fact that such a move completely disregards congressional intent, it also sets the Postal Service on a downward spiral that will undercut any opportunity to revitalize it and put it in a more sound financial footing for future generations. Whether it's the financial documents for a small business, a prescription refill for an elderly resident, or a birthday card for a loved one, Saturday mail delivery is important to every person in every community in America.

The United States Postal Service is an American institution dating back to the founding of our Nation when it was enshrined in article I of the Constitution, and Saturday delivery has been part of that tradition for the past 150 years. The men and women who don the blue uniform of the USPS are visible in every street in every community.

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As a recent Washington Post story recounted, mail carriers have been known to report crimes, detect gas leaks and check on the elderly. Many serve the same routes for years, taking note of the comings and goings in their neighborhoods and offering an extra set of watchful eyes. They are, in many ways, the first responders in many of these communities.

Eliminating Saturday mail service would result in the layoffs of more than 50,000 letter carriers. Job losses in the public sector have already been a drag on our economy for the past 2 years, and this only exacerbates that problem. The supposed savings would clearly be offset if these unemployed middle class workers would then need Federal assistance to make ends meet.

Upon closer inspection, the economic case for eliminating Saturday delivery is specious at best. The Postmaster General claims it will save \$2 billion, but that does not include the lost revenue or the broader economic ripple ef-

fect. A confidential report commissioned by the Postmaster General just last year showed that a 7.7 percent decline in mail volume, such as going from 6 to 5 days would trigger, would actually result in a \$5.2 billion loss in revenue. It's little wonder that he deep-sixed his own study.

Within the broader economy, 8.4 million jobs are supported by the private and public mailing industries. That represents 6 percent of all American jobs. For every job in the Postal Service, there are 10 in the private sector, and three out of four of those jobs are dependent on existing delivery infrastructure by the Postal Service, including 6-day mail. Last year, the combined industries supported \$1.3 trillion in sales revenue, or 8.6 percent of our entire economy.

While first-class mail volume has been trending downward for the past decade, the Postal Service is not maximizing those lines of business that are showing growth, such as package delivery. Growth in online retail sales, spurred by Cyber Monday, for example, pushed USPS package delivery revenue up by 4.7 percent, or \$154 million, in the first quarter of this year alone. The Postal Service has not been able to capitalize on those opportunities largely because Congress, itself, stifled innovation with the 2006 legislation that it passed. Unlike its international counterparts, the Postal Service is prohibited by law from co-locating with such comparable businesses as banks and coffee shops, which actually offer a lot of revenue in the European postal services. We even restrict how the Postal Service can competitively market its low-priced services.

Of course, the most egregious burden imposed on the Postal Service by Congress is the outrageous pre-funding requirement for future retiree health benefits. Under current law, it must pre-fund 75 years at 100 percent of those benefits in a 10-year window. No other entity on the planet has such an onerous requirement and the Postal Service, and we did it—Congress did it—in 2006. In fact, \$11.1 billion of the \$15 billion-plus loss last year for the Postal Service is directly attributable to that burden.

That brings us back to the audacity of last week's announcement by the Postmaster General. The Postal Service has routinely testified before Congress, requesting the authority to go from six to five, but congressional intent on the preservation of 6-day mail delivery has been clear for 30 years. Even the Presidential budget request recognizes the need for Congress proactively to grant such authority. It cannot be grabbed unilaterally. The Postmaster General acknowledged he was on shaky ground—and indeed he is—in making this announcement. I, along with Representative GRAVES, have asked him to provide what, if any, legal justification he relied on to make this momentous decision, and we've asked the Attorney General and the

Postal Regulatory Commission for their opinions on the Postmaster General's statutory authority for this ill-advised action.

Mr. Speaker, Representative GRAVES and I have introduced a bipartisan resolution urging the Postal Service to preserve 6-day delivery. We would welcome our colleagues in joining us to highlight congressional intent that Saturday service is vital to our neighborhoods and small businesses and to the vitality of our communities. I urge my colleagues to take a closer look.

THE DRONES ARE COMING,  
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The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the domestic use of drones is on the way. There will be more eyes in the sky looking over America.

According to the FAA, by 2015, it will allow the use of drones nationwide, and by 2030, 30,000 drones will be cruising American skies—looking, observing, filming, and hovering over America. They will come whether we like it or not. We will not know where they are or what they're looking at or what their purpose is, whether it's permitted or not permitted, whether it's lawful or unlawful, and we really won't know who is flying those drones.

Sometimes drones are good. We can thank drones for helping us track terrorists overseas and for helping us catch outlaws on the border. Legitimate uses by government and private citizens do occur, but a nosy neighbor or a Big Brother government does not have the right to look into a window without legitimate cause or, in the case of government, probable cause.

Mr. Speaker, drones are easy to find. I learned from a simple Google search that you can buy a drone on eBay or at your local Radio Shack. It's very easy. And as technology changes, Congress has the responsibility to be proactive and to protect the Fourth Amendment right of all citizens. The Fourth Amendment states:

The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated.

It doesn't take a constitutional law professor to see why legislation is needed to protect the rights of the American people. The right of a reasonable expectation of privacy is a constitutional right. Any form of snooping or spying, surveillance or eavesdropping goes against the rights that are outlined in the Constitution.

Today, I will reintroduce the Preserving American Privacy Act because it's time for Congress to be proactive in protecting the rights of civilians from the private use and government use of drones. This legislation balances individual constitutional rights with legitimate government activity and the private use of drones. We don't

have time to wait until 2030 when there are 30,000 drones in the sky.

This bill sets clear guidelines, protects individual privacy and informs peace officers so they will know what they can do and what they cannot do under the law. Nobody should be able to use drones for whatever purpose they want. This bill will make it clear for what purpose law enforcement and citizens and businesses can use drones.

There will be limits on the government use of drones so that the surveillance of individuals or their property is only permitted or conducted when there is a warrant. This applies to State, Federal, and local jurisdictions, but there are exceptions. Law enforcement could use a drone for fire and rescue, to monitor droughts and to assess flood damage or to chase a fleeing criminal. And of course, the exceptions, called exigent circumstances, which are already in our law, will apply.

This bill includes a clear statement so that it does not prevent the use of drones for border security. The bill also sets guidelines for the private use of drones.

The bottom line of the bill is simple: nobody should be spying on another unless they have the legal authority to do so. The decision should not be left up to unelected bureaucrats to decide the use of drones, so Congress has the obligation to set guidelines, to secure the right of privacy and to protect citizens from unlawful drone searches. Just because the government has the technology to look into somebody's yard doesn't give it the constitutional right to do so.

And that's just the way it is.

THE CONSEQUENCES OF  
SEQUESTRATION

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

Mr. BERA of California. Mr. Speaker, in a few short weeks, we face automatic across-the-board spending cuts. If allowed, they could not only stall our economic recovery; these cuts will immediately threaten the future of our children and grandchildren. If we allow sequestration to take place, we threaten to kick 70,000 of our children off of the Head Start program. If we allow sequestration to take place, 10,000 American teachers will lose their jobs. We threaten the very future of our children and grandchildren. This is irresponsible.

In the spirit of their future, the children from Mrs. Gibson's third-grade class at Foulks Ranch Elementary School in Elk Grove, California, wanted me to deliver a message to Congress. They are five simple tips: They want Congress to be responsible. They want Congress to be respectful. They want Congress to be kind. They want Congress to be accountable. Mr. Speaker, the third-graders from Mrs. Gibson's class want Congress to make good choices.

Allowing sequestration to take place is a bad choice. If the third-graders can figure it out, I certainly hope we in Congress can as well. Let's do what they advise. Let's be responsible and let's make good choices.

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PUERTO RICO MEDICARE PART B  
EQUITY ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Puerto Rico (Mr. PIERLUISI) for 5 minutes.

Mr. PIERLUISI. Mr. Speaker, today I'm introducing a modified version of bipartisan legislation I introduced last Congress. The bill would amend a provision in Federal law that applies only to Puerto Rico and that has harmed thousands of Medicare beneficiaries on the island. My legislation would eliminate this problem for future beneficiaries and provide appropriate financial relief to current beneficiaries who have been adversely affected. Senator SCHUMER is introducing a companion bill, and I want to thank him for his support on this issue.

Most individuals become eligible to enroll in Medicare part A, which covers inpatient hospital care, when they turn 65. In every State and territory except Puerto Rico, individuals enrolled in part A are automatically enrolled in part B, which covers doctors' services and outpatient hospital care and requires the payment of a monthly premium. Individuals can opt out of part B if they don't want it. In Puerto Rico, by contrast, individuals enrolled in part A are not automatically enrolled in part B but, rather, must opt in to receive this coverage.

The problem with the opt-in requirement is that the law requires individuals to elect part B coverage within a 7-month initial enrollment period or to pay a penalty to the Federal Government. The penalty is substantial—a 10 percent increase in the monthly part B premium for every year of delayed enrollment. It is also permanent, lasting as long as the individual has part B, which can be decades.

Over the years, the responsible Federal agencies have done a poor job informing beneficiaries in Puerto Rico about the opt-in requirement and the consequences of late enrollment. Therefore, many of my constituents fail to realize they lack Part B until they get sick and need to visit a doctor, by which point significant time may have elapsed. To illustrate the repercussions, consider the standard Medicare Part B monthly premium of \$105. An individual who enrolls 2 years late must pay a 20 percent surcharge—an additional \$21 per month. Over 1 year, that is \$252. Over 20 years, it is \$5,000.

The combination of the opt-in requirement and inadequate beneficiary education in Puerto Rico has led to consequences that are both severe and