rights leaders, providers of child care, after-care, educational programs for our children. They are advocates for entrepreneurs, minority businesses, and economic development opportunities in our communities. They stand strong with their first ladies and congregations for stopping domestic violence against women, for reducing crimes in our neighborhoods.

These powerful leaders are Bishop Jerome Ross, Reverend Dr. Keith Troy, Reverend Fred Lamarr, Reverend Jerry Carter, Reverend Victor Davis, Bishop Donald Washington, Reverend John Little, the Honorable Larry Price, Reverend Dale Snyder, the Honorable Hearchel Craig, and Reverend Joel King, cousin of Martin Luther King, Jr.

Lastly, they know all too well what the impact of sequestration will be to our at-risk communities. I salute them because they will carry on their great work despite the sequestration and the unnecessary challenges it will present if imposed. Sequestration is harmful to our district, to our constituents, and to the Nation. The impact of sequestration will affect the Federal Government's ability to provide States with the necessary resources to invest in the future leaders and to protect America's strong business environment.

Our hardworking taxpayers deserve better. Let's not put our economy at risk.

VETERANS JOBS CAUCUS

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

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, as the Representative of the Sixth District of Illinois and the son of a Korean war veteran, I'm honored to serve over 34,000 veterans. We have a deep commitment, as we know, to support those who've risked their lives to defend our freedom and help them in their transition back to civilian life. I've been active in a program called Helmets to Hard Hats, and there's a jarring unemployment figure for veterans that we are all sobered by. More than 844,000 veterans currently face unemployment, and veterans aged 18 to 24 face a staggering 31 percent unemployment rate.

There's an opportunity for us to work together, and I'm pleased to have recently joined the Congressional Veterans Jobs Caucus in an effort to bring Republicans and Democrats together to be like-minded as we seek to serve those who have served us so well. There's a myriad of obstacles that are in place that need to be remedied, and together we can join with the Disabled American Veterans organization, which is here in Washington, D.C. this week to celebrate their success and our obligation to them.

SEQUESTRATION

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

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, we are now 2 days away from failure-triggered, ideologically driven, and irrational budget cuts called ''sequester.'' It is an extraordinarily bad policy that 229 Republicans voted for on July 19, 2011. These cuts could be incredibly harmful to our national defense, our economy, and our national welfare.

General Martin Dempsey, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said:

> This will affect the entire country, and it will undermine our readiness for the next several years.

Hundreds of thousands of civilian defense personnel could be furloughed, and thousands of contractors could be forced to lay off critical personnel. Congress should not put our national security or economic recovery at risk. If I were the majority leader, this policy would not happen.

House Republicans should listen to Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood when he said:

> As a former Republican Member of Congress for 14 years, I urge my former colleagues to address this issue and to work on a long-term, balanced solution to our deficit problem.

With only 2 days left, it is time for us to come together to find a solution that can replace these cuts with a sensible, balanced alternative.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair would remind Members not to traffic the well when others are speaking.

□ 1210

REMEMBERING THE MENIFEE COUNTY LIVES LOST IN THE MARCH 2, 2012 TORNADO

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

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, today I wish to honor three precious lives lost in the tornado which devastated Menifee County, Kentucky, one year ago this Saturday.

Beverly Bowman was a magnet to children, according to newspaper accounts. Friends called her the backbone of the Tarr Ridge Union Church.

Anita Smith adored animals. Reports said she owned at least four horses, along with goats, dogs, and a mule.

And Vershal Brown was a remarkable man, recalls Menifee County Sheriff Rodney Coffee: ''Day or night, if you called him, he could help you. He would be there.''

Mr. Speaker, the people of Menifee County have shown amazing faith and determination in rebuilding their lives and their community. This weekend, we will celebrate together how far they have come, and we will join hands and remember.

SEQUESTRATION

(Ms. BROWNLEY of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. BROWNLEY of California. Mr. Speaker, this Friday, the U.S. budget faces a round of indiscriminate and severe cuts that will hurt the middle class, compromise national security, and set back our very fragile economic recovery.

I call on all of our colleagues to take immediate action to avert the sequester to prevent $1.5 trillion in reckless, unnecessary, across-the-board cuts. If we fail, my families and businesses in Ventura County will pay the price.

Naval Base Ventura County in my district could be forced to furlough 80 percent of its civilian workers. Our seniors and our children could be severely impacted through cuts to Medicare, Head Start programs, and teachers' jobs. We need to stop these arbitrary and reckless cuts now and pass a balanced approach with H.R. 699.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring H.R. 699 to the floor.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the guidelines consistently issued by successive Speakers as recorded on page 752 of the House Rules Manual, the Chair is constrained not to entertain the gentlewoman's request unless it has been cleared by the bipartisan floor and committee leaderships.

GUN CONTROL

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

Mr. POMPEO. Mr. Speaker, we're now some 11 weeks out from the tragedy that occurred in Newtown, Connecticut. And while all the talk today is about the sequester, we still have politicians and pundits all across the country that are purporting to try and solve this epidemic of gun violence with new rules taking away guns from ordinary citizens.

Unfortunately—and this is humbling for many in politics—no law or set of laws can possibly address in a meaningful way all of the challenges that we face today with a violent America. In fact, we face a much deeper, more malignant problem. It's a culture that degrades and cheapens life.

That's why I continue to be disappointed to hear the President propose further gun control. The President's plan isn't so much an attempt to solve a problem as an attempt to fulfill a wish list for gun control advocates. Unfortunately, for the American people, an opportunity for a real national dialogue on the root causes of this type of violence is being missed.

I've heard from hundreds of Kansans on the issue of gun control, and the vast majority of them understand that Washington restricting their Second Amendment rights will do very little

to end the violence in our society or to improve the safety of their families or in their schools of their children.

SEQUESTRATION

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

Mr. VARGAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to sequestration.

The word ''sequester'' derives from the Latin word ''sequi.'' It meant to follow. In late Latin, it devolved into ''sequestrar,'' which meant to surrender into the hands of a trustee. By the early 1500s, sequestrar grew to mean ''to seize, to confiscate.''

In Spanish, the word ''secuestro'' means to kidnap, to hostage, to ransom. And really, that is what the majority party is doing here today. They're holding the American people hostage, holding them ransom for these draconian spending cuts. House Republicans don't care about the harm it will cause to our working families, our seniors, our children, our military—especially our military.

We have heard now from our military leaders that military preparedness will suffer and will suffer greatly. We've already heard that an aircraft carrier has been stalled in port and is not able to be deployed to the Middle East. But there is a solution. Democrats, through the efforts of the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN), have proposed a fair and balanced plan that would replace these destructive and unwarranted cuts.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 699, a balanced bill to replace the sequester with spending cuts and revenues.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. As the Chair previously advised, that request cannot be entertained without the appropriate clearance.

CHARDON 1-YEAR ANNIVERSARY

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

Mr. JOYCE. Today marks the 1-year anniversary of a horrific day for all northeastern Ohioans. It marks the worst day of their lives for too many mothers, fathers, brother, sisters, friends, and family in Chardon, Ohio.

One year ago today, a shooter opened fire in Chardon High School, fatally shooting three students and injuring three others. These three children were cruelly taken from this Earth all too soon. They were loved by their families, embraced by their communities, and had their whole lives ahead of them.

As the county prosecutor at the time, I saw firsthand the grief and devastation that no parent should ever have to experience. Nothing will ever come close to replacing the love and happiness these children brought to their friends and family. Our community may never truly be whole again, but we must take every moment possible to honor these victims and pray for their families.

I would like to now take a moment of silence for Demetrius Hewlin, Russell King, Jr., and Daniel Parmertor. May God bless them and may God bless their families.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN REAUTHORIZATION ACT

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

Ms. MENG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge my colleagues to pass the bipartisan, Senate-passed Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act.

Early in my career, one of my first experiences was working with victims of domestic violence who were struggling and in desperate need of help. Having personally helped victims fill out VAWA petitions so they wouldn't be forced to live under the same roof as their abusers, I've seen firsthand the long-term human devastation this kind of violence can cause, and we cannot continue to ignore its toll on women and families.

VAWA funds have trained over 500,000 law enforcement and judicial officers on the realities of domestic and sexual violence, helping to protect survivors across the country. VAWA saves money, and it saves lives.

Since VAWA was first enacted, over 600 State laws have been passed to combat domestic violence, and reported incidents of violence have decreased by 60 percent. Despite these successes, there's much work to be done, and all victims of domestic violence, including those in the LGBT community and those without documentation, must feel safe seeking help from our criminal justice system.

□ 1220

CONGRESSIONAL VETERANS JOBS CAUCUS

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

Mr. DENHAM. When the courageous Americans who volunteer to fight our wars come home, they should not have to fight for jobs. Unemployment is one of the biggest problems currently facing America's veterans. In addition to our gratitude and support, our veterans need jobs. With more than 250,000 servicemen and -women expected to return to civilian life each year over the next 5 years, veterans' employment issues will only grow more challenging.

That's why for more than a year the Congressional Veterans Jobs Caucus has worked to bring the public and private sectors together—to end the veterans' unemployment crisis. I am proud to join more than 70 of my House and Senate colleagues from both sides of the aisle in this important mission to raise awareness and to increase employment among our Nation's veterans. Today and every day, we are asking our colleagues and private businesses, small and large, to make a personal and public commitment to hiring veterans by displaying this sign: ''I hire veterans.'' This logo should be displayed in our windows.

It is our greatest duty as leaders in Washington to uphold our commitment to our veterans, and we invite members of the public, especially business owners, to join us in this important mission.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2013

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

Mr. RUIZ. I would like to thank the Senate for working in a bipartisan manner to pass the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act. However, the House Republican version of the bill fails to protect all women, including Native American women, immigrant women, and the LGBT community.

I rise today in strong opposition to the House Republican version of the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act. As an ER doctor, I have seen firsthand the beaten and bruised bodies of women victims and the invisible scars left on the victim, her family, and community. Native American women in my district and across the country endure an epidemic of domestic violence, and in most cases the abusers are not members of the tribes. Tribes must have the right to protect their daughters, sisters, and mothers from violence.

We must work to make sure that all women are protected from domestic violence. I urge all of my colleagues to join me in opposition to the House Republican version of this legislation, and I look forward to the passage of the bipartisan Senate version of this legislation.

SEQUESTRATION

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

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. Last Congress, I supported more than $155 billion worth of real spending cuts. If Democrats are interested in finding a more targeted approach to avoiding the sequester, I'm more than happy to offer my suggestions. We only have to cut 2½ cents out of every dollar that we spend in 2013 to dodge the effects of the sequester. If we can't shrink spending by 2 percent without causing a meltdown, what does that say about the size of Washington?