

they come together to celebrate Juneteenth. This spirited celebration is an annual reminder of the valiant souls of our Nation's history to whom we owe so much. Let us also use this occasion to reflect upon ourselves and how we can each lead a life that honors the sacrifice of our ancestors.

RECOGNIZING DIEGO ARENCÓN ON
FATHER'S DAY

HON. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 14, 2013

Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart. Father's Day is a time for families to come together, a time to honor the role of fathers in our lives, and a time to count our blessings. But for many Americans, this Sunday will be the first Father's Day where they won't be able to hug their dad tight. And for fathers who have lost a child in the past year, this will be the first Father's Day where they can't look into their son's or daughter's eyes and tell them how much joy they bring them every day.

This Father's Day, I would like to honor one of my constituents, Diego Arencón, who has sadly lost both his father and his son in the past year. A dedicated public servant, Diego is a member of the Albuquerque Fire Department and is President of the Albuquerque Area Fire Fighters, IAFF Local 244. He has selflessly risked his life to keep the residents of Albuquerque safe. He is an effective advocate for his fellow firefighters, an accomplished jazz drummer, and I'm proud to be counted among those who call Diego a friend.

Diego and his continued commitment to his wife, Lupe, and to his surviving children, Santiago, Loliana and Diego, is an inspiration to all who know him.

In early January of this year, Diego's father, Jose "Pelete" Arencón, passed away. A prominent gypsy flamenco singer, Jose was known for his compelling voice. He began singing as a child, and became a professional singer as a teenager. Born in Spain, he moved to Albuquerque with his wife in 1975, bringing the traditional roots of flamenco to the Duke City.

Diego's son, Nikolas Ventura-Arencón, was only 14 when he tragically passed away the day before Thanksgiving last year. Even at his young age, Nikolas had ambitions to serve his community and his country just like his father. Nikolas was a member of the Los Alamos High School ROTC and had dreams of attending the New Mexico Military Institute to become a Marine. He also wanted to follow in his father's footsteps by becoming a firefighter. Within their ranks, New Mexico firefighters say Nikolas Ventura-Arencón was "one of us."

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY APPROPRIATIONS ACT OF 2013 H.R. 2217

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 14, 2013

Ms. McCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to the Department of Home-

land Security Appropriations Act of 2013 (H.R. 2217).

As a member of the Appropriations Committee, we passed a bipartisan Homeland Security appropriations bill. I believe, that legislation would have passed the House by an overwhelming margin.

Unfortunately, an amendment offered by Representative STEVE KING of Iowa was added to the bill on the floor; it is a poison pill for any member who cares about advancing comprehensive immigration reform. The King amendment terminates specific Obama Administration policies on immigration, including deferred action for childhood arrivals, supporting prosecutor discretion for victims of crimes, and prioritizing the deportation of violent criminals. The King amendment was adopted in a highly partisan vote of 224–201, with 221 Republicans voting for this anti-immigrant measure.

Specifically, the King amendment would mean that young people, who were brought here as children by their parents and grew up in America, will face deportation from the country they consider their own. It means victims of domestic abuse and human trafficking could face deportation for reporting their abusers.

Prioritizing public safety is only common sense. Immigration officials should be focused on deporting dangerous individuals, not working families or victims of domestic violence and human trafficking. Denying law enforcement officials the ability to use their discretion is not only a foolish and ineffective method of directing our resources, but inhumane.

I strongly support the Obama Administration policies that the King amendment eliminates. As a co-sponsor of the DREAM Act in the 111th and 112th Congress, I am appalled that House Republicans would support eliminating this policy and forcing these young people to live with the fear of being deported. Dreamers want and deserve the chance to earn American citizenship so they can fully contribute to the country they have always viewed as their own.

The King amendment will have a chilling effect on the movement for comprehensive immigration reform. The Senate is making real progress in negotiations, but this anti-immigrant amendment suggests that House Republicans have no interest in the real reform needed to fix our broken immigration system.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 14, 2013

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was \$10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is \$16,738,708,293,971.53. We've added \$6,111,831,245,058.45 to our debt in 4 and a half years. This is \$6 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2014

SPEECH OF

HON. BETO O'ROURKE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 13, 2013

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1960) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2014 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes:

Mr. O'ROURKE. Mr. Chair, the Federal Government is facing some of the most complex challenges in our Nation's history and dealing with serious budget constraints. In order to do more with less, it is critical that we have a first class Federal workforce. The government must make the proper investments in its employees and take the steps necessary to recruit, retain, and develop its talent.

The media often focuses on what goes wrong in government, but today I want to take a moment to recognize the important work of the more than 800,000 Department of Defense of Defense (DoD) civil servants who provide essential services to help keep our country safe. DoD civilians are partners in our national defense and integral to the success of DoD military operations.

I represent Fort Bliss in El Paso, Texas and to echo the words of Former Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta when he visited the installation, "let me be clear—Fort Bliss is the premier post in America." The critical role this post plays in our national defense is supported by more than 11,000 full-time civilian employees. We live in a world where the threats to our freedoms are diverse and we must ensure that our civilian workforce is up to the task of protecting the American people. To succeed in carrying out the complex tasks of the Department, Congress must enable all these employees to excel in their jobs. We must compensate them commensurate with their responsibilities; provide them with a quality of work life that fosters long-term growth; and work to ensure that labor-management relationships remain strong.

This year Congress debated multiple amendments to the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2014 that aimed to weaken the civilian workforce at DoD. These amendments would greatly expand the A–76 process and direct the Department to contract out any function not considered to be "inherently governmental"—regardless of policy, risk, or cost to DoD. The Congress outlawed the use of the A–76 process during the Bush Administration after the finding by DoD Inspector General that it was biased against federal employees, and by the Government Accountability Office that the costs of associated with the process often exceeded estimated savings. Additionally, in testimony before the Senate Defense Appropriations Subcommittee, DoD Comptroller Robert Hale acknowledged that contractors are twice as expensive as civilian employees stating that "if you're going to have a job over a long period of time . . . it's probably cheaper to have a civilian government employee to do it." For these reasons, I voted against these amendments.