United States of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 114th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 162 WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 2, 2016 No. 34

House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
March 2, 1016.

I hereby appoint the Honorable JODY B. HICE to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

PAUL D. RYAN,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 5, 2016, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

HONORING COACH MIKE BAEB

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

Mr. DOLD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize New Trier High School wrestling coach Mike Baeb, who is leaving New Trier after helping lead the wrestling program for over 30 years.

When he arrived at New Trier, he truly injected new life into the program, and I should know because I was a senior on the wrestling team when he came in as a coach. As a senior and the captain of the team, I often had to wrestle Coach Baeb; and I have to tell you, wrestling Coach Baeb was like wrestling a bear.

Unfortunately, I only had 1 year of coaching from Mike, and I certainly could have benefited from many more. During his time as coach, Mike won 8 Central Suburban League Conference championships, 13 IHSA Regional championships, and 7 State place winners.

Coach Baeb has also been a leader, a friend, and a mentor to many students over the past 30 years, all of whom are better off having been under his leadership, and that includes myself.

I offer my sincere thanks to Coach Baeb for his friendship and for his leadership. I wish him all the best in his future endeavors.

DIVERSITY ON NETWORK TELEVISION

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

Mr. GUTIÉRREZ. Mr. Speaker, when we got our first color TV, it was a big deal in my family. We were working class, Puerto Rican, and not used to such luxury; so when we got a color TV, we had really arrived in America.

Every Sunday night, my sister and I would watch ''The Wonderful World of Disney'' that always started with the same announcement: ''The following program is brought to you in living color on NBC.'' Then you would hear the NBC chimes.

Well, that was a long time ago. Now you turn on NBC, and the furthest thing from your mind is color. What is going on at NBC? Last week Wake Forest University professor and MSNBC television host Melissa Harris-Perry was abruptly pulled from the airwaves without even a chance to say good-bye.

NBC said they wanted a show that was more about politics, but I have to say, when I watched her show, Melissa Harris-Perry was talking about politics in a unique way, like few others on the airwaves. She brought diverse voices to the table to talk directly and unapologetically about the politics of race in America, a major theme among candidates and a critical conversation to include on the airwaves.

I am sad to see her go, just like Alex Wagner before her, but I am even sadder because I don't think these are isolated cases.

Anchorman Jose Diaz-Balart is another voice that seems to be disappearing from English language airwaves. You remember Jose. He is the Telemundo anchorman NBC would bring out to ask a question—only one question—about immigration during the Republican Presidential debates in 2012.

You may have met his brother Lincoln. He used to sit over there, and his other brother MARIO still does. Jose had a 2-hour show on MSNBC and did a very good job, but Jose is a lot harder to find these days. They cut him back, and now it seems that they are cutting him out.

For example, MSNBC announced that they were sending a team of reporters to Florida to report on the primary next Tuesday, but not Jose, one of the most respected and recognized journalists in America, who happens to be from Miami and a Florida political dynasty. Apparently he is not the right guy to report on politics in Florida.

Let's not forget the great NBC racism flip-flop last year when NBC severed its ties to Donald Trump because of his racist remarks about Latinos, only to have him host their flagship comedy show ''Saturday Night Live'' a few months later.

That was right about the same time last fall when NBC's executives met with members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus and NBC News President Deborah Turness told us, ''We love the Hispanic community,'' as she updated us on strides they were making

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on diversity in hiring. She made it very clear that she had our community's interests at heart when she said, ''Yo hablo Español'' in her beautiful British accent.

Most of the news coverage of this meeting was about when she used the term ''illegals'' to describe immigrants, which, in case you need a reminder, is not a good idea when you are meeting with members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus.

Well, forgive me for not noticing just how much progress NBC was making on diversity when some of the most visible people of color at NBC, like Alex Wagner, Melissa Harris-Perry, and Jose Diaz-Balart, are disappearing.

But let's be clear: this is not about quotas, window dressing, or checking the diversity box. Journalists of color bring a different texture and a different perspective on what issues matter and what should be discussed and debated on television.

The reality is that our Nation has become more diverse, and our television and our news media and our political institutions, including the Democratic and Republican Parties, have not kept up.

When NBC has a bad year when it comes to race, or when the Oscars have a couple of bad years when it comes to people of color, these are moments to talk about and confront the emotions and ideas we all have—we all have—about race and ethnicity.

It is a good time to think about what the phrase ''e pluribus unum'' really means in America today. This is a discussion we should all be having all of the time here in this body, on news programs, and in entertainment. It is a discussion I hope every family is having at their dinner table.

TAMMY BATEMAN'S STORY

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

Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia. Mr. Speaker, every West Virginian knows about the consequences of the war on coal. We see it everywhere we go: mines are closing; school districts are laying off employees; county commissions are forced to lay off deputy sheriffs; retailers are going out of business; mom-and-pop stores are struggling, barely able to hang on.

A pink slip doesn't mean just a loss of a job. It means a loss of a way of life; it means hard choices; and for some it means having to leave West Virginia entirely to find work elsewhere. The war on coal is killing West Virginia jobs.

Tammy Bateman and her family had to make a difficult decision. It changed the life of every member of her family, in particular that of her daughter. Tammy is a West Virginia coal voice. This is her family.

Here is what Tammy wrote to me:

''My husband worked for Cecil Walker Machinery for over 20 years at the Logan branch in West Virginia. We have lived here for all of our lives.

''Due to the declining coal industry, we had to move to another State and move our daughter from the school that she loves.

''We have a lot of friends and family that have either had to pack up and move away also and some that have stayed and have been laid off and are suffering.

''This is all due to Obama's war on coal. You see, when coal is affected, so are small businesses, schools, and much more, especially people's livelihoods.''

Mr. Speaker, the people of my district want to work. They want a paycheck to provide for their families. They want a better future for their children.

Thanks to the war on coal, thanks to the EPA's regulations putting coal mines out of business, West Virginians are suffering. This administration needs to put West Virginians back to work, not put West Virginians out of work.

SPECIAL IMMIGRANT VISA PROGRAM

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, today a bipartisan group of several dozen Members from both sides of the aisle led by ADAM KINZINGER and me were going to be sending a letter to Secretary Kerry, and I am pleased to say we don't have to send it.

The origin of the request dealt with our military operations in the Middle East, the brave Iraqi and Afghan men and women who provided sensitive and trusted services to United States military personnel. For over a decade, I have been working to try and protect them.

These Iraqis and Afghans who worked with Americans, whether as drivers or interpreters, were shoulder to shoulder with our troops, often in dangerous circumstances. In some instances, we have heard how their services literally made the difference as to whether our soldiers lived or died.

Now, thousands of our allies who helped us, face kidnapping, torture, and murder as a direct result of their assistance provided to the United States because members of the Taliban and the self-proclaimed Islamic State and other hostile elements on the ground see these individuals' service as an act of betrayal—and they have long memories.

To reward their faithful service and to fulfill our moral obligation, I have worked with colleagues on both sides of the aisle and with Senators, starting with Senator MCCAIN and the late Senator Kennedy in 2007, to create a special immigrant visa program. Known as the SIV program, enables the safe relocation of these Afghans and Iraqis to the United States.

Since 2007, our bipartisan team in Congress, including a number of Members who have recently joined us who served in Iraq and Afghanistan and know these circumstances firsthand, has been working to reform and revise the program, sometimes fighting just to keep it alive.

In November of last year, the National Defense Authorization Act extended and expanded the Afghan SIV program to ensure the continued protection of these souls. However, the final version of the bill also lengthened the period of service from 1 to 2 years required for individuals ''submitting a petition after September 30, 2015.''

The State Department's initial announcement on the interpretation of the law would have made more than 3,000 of our Afghan allies who had already begun the cumbersome application process start over to demonstrate the 2 years of qualifying employment. That is why Representative KINZINGER and I prepared this bipartisan letter to call on the State Department to revisit the interpretation.

Thankfully, after review and consideration of the concerns from Members of Congress, the State Department agreed to apply the 2-year requirement only to new applicants. This is welcome news.

Every hour that is delayed to relocate these vital partners to safety, puts their lives at risk and lives of their families. I am glad we have put this behind us perhaps, but we cannot keep operating in this inefficient manner while our allies and their families face consistent threats.

□ 1015

They deserve better. And we can do better.

It is shameful that we cannot better serve those who have put their lives on the line to help us. It seems that there is always another roadblock that occurs.

This should be a bipartisan issue that Members of Congress and the administration can work together on to save lives. It is not just saving the lives of the people who helped us.

It ensures the safety of our troops and other American personnel currently serving in harm's way. It will ensure the success of our future missions. No one in their right mind will cooperate with American forces under dire circumstances if we abandon them after their vital assistance.

I applaud the State Department's reinterpretation of this work requirement and look forward to working with my colleagues on the SIV program improvements this year. I hope we can do a better job to meet our responsibility to these souls who risked so much to help Americans.

REFORMING OUR MENTAL HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

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

Mr. LANCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of reforming our Nation's broken mental health care system.

Too often we are reminded that the country's mental health care system is not working nearly as well as should be the case. Many Americans hide behind the curtain of shame and insecurity while many others lack access, assistance, or even information on how they may receive treatment.

It is a vicious cycle, where the vulnerable who need the most care are instead left out of society, unemployable, and, in some cases, a danger to themselves and others.

Recent data suggests that fewer than one-third of Americans with diagnosable mental illness actually get treatment. Experts also estimate that more than half of those who suffer from severe mental disorders do not receive treatment in any given year.

At least 25 percent of returning troops from Iraq and Afghanistan will experience some type of mental health condition. We owe our servicemen and -women and veterans this effort to get them the care they need and deserve.

I am proud to partner with Democratic Congresswoman DORIS MATSUI of California, with whom I serve on the Energy and Commerce Committee, in recently introducing a bill to significantly expand access and strengthen community mental health and behavioral health services across the country.

The Expand Excellence in Mental Health Care Act aims to expand mental health care planning grants in two dozen States, including New Jersey, through an initiative based on our 2014 Excellence in Mental Health Act that was signed into law by President Obama in 2014.

This measure is directly tackling one of the most significant mental health care challenges: access. The Expand Excellence in Mental Health Act will enable more States to experiment with the tools and practices to fix this broken system.

By expanding the law to include more States, we encourage greater collaboration and testing to find out what solutions work, how best to care for those who need treatment, and what we can do to keep the people of the United States safe.

The Excellence in Mental Health Care Act is one of the most significant works Congress has already passed into law on mental health care. We should expand it and keep the momentum going.

I am also proud to be working with Republican Congressman TIM MURPHY of Pennsylvania on this issue. Dr. MURPHY, who has a Ph.D. in psychology, has been using his expertise to lead a serious discussion in the House Energy and Commerce Committee on this critical issue.

His Helping Families in Mental Health Crisis Act, which I am proud to cosponsor, takes a clinical approach to supporting families and individuals undergoing sudden or long-term mental health crises. The bill views those who need care through the mental health lens, not just through the criminal justice system.

Our work on these bills is part of a larger conversation on improving mental health care in this country. These bills will help struggling families who seek the best care for their loved ones. It will help those who fear stigma to get the care they need and will give our servicemen and -women and veterans the care they deserve.

I urge support for these measures, and I welcome all good ideas to the table for reforming our mental health care system.

CELEBRATING GEORGE ZANDER'S LEGACY

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

Mr. RUIZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize and celebrate the life of a magnificent human being, remarkable leader, and close personal friend, Mr. George Zander of Palm Springs, California.

Many in our community knew George as a strident advocate for equality. George was a gentle man with a burning passion to make our Nation a more perfect Union, particularly for our LGBT brothers and sisters.

In my years working in the Coachella Valley, I, like so many others in our community, knew George as a colleague, adviser, and, above all, a dear friend.

George left this world on December 10, 2015. Nonetheless, his vision, passion, and vigorous strength to fight for a more just Coachella Valley, a more just Nation, and, ultimately, a more just world, are what remain.

George's legacy is one of social justice. For over three decades, he was actively engaged in the communities that make up the desert of the Coachella Valley. He was a leader among us and steadfastly guided our community toward a more inclusive and welcoming place.

So today I would like to take a moment to memorialize the life of George Zander, whose legacy will live on for future generations, not just in the Coachella Valley, but in the history of our Nation.

As a young man, George heeded President Kennedy's call to service and joined the Peace Corps, where it became clear that he was a natural leader.

His leadership and advocacy for the LGBT community spanned decades and began in a time where it was far less politically or socially acceptable to do so, but that didn't stop him.

In Seattle, Washington, George was a member of the first openly gay and lesbian association, called the Dorian Group. This vanguard organization advocated for the advancement of the rights of LGBT individuals at a difficult time in our Nation's history.

It took great courage, but George was never one to shy away from taking a stand. George had a passion for public service and a sincere faith that our representative government plays a role in improving lives.

He worked alongside his good friend, Seattle's mayor Ed Murray, was chair of the King County Democratic Party, and worked for the 1996 Clinton-Gore campaign. Later, moving to San Francisco, he worked side by side with Cleve Jones, another prominent LGBT rights activist.

From Washington to San Francisco, to our beautiful desert in the Coachella Valley, George made an enormous impact. After moving to the Valley, he worked in the office of the great Senator BOXER.

He was a member of the Palm Springs Police Advisory Board, the Palm Springs Police Department LGBT Outreach Committee, and vice chair of the Warm Sands Neighborhood Organization.

George was a contributor for the LGBT publication, The Bottom Line, cofounded the Desert-Stonewall Democrats, and later became the Palm Springs field officer manager for Equality California.

George played a key role in advocating for laws that protect the LGBT community locally and statewide, working tirelessly to defeat proposition 8. He also collaborated with other local LGBT groups, such as the Palm Springs Human Rights Campaign, the LGBT Center, Desert AIDS Project, and Trans Palm Springs.

Mr. Speaker, George was a true leader who was the victim of a hate crime weeks before his death. I condemn these acts. There should be no space for these types of actions toward any human being, regardless of race, religion, sexual orientation, or gender identity.

For more than three decades, George spearheaded efforts advocating for human rights and equality for all in my district and across the Nation.

George was not only an extraordinary leader, activist, friend, and husband, but, overall, a gentle, loving, and caring human being.

In honor of George Zander, let us pay our respects and never forget his legacy. Let us continue fighting for a more just and tolerant world.

THE NEED TO STAND UP AGAINST ASSAD AND RUSSIAN WAR CRIMES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Indiana (Mrs. BROOKS) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, last week a U.N. panel released a deeply troubling report on the grave and horrific atrocities taking place across Syria. The report was mandated by the U.N. Human Rights Commission to investigate and record all violations of international law since March 2011.

The report outlines in painstaking detail the mass human rights abuses that innocent civilians must endure from both the Russian-backed Syrian offensive and terrorist groups like ISIS.

Hospitals are deliberately targeted—33 in Aleppo alone—resulting in mass civilian casualties. In blatant disregard of core human rights law, starvation has systematically been used as a weapon of war.

Over 450,000 people are currently trapped in besieged towns and villages in Syria, and thousands are at risk of starving to death.

Schools and playgrounds and other public spaces are routinely shelled to inflict the maximum amount of terror on innocent civilians. The report tells of attacks on a girls school in Duma, where 19 civilians were killed. Even though there were no military objectives, government forces attacked the school twice, the second attack taking place during first aid evacuation efforts.

Last month Secretary Kerry helped negotiate a temporary, 2-week cease-fire with Russia that was supposed to end the fighting and allow for the delivery of aid to besieged towns.

Unfortunately, like the deal we struck with Russia on Assad's use of chemical weapons, this cease-fire merely locks in the gains achieved by the Assad regime and gives Russia outsized influence in shaping the future of the Middle East. Regardless, the terms of the agreement were almost immediately violated.

Any hope of a sustained peace was dashed this week with the almost-immediate and predictable breach of the cease-fire agreement.

On Sunday, the Syrian opposition released a letter documenting violations of the cease-fire agreement by the Assad regime, Russia, and Iranian-backed militia, which I will include in the RECORD.

FEBRUARY 28, 2016.

H.E. Mr. BAN KI-MOON,
Secretary-General,
United Nations, New York.

EXCELLENCY SECRETARY-GENERAL: I regret to inform you that hostilities committed by Russian, Iranian, the Syrian regime, and foreign militias and mercenaries allied to them have continued against the Syrian people despite the truce taking effect on the 27th February 2016.

Right from the onset of the truce, a large number of violations have been committed by the regime and its allies in several parts of Syria. The regime has continued to target populated areas using helicopter raids to deploy explosive barrels, resulting in a large number of fatalities and causing significant injuries, most of whom were innocent women and children. There were seven recorded incidents of such breach. Furthermore, there have been twenty-four recorded breaches involving artillery shelling and five incidents recording offensive ground operations. Recorded breaches of the truce were registered in twenty-six different areas held by the moderate opposition.

Moreover, today, Sunday 28th February, Russian fighter jets launched twenty-six air strikes against territory held by opposition groups which have announced and entered into the truce. Disturbingly significant is the fact that cluster bombs as well as thermobaric weapons were deployed, adding to the number of innocent civilian fatalities and horrifying injuries.

In light of repeated breaches by the regime and its allies since the commencement of the truce, the growing number of fatalities, which currently stands at twenty-nine documented deaths, in addition to the dozens who have been injured as indiscriminate targeting of populated areas continues, we wish to clarify the following:

It is most unfortunate that the Russian Ministry of Defense presented an erroneous map riddled with false military information (http://youtu.be/MaYvdEidSzsSent) and attributed this map to the United Nations for calculated political and military purposes, as purported areas of political influence and distribution of forces on Syrian territory. The sole purpose of that exercise was to exclude certain areas from the truce and to continue their systematic bombardment and forced displacement. Given the serious consequences of these violations on the Syrian people and on the unity and territorial integrity of Syria, we urge that you take the necessary measures to respond and counter false Russian allegations and put a stop to such practices.

We call on the United Nations and the Friends of Syria Group to be mandated to specify the territory covered by the truce to prevent hostilities in the designated inclusion zones, such a task must be assumed by an impartial and transparent party. We also note that the absence of clear separation lines will result in the targeting of civilian populated areas by the regime and its allies, and henceforth constitute yet another flagrant violation of Security Council resolutions jeopardizing the truce.

Although the Syrian opposition groups have demonstrated maximum levels of self-restrain and have thus far continued to adhere to their obligations to the truce, it seems likely that the regime and its allies' persistent crimes against the Syrian people will inevitably undermine international efforts for the continuation of the truce.

We have agreed to the temporary truce as a response to sincere international efforts aiming to ease the suffering of the Syrian people and to assist in the implementation of the humanitarian provisions of UNSCR 2254, in particular: articles 12, 13 and 14. Failure to achieve any significant progress in this regard will leave us no option but to examine alternative measures to ensure the protection of the Syrian people and bring an end to the crimes committed against them. It is therefore of critical importance for the Security Council to stand firm and unwavering in its resolve.

The persistent violations of the regime and the forces allied to it will undermine Security Council efforts for a political process, including the most recent, UNSCR 2268. It is abhorrent to pursue a political process through which the suffering of the Syrian people is used as a means to achieve political and military gains; under such circumstances, negotiations will be unfeasible.

Excellency Secretary-General, the gravity of the situation, and the consequent clear and direct threat to peace and security at a regional and international level, require the United Nations to intervene immediately, to stop the crimes committed against the Syrian people and to preserve the unity and integrity of Syria.

Yours respectfully,

DR. RIAD HIJAB,
Coordinator General, The High Negotiations Committee.

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. These violations discussed in this letter are comprised of barrel and cluster bomb attacks and a number of ground incursions against opposition groups who had entered into the truce.

In the first 2 days alone, there were more than 29 documented deaths, mostly of women and children, and dozens of injuries. This is during the alleged cease-fire.

Some believe that this far-off conflict isn't affecting communities across America. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to say they are wrong.

I routinely meet with Syrian Americans in Indiana who share stories of the devastation their loved ones are experiencing back in their homeland. Listening to them recount the struggles of their families reminds me that, if we are to adhere to our values as a Nation, we must defend the vulnerable and expand basic human liberty.

Standing idly by as bombs rain down on hospitals or as Assad uses starvation as a method of warfare is an abdication of what we stand for as a Nation, but that is exactly what we have done.

This President's insistence on diminishing American power abroad has empowered Putin to step into the leadership vacuum, has bolstered Assad in Syria, and has prolonged the conflict.

We must not succumb to difficulty. We must take a stand and start meaningfully engaging our allies and strengthen the moderate Syrian forces, like the Kurds on the ground, to fight to replace the Assad regime.

Both my constituents and the Nation's top military advisers know that doing so is the only way to bring any long-term stability to Syria.

□ 1030

SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY'S ACCESS TO WATER

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

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about one of the most important issues facing the San Joaquin Valley, and that is the access to water.

California has received well-above-average rainfall during the months of December and January. But for the past several weeks, we have seen dry conditions, once again, come back.

For the last several weeks I have tried to speak on behalf of the need to make changes so that we can urge the Federal agencies to pump water at maximum levels that are allowed under the biological opinions, so that we could bring more water to the San Joaquin Valley and the farms located south of the delta.

It is welcome news that they are pumping at more robust levels, and it is my hope that we will continue to pump at maximum levels when allowable, especially because these El Nino conditions that we have had in December and January are now fading, sadly.

With the possibility of California's rainy and snow seasons coming to an end, and with much less precipitation than we had hoped for, we must take advantage of every drop of precious water that is in the system.

We need a comprehensive plan to fix California's broken water system that provides short-term operational flexibility and, at the same time, increases the State's long-term drought resiliency that will provide real water reliability and actually recovers species that have been listed in the Sacramento, San Joaquin Delta.

It is time to address these issues that are impacting these species in the delta and implement a plan to recover them so that we can stop operating the water system primarily with the blunt tools of the Endangered Species Act that clearly aren't working. They are not working because the species are not recovering.

Studies have indicated that on some rivers feeding into the delta, over 98 percent of the juvenile salmon are eaten by invasive species like the striped bass that aren't even native to California.

Despite this knowledge and the clear protections provided listed species by the Endangered Species Act, the administration has established a goal to double the amount of striped bass in California.

It should not be the policy of the United States to increase the populations of invasive species that prey on native salmon in California. I don't get it. This makes absolutely no sense and needs to be corrected.

We should be implementing a predator control program which, I might add, is supported by the Salmon Fisheries Institute. As a matter of fact, they have got over 31 programs on predator control that they would like to implement. They can't implement one of them.

We should be focusing on trying to make a difference, and that is why I am proud to be a cosponsor of Representative JEFF DENHAM's legislation, the Save Our Salmon Act.

The Save Our Salmon Act, by Congressman DENHAM, would eliminate the policy of doubling striped bass populations in the delta, a policy which has very serious negative impacts to our native salmon species and causes tremendous harm to the farm communities in the San Joaquin Valley.

We have to determine if California is going to operate with a broken system or if Congress, the administration, and the State can come together with Federal and State legislation to provide meaningful solutions to fix our broken water system for the future, for the 21st century.

Will we allow communities to dry up and blow away, as some of my colleagues, I believe, sometimes infer?

Or will we come together and craft a solution that can improve conditions for everyone across the State, while focusing on drought recovery for those who have been most affected in areas that I represent?

I am talking about farm workers. I am talking about farmers. I am talking about farm communities that put food every night on America's dinner table. I will continue to believe that we still can come together if we focus on achievable solutions.

After years of moving more and more water through the delta in an attempt to halt species decline, we haven't actually recovered any of these species. It is high time, I believe, to try something new.

I remain committed to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to craft solutions that increase California's drought resiliency and provide water to the communities who have been most impacted by the recent drought because, after all, this is about security. It is about job security, it is about economic security, it is about the future security of our valley and the State of California.

We must fix California's broken water system for the short term and the long term. Time is of the essence, and every day of delay only results in losses of these vital water supplies.

SEVENTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MILLER-RAFFAELE VFW POST

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the 70th anniversary of the Miller-Raffaele VFW Post 6221 in Emporium, Cameron County, located in the Pennsylvania Fifth Congressional District.

The post is named after two sets of brothers who answered the call to defend the United States of America in World War II, Jack and Harry Miller, along with Sam and Frank Raffaele.

Jack and Harry were killed within 1 month of each other in 1944. Sadly, Sam and Frank also made the ultimate sacrifice on the same day, yet miles apart from one another, also in 1944.

After the war ended, the community welcomed back the surviving men and women who formed the Miller-Raffaele Post 6221, which was officially opened on March 5, 1946.

Mr. Speaker, we owe so much to the members of our Nation's Armed Forces, and especially to those members of the Greatest Generation who traveled to places such as Europe and Asia to fight tyranny.

I am proud to salute the members of the Emporium VFW on this important anniversary, and I wish them the best of success in the future.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 404TH MANEUVER ENHANCEMENT BRIGADE

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

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to formally congratulate the 404th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade from Normal, Illinois, for receiving the Reserve Family Readiness Award from the Department of Defense at the Pentagon last Friday.

This award is bestowed on the top unit in each Reserve component for their outstanding programs that support unit missions and family readiness.

The 404th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, under Unit Commander, Captain Jera Muder, has more than 2,000 soldiers in various functional units, from engineering to military police, to support units.

These family readiness support programs allow our soldiers, sailors, marines, airmen, and guardsmen to serve throughout the world with peace of mind, knowing that their home front is safe.

This is a prestigious title, and it makes me proud and Illinois proud that these remarkable men and women call central Illinois home.

Today we applaud their families for the sacrifices they make so their soldiers can defend our country abroad, and we congratulate them on this well-deserved award.

To those in our Armed Forces keeping our homes and families safe, thank you. And to the fathers, mothers, wives, husbands, and children behind our troops, you also deserve our gratitude for your ongoing sacrifice and bravery.

KLAMATH RIVER DAM REMOVAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. LAMALFA) for 5 minutes.

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, yesterday in the Natural Resources Committee, I requested and demanded that the Interior Department explain its involvement in creating what appears to be a shell corporation, which it calls a non-Federal entity, which would work to remove dams on the Klamath River in northern California and southern Oregon, this without any authorization from Congress.

Interior officials refused to answer in committee whether they will be subject to the Freedom of Information Act or even explain why stakeholders are required at these meetings to sign nondisclosure agreements before learning how they will be affected by the actions at these secret meetings.

They don't like having them called secret meetings. They have other euphemisms, such as a private conversation, what have you. They are even organizing bylaws for an incoming board at these meetings.

Mr. Speaker, the very idea that Federal and State government employees are involved in a project designed explicitly to avoid open government,

open government laws, and public disclosure should give us all pause, especially since tax dollars are being used to pay for the salaries of those folks involved, their travel, the meeting spaces, et cetera. They are not doing this pro bono.

While this is billed as a California-Oregon project, the Interior Secretary's signature is on a pact to create this entity that suggests that the administration is, again, trying to end run Congress to achieve a political goal.

I will continue working to get answers on this Klamath issue on the removal of the dams and the effect it will have on the Klamath Basin water users.

But in the meantime, the administration needs to end its focus on dam removal and work towards a solution that doesn't ignore the water supply issues that affect so much of the West, affect many thousands in northern California, and especially those directly in the line of fire in the Klamath Basin that have been clamoring for so long for a long-term solution to keep the waters flowing to their farms.

At a time of extreme drought in California and the Western States, and even more burdens such as the electricity renewable mandate that is going to affect California to 50 percent of required renewables, the concept of removing hydroelectric dams that also make a little water storage and have some positive effects on river temperature is absurd.

Why is the priority something that is going to hurt the people of the region, hurt their goals?

Instead, we should be pursuing water storage in California and putting this issue aside.

On top of that insult to injury is that it is being done in secret, without congressional approval, without the chance for all the stakeholders that really have an affect in the area to be involved.

This is the wrongheaded way to do things. It is offensive to me, it is offensive to my constituents.

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 41 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. MOOLENAAR) at noon.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer:

Dear Lord of mercy, we give You thanks for giving us another day. Hear our prayers and those of people around the world that there might be an end to hunger.

We use this moment to be reminded of Your presence and to tap the resources needed by the Members of this people's House to do their work as well as it can be done.

As the Nation digests the results of a most significant voting day, may the Members remain focused on the tasks at hand.

All this day and through the week, may they do their best to find solutions to pressing issues facing our Nation. Please hasten the day when justice and love shall dwell in the hearts of all peoples and rule the affairs of the nations of Earth.

May all that is done this day be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. 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 pro tempore. Will the gentlewoman from Kansas (Ms. JENKINS) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. JENKINS of Kansas 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.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

U.S.-CANADA PRECLEARANCE AGREEMENT

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

Ms. STEFANIK. Mr. Speaker, in my district in northern New York, Canada is more than just a bordering nation. They are our neighbors and our friends.

Canadians and upstate New Yorkers enjoy their summers together fishing along the St. Lawrence River, golfing on Wellesley Island, visiting the Thousand Islands National Park, and exploring Boldt Castle.

Plattsburgh, a city in my district, has even branded itself as Montreal's U.S. suburb, hosting more than 100 U.S. subsidiaries of Canadian companies, with 15 percent of its area workforce working for a Canadian or border-related employer.

That is why I helped lead the efforts and support the Promoting Travel, Commerce, and National Security Act, a necessary step to solidify the preclearance agreement between the U.S. and Canada, which was reached nearly a year ago.

This significant, bipartisan legislation is great news for U.S.-Canadian relations, and I strongly encourage my colleagues to cosponsor this vital piece of legislation to maintain a secure northern border and facilitate travel and commerce between the U.S. and Canada and benefit our upstate New York economy.

BELFAIR SHOOTING

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

Mr. KILMER. Mr. Speaker, last Friday, in the region I represent, tragedy struck the close-knit community of Belfair. A shooting took the lives of a family and a neighbor. All the victims were taken too soon from this world. Right now, in their place, is heartbreak.

Since this happened, we have been thinking of the friends and family impacted by this shooting. Pastors from North Mason have gathered mourners together to offer support and prayers.

I want to make sure we note the courage of local law enforcement and other first responders who came to the scene. The Mason County Sheriff's Office, among others, deserves praise for putting their lives on the line in confronting the person responsible for this violence and responding to an awful situation.

As a dad of two little girls, it pains me that so many communities like ours are faced with tragedies like this. I am hopeful we can come together to find ways to stop them.

The words of Jamie McCallum, a pastor at Belfair Community Baptist Church, ring true as we pick up the pieces from this incident. Pastor McCallum said:

> Violence and pain may have the strongest voice for the moment, but love and life have the final say.

REMEMBERING BORIS NEMTSOV

(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, this past Saturday, February 27, marked the first anniversary of the assassination of Russian pro-democracy and opposition leader Boris Nemtsov, who was tragically gunned down in Moscow.

Killed just days before he was due to publish evidence of Russian military involvement in Ukraine, Boris led the effort in exposing the regime's corruption at every turn as he fought for a more open and democratic Russia.

Mr. Speaker, this poster was actually used in Russia by Boris' supporters protesting in the aftermath of his murder.

I had the honor of working with Boris for many years, and he would want us to do our part to hold Putin accountable. But we cannot forget the questionable circumstances surrounding his murder.

I call on the administration to sanction any Russian official involved in Boris' murder, and I urge that their names be added now to the Magnitsky list of human rights violators. Let's honor Boris in this way.

GUN MYTH

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

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, today I want to bring attention to another myth about gun violence: the suggestion that more guns are the key to reducing gun violence.

On December 4, just days after San Bernardino, Senator TED CRUZ said, ''You stop bad guys by using our guns.''

We hear similar comments from gun advocates and allies all the time, but the facts tell a much different story. Not one of the 62 mass shootings from 1982 to 2012 was stopped by an armed citizen.

A 1998 study in the Journal of Trauma, Injury, Infection, and Critical Care found that a gun in the home is 22 times more likely to be used against a friend or family member than used in self-defense.

A 2003 study found women in homes with a gun were 2.7 times more likely to be murdered. A 2013 study found, for each percentage point increase in a State's gun ownership rate, firearm homicide rates increased by 0.9 percent.

Facts are stubborn things. But the facts are clear. More guns will not end our country's epidemic of gun violence.

HONORING CARL NORDSTROM ON HIS 100TH BIRTHDAY

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

Ms. JENKINS of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 100th birthday of Carl Nordstrom of Topeka on March 5.

Carl has devoted his life to public service. He was the executive director of the Kansas Association of Commerce and Industry from 1970 until 1982. He was cofounder of Leadership Kansas, inspiring leaders to maintain and strengthen the social, business, and political fabric of our State. In 1983, Carl was named Kansan of the Year by the Native Sons and Daughters of Kansas.

A graduate of Topeka High School and Washburn University, he participated in many amphibious landings in the Pacific during World War II. He is a past president of the Washburn Alumni Association and is in the Washburn Athletic Hall of Fame. He remains to this day a leader and teacher in the University United Methodist Church in Topeka.

Happy 100th birthday, Carl Nordstrom, and thank you for your service to Kansas.

PROMOTING TRAVEL, COMMERCE, AND NATIONAL SECURITY ACT

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

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Promoting Travel, Commerce, and National Security Act introduced in the House and Senate.

This legislation sets rules by which American border agents will operate in Canada, thereby allowing a land port of entry to move the inspection of all inbound cargo to the Canadian side of the border.

Last year U.S. Customs and Border Protection conducted a pilot program at the Peace Bridge in Buffalo. It concluded that preinspection of cargo would double the capacity of the bridge and slash wait times during peak season from 22 minutes to 5 minutes.

The Peace Bridge is an economic lifeline between western New York and southern Ontario, and its efficiency and safety is a top priority. I thank Congresswoman KUSTER for her leadership and partnership. I urge the House to approve this important legislation.

AMERICAN PEOPLE NEED TO KNOW

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, yesterday Economics Professor Peter Morici of the University of Maryland in The Washington Times cited facts the American people need to know:

''President Obama would like us to believe things are getting better every day, but average median incomes are down about $1,650 on his watch. Elderly women are working in record numbers because pensions and retirement incomes are being decimated.'' ''Young folks, bogged down by student loans, can't buy homes and face rocketing apartment rents.''

''Should the economy tumble, Hillary Clinton will try to buy off voters with more Obama-vintage free stuff that makes creating jobs in the private sector so tough.''

''Expanding ObamaCare-mandated benefits will push up prices for drugs, medical services, and insurance premiums even more and cause employers to hire even fewer workers.''

''Instead of more jobs, America will have more debt and more employers fleeing.''

''America did not become a superpower by being timid, and it's time for a President who understands this.''

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and may the President, by his actions, never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

WHOLE WOMAN'S HEALTH V. HELLERSTEDT

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

Ms. JUDY CHU of California. Mr. Speaker, this morning I stood in front of the Supreme Court with hundreds of passionate voices rallying to defend our right to choice.

Before the Court today is one of the most significant abortion cases to be heard in years. For over 40 years now, Roe v. Wade has been the law of the land, recognizing a woman's right to a safe abortion when she needs it and where she needs it.

But State laws, like the Texas law in question, chip away at that right so that women must drive hundreds of miles and face serious delays before exercising their right to choice.

What is worse is that preventing women from accessing safe medical care has led to a sharp increase in self-induced abortions. We cannot accept putting women at risk by returning to the horrors of the back alley that harmed so many.

Today I call on the Supreme Court to keep women safe and recognize that our constitutional rights should not depend on our ZIP Code.

BLEEDING DISORDERS AWARENESS MONTH

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

Mr. BENISHEK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today wearing my red tie because this March marks the first national Bleeding Disorders Awareness Month.

Bleeding disorders, such as hemophilia or Von Willebrand disease, are currently estimated to affect more than 3 million people nationwide.

These disorders are frequently underdiagnosed, and many victims of these disorders often struggle to get proper medical care. As a doctor who treated patients in northern Michigan, I have firsthand experience with patients tackling these difficulties.

While the medical community has made great strides over the years in improving the quality of care available for those impacted by bleeding disorders, we can do more.

I met recently with constituents in my district who are impacted by bleeding disorders, and they shared with me the great work being done in northern Michigan by Munson Healthcare's Bleeding Disorder Center to provide better care for patients throughout northern Michigan.

I hope that my colleagues and I can all join together with the medical research community to build on these

gains and find commonsense and bipartisan ways to develop new treatment options for those suffering from bleeding disorders.

□ 1215

VICTIMS OF GUN VIOLENCE

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

Mr. PETERS. Mr. Speaker, Roy, Utah, June 21, 2015: Shawna Smith, 26 years old; Tylee Smith, 6; Blake Smith, 2.

Bristol, Tennessee, August 29, 2015: Lena Rose, 57 years old; Toshya Millhorn, 39; James Millhorn, 36.

Columbus, Ohio, November 23, 2015: John Anderson, 31; Christina Anderson, 30 years old; Landon Anderson, 7.

Montgomery, Alabama, December 28, 2013: Glenn Thomas, 22 years old; Kimberle Johnson, 21; Timnorious Hamilton, 20.

Tucson, Arizona, May 12, 2015: Raul Carrillo, 58 years old; Karen Saari, 53; Erik Carrillo, 32; Isela Rodriguez, 17.

Cleveland, Ohio, November 21, 2014: Lemon Bryant, 60 years old; Sherita Johnson, 41; Ja'Rio Taylor, 19 years old; Shaylona Williams, 17 years old.

Mountain, Alabama, November 16, 2015: Sylvia Duffe, 71 years old; Clara Edwards, 68.

FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION OF THE MILITARY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE OF KEY WEST

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

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Military Affairs Committee of Key West on their 50th anniversary celebration. Since its inception, MAC's mission has been to strengthen the bonds between military members and civilians in the Florida Keys. Members of MAC are devoted citizens of their community, participating or volunteering in local events to ensure that Keys life continues to thrive.

Today I am proud to recognize two original charter members of MAC, Mr. Edward B. Knight and Mr. Frank Toppino. Mr. Knight is a former Naval aviator in World War II, while Mr. Toppino was in the U.S. Army in the Pacific Theatre, also in World War II.

Both men have gone on to become successful entrepreneurs, businessmen, and philanthropists in Key West. They are highly respected pillars of the Florida Keys community, bringing together military members and civilians. They lead by example, inspiring us to uphold the values and the visions of MAC and their charter members.

I applaud Mr. Toppino, Mr. Knight, and the members of the Military Affairs Committee of Key West on a very successful and unifying 50 years. May MAC and its mission continue to flourish.

RECOGNIZING THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE HONORABLE PATSY MINK DURING WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

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

Ms. GABBARD. Mr. Speaker, after graduating from Maui High in 1944 as class president and valedictorian, and attempting college with dreams of becoming a doctor, Patsy Mink had over a dozen medical schools slam the door shut simply because she was a woman.

Rather than quit, she took action. She went to law school, becoming the first Japanese American female attorney in Hawaii, and was elected as the first Asian American woman ever to Congress in 1965.

Through her 12 terms in the House of Representatives serving Hawaii's Second District, which I am honored to represent today, she was a true champion for equal rights and opportunity.

In 1972, her landmark bill, Title IX, was signed into law, legislation that has since allowed young women all across the country the very same opportunities to jump high, run fast, hit hard, and go the extra mile, the same as their male counterparts.

As we kick off Women's History Month, let us recognize and celebrate Patsy Mink and the countless other women throughout our Nation's history who have blazed trails before us and broken down barriers for a better future for our next generation.

SHOOTING IN CENTRAL KANSAS

(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, last Thursday, yet another city, this time in central Kansas, was added to the list of communities across the country affected by gun violence.

Three lives were taken, 14 injured, and many others changed forever. Sadly, many of us know all too well the pain that comes from acts of violence caused by the trigger of a gun.

Ninety minutes before this shooter opened fire, he was served with a restraining order in response to a domestic violence report. Often these protection orders serve as the first notification to an abuser that the relationship is ending and, as in this case, that can lead to more violence.

That is why I offered the Protecting Domestic Violence and Stalking Victims Act, a bill that would prevent individuals subject to judicial protection orders from temporarily purchasing or possessing a firearm.

The hours right after an abuser is first served with a restraining order are the most volatile and dangerous, and it is only responsible to remove firearms from this situation temporarily.

I urge my colleagues to join me in cosponsoring this commonsense bill.

TEXAS HAS NO CHOICE

(Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, this morning I joined hundreds of women on the steps of the Supreme Court to protest the Texas law that is under consideration by the Court today.

The Texas law has already shut down over half of the abortion clinics in the State of Texas, and if the law is upheld today, it will effectively end the constitutional right of women in Texas to obtain a legal abortion.

If that happens, the extreme Texas law will likely be used as a blueprint by anti-choice extremists across this country.

Now, they claim that this law's restrictive provisions are necessary to protect a woman's health. But doctors across this Nation will tell you that that is a lie. The harsh restrictions were designed with the single purpose of closing and blocking access to choice.

I proudly joined over 162 of my colleagues on an amicus brief urging the Court to strike down this law. The right to choose is meaningless without the access to choice.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

(Mr. TED LIEU of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. TED LIEU of California. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to acknowledge and celebrate the month of March as Women's History Month. During this month, we recognize the many successes of women all across America and our Nation's history.

I am proud to represent California's 33rd Congressional District, home to many female trailblazers such as Barbra Streisand who, in addition to her many accomplishments in the entertainment industry and her philanthropic contributions, is the first female director to receive Kennedy Center Honors and recently received the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the Nation's highest civilian honor.

We also have Sherry Lansing, who was the first woman to head a major Hollywood studio, the first female studio chief to receive a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame, and the first woman to be named Pioneer of the Year by the Foundation of Motion Picture Pioneers.

Then we have Michelle Kwan, who was born in my hometown of Torrance, an alumnus of UCLA, who is not only a 5-time world championship ice skater with two Olympic medals, but also serves as senior adviser to the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, among many other roles.

As we celebrate Women's History Month, let us continue to work to create equal opportunities for future generations of women.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3716, ENSURING REMOVAL OF TERMINATED PROVIDERS FROM MEDICAID AND CHIP ACT

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 632 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 632

Resolved, That at any time after adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3716) to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to require States to provide to the Secretary of Health and Human Services certain information with respect to provider terminations, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Energy and Commerce. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. In lieu of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Energy and Commerce now printed in the bill, it shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the five-minute rule an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 114-45. That amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read. All points of order against that amendment in the nature of a substitute are waived. No amendment to that amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against such amendments are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. Any Member may demand a separate vote in the House on any amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole to the bill or to the amendment in the nature of a substitute made in order as original text. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 632 provides for a rule to consider a commonsense, bipartisan piece of legislation that will address waste, fraud, and abuse within the Medicaid program.

The rule provides for 1 hour of debate, equally divided between the majority and the minority of the Committee on Energy and Commerce. The Committee on Rules made in order four amendments that were submitted to the committee, three Democratic amendments and one bipartisan offering.

Finally, the rule affords the minority the customary motion to recommit, a final opportunity to amend the legislation should the minority choose to exercise that option.

H.R. 3716, the Ensuring Access to Quality Medicaid Providers Act, combines two bipartisan bills that were unanimously reported out of the Energy and Commerce Committee: H.R. 3716, the Ensuring Terminated Providers Are Removed from Medicaid and CHIP Act that was introduced by Dr. LARRY BUCSHON, a member of the committee; and H.R. 3821, the Medicaid DOC Act authored by Representative CHRIS COLLINS, also on the committee.

Not only is this bill bipartisan, it has received support of the administration, and it is an important illustration of the work we are doing in the House right now to improve health care for all Americans.

The Medicaid program continues to suffer from fraud, waste, and abuse. These issues cause direct harm to the beneficiaries and waste billions of taxpayer dollars.

Medicaid beneficiaries frequently end up in the emergency room, not because they need emergency care, but because they cannot find a physician participating in their Medicaid program. This is an inefficient and ineffective way to access health care.

H.R. 3716 is commonsense legislation that resolves both of these problems and improves beneficiary access to quality providers. Not only is this bill good for patients, it is fiscally responsible.

According to the Congressional Budget Office, this package would reduce Federal outlays by $15 million over the budget window because the Medicaid program would no longer be paying providers who had been terminated for reasons of fraud, integrity, or quality.

Although the Congressional Budget Office does not estimate State-specific savings, this bill would also save State Medicaid programs from several million dollars over the same timeframe.

The Office of Inspector General at the Department of Health and Human Services has previously found that 12 percent of terminated providers were participating in a State Medicaid program as of January 1, 2012, after the same provider was terminated for reasons of integrity or quality from another State Medicaid program.

□ 1230

The base bill, H.R. 3716, will ensure that we put an end to this problem.

State Medicaid and State CHIP programs will be required to report terminated providers to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services within 21 business days. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services will then be required to include that data and Medicare provider terminations in its Termination Notification database within 21 business days. In addition, State Medicaid and State CHIP managed care contracts will be required to include a provision that providers terminated for reasons of integrity or quality from Medicare, Medicaid, or SCHIP be terminated from participation in their provider networks. Where Medicaid or CHIP payments are made to providers for services performed more than 60 days after the provider's termination, those States will be required to pay back the Federal portion of the Medicaid match of those payments.

The bill will also ensure that State Medicaid agencies have a current and complete list of providers serving Medicaid patients by requiring providers to enroll with the State agency. To streamline reporting requirements and eliminate duplication, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services will be required to develop uniform terminology for terminations related to fraud, integrity, or quality.

These simple reforms will ensure that we stop paying millions of Federal taxpayer dollars for fraudulent and wasteful care and that beneficiaries are not receiving care from providers who have failed to adhere to basic standards of quality or integrity.

The second key issue this bill tackles is one of access to care. Beneficiaries in the Medicaid program have historically struggled to find a physician who will accept Medicaid and can provide treatment. H.R. 3716 includes H.R. 3812, introduced by Representative CHRIS COLLINS of New York, to empower beneficiaries with better information that will arm them with the information that they need to access care without first going to an emergency room.

While Medicaid beneficiaries enrolled in managed care plans have a defined network of providers, about half of States use delivery systems other than risk-based managed care, and those served under a fee-for-service or primary care case management program

include some of the most vulnerable Medicaid enrollees, such as the elderly and disabled children. Unfortunately, these enrollees may have limited assistance in identifying physicians who participate in the Medicaid program.

Specifically, the policy would require State Medicaid programs to publish an electronic directory of physicians who have billed Medicaid in the prior year—an indication that the physician has or likely still accepts Medicaid patients. That directory would include the physician's name, specialty, address, telephone number, and, where relevant, information on whether the physician is accepting new patients and linguistic capabilities.

Medicaid is estimated to cover 83 million people this year, and it is growing. H.R. 3716 makes two targeted but important reforms to strengthen the integrity of the Medicaid program and to improve access to quality care. This legislation is another example of the Energy and Commerce Committee's record of success on bipartisan reform to improve the state of health care in America. I encourage my colleagues to vote for this package.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas for yielding me the customary 30 minutes for debate.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to debate the rule for H.R. 3716, Ensuring Removal of Terminated Providers from Medicaid and CHIP Act. Among other things, this bill requires State Medicaid and CHIP programs to report providers terminated for reasons of fraud, integrity, or quality to CMS within 21 business days.

The requirements in this legislation are straightforward and have achieved broad bipartisan support. I find myself strangely in the position of agreeing with all of what my colleague from Texas had to say. I listened to him intently. So it only leaves the question: Why is this bill being presented here today instead of under the suspension calendar?

Rather than taking the time to debate a rule for a bill that could be passed without the need for a special rule, would it not be a better use of this body's valuable legislative time to debate and pass a budget resolution and get the appropriations process started?

Mr. Speaker, I applaud Speaker RYAN's promises to end Republican obstruction and dysfunction and return to regular order, but I cannot see how what is unfolding now is a step in that direction.

Last fall, Republicans and Democrats came together to pass a bipartisan budget agreement. Now Republicans, appeasing the most extreme fringe of their party, are considering breaking that agreement. Breaking this agreement will not be without consequences for this Nation, including deeper cuts to seniors and working families.

Mr. Speaker, the majority's fumble on the budget has ushered in a new level of dysfunction for this institution. My Republican friends' inability to govern has gotten so bad that they can't even agree to follow through on an agreement they have already agreed to and has been signed into law.

As we debate today, it is still not clear how the majority plans to move forward on one of this body's most basic constitutional obligations: appropriating funds to run the country.

I told the young people working with me that I thought of a metaphor last night about when I first learned to swim. I grew up in an area where there were a lot of lakes, so it was automatic that all of us would learn how to swim, and we did. In learning to swim, among the things that the young boys taught me was there were times when you just tread water, where you don't move forward or backward. If you are backstroking, just tread water. Some learned to float. I didn't. But apparently my Republican friends have learned to float and have learned to tread water because we are not going anywhere fast in this institution of dysfunction.

The inability to fulfill this obligation is truly astounding and reveals a Republican majority that may wish upon every star in the sky to return to regular order but has no earthly idea of how to do so. Indeed, the only regularity we see coming out of today's Republican leadership is one dedicated to disorder.

The inability to even begin a fruitful discussion of a budget process is but one among many pieces of evidence that prove that the Republican hopes of regular order are as elusive as is their ability to put forth a plan that will benefit working class Americans, strengthen our infrastructure, and provide for the least among us. It would be comical if it were not so dire.

Let's recap how we have arrived at this point of Republican inability to govern. For the first time in 40 years, Republicans refuse to even invite a representative from the administration to testify on the President's budget proposal. Then, Republican leaders failed to hold a committee markup on a budget resolution last week and fumbled their plans to present their conference with a promised budget blueprint. Now, in order to appease the insatiable radical fringe of his party, Speaker RYAN is threatening to break the terms of the bipartisan budget agreement passed into law last year—totally unbelievable.

Mr. Speaker, the American people deserve better. They want us to work together to fund their government and solve the problems of this country. This whole Republican budget process has shown that the majority and the radical fringe rightwing of their party are simply not up to that task.

I might add that I read last night that the majority leader in the other body has made it very clear that he is not going to play along with House Republican functionaries who would send stuff to the Senate that is not going to pass. I predict that we will one day have the usual omnibus at the end of this process, and that is tragic.

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

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, so pending Mr. HASTINGS' conclusion, I will reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers as well, and I am prepared to close.

I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, if we defeat the previous question, I am going to offer an amendment to the rule to bring up a resolution that would require the Republican majority to stop its partisan games and finally hold hearings on the President's budget proposal.

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

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

There was no objection.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote ''no'' and defeat the previous question.

Mr. Speaker, the bill underlying this rule institutes a number of proposals that have broad bipartisan support. So again I ask: Why are we here debating a rule for such a bill? Quite obviously, it is because Republicans have no choice but to tread water. In doing so, they have called a time-out on helping the American people; they have called a time-out on doing their job.

They have done so so that they may make haste in putting Humpty Dumpty back together again.

Good luck, my friends. Truly, truly, I wish you good luck.

In the meantime, rest assured that those of us on this side of the aisle stand ready in getting to the people's business once you can pull yourselves together and put forth a budget plan. I am, of course, suspect of whether our friends on the other side of the aisle will be able to do so.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I do want to point out today is March 2, significant for many of us in Texas because that is Texas Independence Day, a date that is recognized across the Nation as one that brought independence to the State of Texas.

I would point out it seems like oftentimes, in my role here presenting the Republican case for the rule from the Rules Committee, it also becomes my duty to provide some historical perspective for the House of Representatives, and today is no exception.

March 2, today, the first year that the Democrats had the majority in recent memory was calendar year 2007.

When was a budget passed in calendar year 2007? It was passed on March 29. I would point out that the only thing bipartisan about that budget resolution was the opposition.

Calendar 2008, a bit better, the budget passed on March 13, the middle of the month, about 2 weeks from where we are today. Once again, on that budget, 212 yeas and 207 nays. But the nays were bipartisan. The yeas, of course, were of a single party.

Calendar year 2009, the budget didn't pass until the month of April, and, once again, the only thing bipartisan about the budget that year was its opposition.

Then, finally, I would point out that the following calendar year, 2010, there was no budget submitted.

So, Mr. Speaker, my understanding from the chairman of the Budget Committee is they are actively working on the budget. I wish them Godspeed. I am thankful that I don't have to be in the room while it is being done, but I have every confidence that they will produce a budget document that the House will then consider. But today—today—Mr. Speaker, today's rule provides for consideration of an important fix to the Nation's Medicaid program.

I certainly want to thank Dr. LARRY BUCSHON and Mr. COLLINS of New York—both, of the Energy and Commerce Committee, two important members of the Committee on Energy and Commerce—for their work on this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote ''yes'' on the rule and ''yes'' on the underlying bill.

The material previously referred to by Mr. HASTINGS is as follows:

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 632 OFFERED BY MR. HASTINGS OF FLORIDA

At the end of the resolution, add the following new sections:

SEC. 2. Immediately upon the adoption of this resolution it shall be in order without intervention of any point of order to consider in the House the resolution (H. Res. 624) Directing the Committee on the Budget to hold a public hearing on the President's fiscal year 2017 budget request with the Director of the Office of Management and Budget as a witness. The resolution shall be considered as read. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the resolution and preamble to adoption without intervening motion or demand for division of the question except one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Budget.

SEC. 3. Clause 1(c) of rule XIX shall not apply to the consideration of H. Res. 624.

THE VOTE ON THE PREVIOUS QUESTION: WHAT IT REALLY MEANS

This vote, the vote on whether to order the previous question on a special rule, is not merely a procedural vote. A vote against ordering the previous question is a vote against the Republican majority agenda and a vote to allow the Democratic minority to offer an alternative plan. It is a vote about what the House should be debating.

Mr. Clarence Cannon's Precedents of the House of Representatives (VI, 308–311), describes the vote on the previous question on the rule as ''a motion to direct or control the consideration of the subject before the House being made by the Member in charge.'' To defeat the previous question is to give the opposition a chance to decide the subject before the House. Cannon cites the Speaker's ruling of January 13, 1920, to the effect that ''the refusal of the House to sustain the demand for the previous question passes the control of the resolution to the opposition'' in order to offer an amendment. On March 15, 1909, a member of the majority party offered a rule resolution. The House defeated the previous question and a member of the opposition rose to a parliamentary inquiry, asking who was entitled to recognition. Speaker Joseph G. Cannon (R–Illinois) said: ''The previous question having been refused, the gentleman from New York, Mr. Fitzgerald, who had asked the gentleman to yield to him for an amendment, is entitled to the first recognition.''

The Republican majority may say ''the vote on the previous question is simply a vote on whether to proceed to an immediate vote on adopting the resolution. . . . [and] has no substantive legislative or policy implications whatsoever.'' But that is not what they have always said. Listen to the Republican Leadership Manual on the Legislative Process in the United States House of Representatives, (6th edition, page 135). Here's how the Republicans describe the previous question vote in their own manual: ''Although it is generally not possible to amend the rule because the majority Member controlling the time will not yield for the purpose of offering an amendment, the same result may be achieved by voting down the previous question on the rule. . . . When the motion for the previous question is defeated, control of the time passes to the Member who led the opposition to ordering the previous question. That Member, because he then controls the time, may offer an amendment to the rule, or yield for the purpose of amendment.''

In Deschler's Procedure in the U.S. House of Representatives, the subchapter titled ''Amending Special Rules'' states: ''a refusal to order the previous question on such a rule [a special rule reported from the Committee on Rules] opens the resolution to amendment and further debate.'' (Chapter 21, section 21.2) Section 21.3 continues: ''Upon rejection of the motion for the previous question on a resolution reported from the Committee on Rules, control shifts to the Member leading the opposition to the previous question, who may offer a proper amendment or motion and who controls the time for debate thereon.''

Clearly, the vote on the previous question on a rule does have substantive policy implications. It is one of the only available tools for those who oppose the Republican majority's agenda and allows those with alternative views the opportunity to offer an alternative plan.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The previous question was ordered.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

□ 1245

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BENISHEK). Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess for a period of less than 15 minutes.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 51 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1301

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. DOLD) at 1 o'clock and 1 minute p.m.

ENSURING REMOVAL OF TERMINATED PROVIDERS FROM MEDICAID AND CHIP ACT

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BUCSHON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 3716.

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

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 632 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 3716.

The Chair appoints the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HOLDING) to preside over the Committee of the Whole.

□ 1302

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 3716) to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to require States to provide to the Secretary of Health and Human Services certain information with respect to provider terminations, and for other purposes, with Mr. HOLDING in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered read the first time.

The gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BUCSHON) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. TONKO) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Indiana.

Mr. BUCSHON. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

The bipartisan bill before us today improves access to quality healthcare providers for vulnerable Medicaid patients.

Today, State Medicaid programs too often suffer from waste, fraud, and abuse, which can harm beneficiaries and waste taxpayer dollars. At the same time, too many Medicaid patients may have a hard time finding a doctor. Our bill takes an important step forward in addressing both of these issues.

First, H.R. 3716 would ensure healthcare providers that are terminated from Medicaid or from one State's Medicaid program for reasons

of fraud, integrity, or quality are also terminated from other State Medicaid programs. The Office of Inspector General at HHS has previously found that 12 percent of terminated providers were participating in a State Medicaid program after the same provider was terminated from another State Medicaid program.

It is critical that fraudulent providers are not allowed to defraud taxpayers or to harm patients across the board. Medicaid beneficiaries are some of the most vulnerable patients, so our bipartisan bill will ensure that they are better protected. This commonsense bill was reported favorably from our Health Subcommittee and from the full Energy and Commerce Committee last year.

The other important aspect of this legislation was authored by CHRIS COLLINS of New York. This provision of the bill requires State Medicaid programs to provide beneficiaries who are served under fee-for-service or primary care case management programs an electronic directory of physicians who are participating in the program.

Research shows that too often Medicaid patients today have a hard time finding a doctor. The Government Accountability Office has previously found that Medicaid patients face particular challenges in accessing certain types of care, such as obtaining specialty care or dental care. Additionally, the GAO has previously reported that 38 States experienced challenges in ensuring enough participating providers.

To help empower Medicaid patients and equip them with better information, this policy would apply requirements similar to those in place for Medicaid managed care plans to fee-for-service and/or primary care case management programs.

Under the bill, States would be required to list on their Web sites a directory of physicians that would include the physician's name, specialty, address, and telephone number. Additionally, for physicians serving as case managers through the PCCM programs, States would be required to include information on whether a physician is accepting new patients as well as to list the physician's cultural and linguistic capabilities.

In a day and age when Medicaid patients can use their phones to search for the nearest gas station or grocery store, it makes good sense to ensure that States are giving patients better information so that they can readily find a doctor near them who accepts Medicaid patients.

Finally, according to the Congressional Budget Office, H.R. 3716 would reduce Federal outlays by $15 million over a 10-year budget window because the Medicaid program would no longer be paying providers that were terminated for reasons of fraud, integrity, or quality. The CBO does not estimate State-specific savings, but this bill would also save State Medicaid programs several million dollars over the same timeframe.

Mr. Chairman, this legislation provides commonsense reforms that help protect Medicaid beneficiaries, that improve access to care, and that save Federal and State dollars in the Medicaid program. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 3716.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I am here to express my strong support for the Ensuring Access to Quality Medicaid Providers Act.

In particular, I am pleased that this legislation incorporates the Medicaid Directory of Caregivers Act, also known as the Medicaid DOC Act. This is legislation in which I joined with my colleague and friend from New York, Representative COLLINS, in introducing.

I thank Representative COLLINS for his initiative in this area and for working together on this issue in a collaborative and bipartisan way. I also thank the Energy and Commerce Committee staffs on both sides for providing constructive feedback and for expeditiously moving this bill out of committee.

The impetus behind this bill is simple and straightforward: to make it easier for Medicaid beneficiaries to find and access a doctor.

The underlying legislation would require States that operate a fee-for-service Medicaid program to publish an online provider directory, just like managed care plans and private insurance are already required to do. By creating a one-stop-shop for Medicaid beneficiaries to find information on participating providers, this commonsense legislation will make it easier for individuals and families to access quality health care.

The legislation details the minimum items that must be included in a provider directory, but it also allows States to go beyond those given standards. All consumers deserve to have access to a basic electronic provider directory to find the best physicians for their use.

The second component of the legislation under consideration would provide the CMS with critical tools to keep patients safe, to protect taxpayer dollars, and to protect the integrity of our Medicaid program.

This bipartisan bill, introduced by Representatives BUCSHON, WELCH, and BUTTERFIELD, implements previous OIG recommendations and builds on authorities originally authorized under the ACA. The ACA included a provision that prohibited disqualified providers from Medicare or a one State Medicaid program from simply crossing State lines and receiving payments in another State Medicaid program.

The ACA provision has been hard to implement, however, because States don't have a consistent or a standardized way of knowing when a specific provider has been terminated by Medicare or by another State. All States are not currently required to report this information, and if it is reported, it is in many differing formats, limiting the data's usability.

This legislation would require all States to report information on fraudulent providers to the Secretary for inclusion in a currently existing termination database that is accessible to all States. The legislation also requires the Secretary to develop uniform criteria for States to use when submitting information.

The language would also require all providers in managed care to enroll with State Medicaid agencies so that States know all providers that are participating in the program. This legislation preserves all existing provider appeals processes, and it changes nothing regarding the underlying standard for fraud in this part of the program.

In closing, Mr. Chairman, I urge all Members to support this bipartisan legislation, which makes Medicaid more consumer-friendly and strengthens program integrity.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BUCSHON. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

This is the type of legislation that we should be passing on the House floor, and I will urge the Senate to pass this legislation later. This is just good government. It corrects some obvious flaws in the Medicaid program that will protect patients and save taxpayers money. I am very pleased that we are able to address this today.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TONKO. As I earlier mentioned in my comments, one of the key participants in putting this effort together was Representative WELCH from the State of Vermont.

I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Vermont (Mr. WELCH), a good friend and a fellow Energy and Commerce Committee member.

Mr. WELCH. I thank the gentleman from New York.

Mr. Chairman, we are lucky we have Dr. BUCSHON, a good Member, a good friend, and a great Energy and Commerce Committee person, who, with his experience as a physician, is able to give us the benefit of this bill. I thank the gentleman from Indiana for that.

The Medicaid program is an incredibly important program to get health care to poor Americans who need it. The vast majority of our providers use the Medicaid program to provide those services, but some fraudulent providers use that program to rip off taxpayers. It has got to stop.

One of the things that Dr. BUCSHON observed and brought to our attention was that when States are aggressively monitoring for fraud and when they identify a fraudulent provider, they write that person off the rolls so that that provider can't keep ripping off the taxpayers. But that information doesn't get disseminated to other States, so that fraudulent provider simply steps across the State line, sets

up another operation, and starts ripping off taxpayers all over again.

This legislation addresses that rip-off. I am glad it does because we can debate about lots of things, but there is unity here about wanting to make certain that any taxpayer dollar is well spent and that it is not ripped off by a fraudulent provider. This sets up practical mechanisms for States that have identified a fraudulent provider so they may share that information with other States so they don't find themselves digging the same hole.

We have bipartisan support for this. It is a money-saving bill. The CBO estimates that it would save approximately $28 million over 10 years.

That may sound like small money; but do you want to know something?

That is real money. It is about the money, but it is also about constant vigilance so as to make sure that the programs we design for good intentions work.

The CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. TONKO. I yield the gentleman an additional 1 minute.

Mr. WELCH. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Chairman, it is just what we should be doing here so we can look at things that have good intentions, like the Medicaid program, and find where there are holes in it and try to close them so that the program runs better so that taxpayer money is saved and so that the efficiency of government is enhanced.

□ 1315

And that is a mutual responsibility that we have so that people can have confidence that the taxpayer dollars that they are spending, whether it is for Medicaid or the Pentagon or any other program, are spent for the intended purposes and are not wasted.

Mr. BUCSHON. Mr. Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I thank the gentleman for his comments. It is true that when you find common ground and work together, good things happen, and this is one of those instances.

I think there are a lot of areas in health care. I was a healthcare provider before I was a heart surgeon. I took care of Medicaid and Medicare patients, private insurance patients, and patients that did not have the ability to pay. I think that we need to continue to look for ways to improve our safety net healthcare programs, mainly continue to look for ways to make sure that people have access to health care in the United States regardless of their ability to pay, regardless of their ZIP Code.

That said, we need to make sure that people have access to quality health care, and that is why bills like this are so important. It weeds out providers that are fraudulent and have other quality-related problems.

As a physician—and I will speak for some of my physician friends—this is the type of thing that we all want in our specialties. We want to make sure that the patients that we serve have access to physicians who are providing quality health care and are not defrauding the system.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Chair, I will continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BUCSHON. Mr. Chair, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. COLLINS).

Mr. COLLINS of New York. Mr. Chair, I thank both Congressman BUCSHON and Congressman TONKO for their help on this very important bill that we are debating today. Included in Congressman BUCSHON's bill, H.R. 3716, is a bill that Mr. TONKO and I put together, H.R. 3821, the Medicare Directory of Caregivers, or DOC, Act.

Our thought behind this bill came from the GAO report that identified access to care as one of the key issues facing Medicaid beneficiaries. There is nothing worse than someone saying: ''The good news is you have got medical insurance coverage through Medicaid. The bad news is they can't find a physician.''

So as a very good, commonsense government idea, what Representative TONKO and I came up with was the thought that we should be publishing on each State's Web site a list of the providers who have seen a Medicaid patient in the last 12 months, the name of the physician, the address, the telephone number, and their specialty, so at least these folks navigating the system to find a doctor have somewhere to go as a starting point: ''Here is a doctor that has seen a Medicaid patient in the last 12 months. Let me give them a call.'' So they are not just lost going through the phonebook, so to speak, or Google.

What our bill would do, it would require that States that operate a fee-for-service or primary care case management program set up an online directory of physicians who have seen these Medicaid patients. We believe that this kind of access to caregivers will keep people out of the emergency rooms. They will have coordinated care by a physician, which is the best and most inexpensive way to treat them.

Representative BUCSHON's bill combined with our bill, H.R. 3821, does save $15 million over the 10-year period, as scored. The bill went through regular order and passed out of the Energy and Commerce subcommittee and full committee by voice vote with no objections.

We are also encouraged to know the White House has signaled that they do support passage of this important access to care legislation.

Again, I thank Chairmen UPTON and PITTS, and Ranking Members PALLONE and GREEN for their support. I encourage my colleagues to vote in favor of this bipartisan legislation.

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Chair, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE), the ranking member of the standing Committee on Energy and Commerce, who has shown great leadership for the Democrats at the Energy and Commerce table. He is very much supportive of this effort here, and we thank him for that.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Chair, I am pleased to support H.R. 3716, the Ensuring Access to Quality Medicaid Providers Act. This legislation is the compilation of two bills, H.R. 3821 and H.R. 3716, which are true efforts to improve program integrity in Medicaid in ways that will strengthen the Medicaid program. Both bipartisan bills passed out of the Energy and Commerce Committee through regular order and were favorably reported by voice vote.

Part of the new compiled bill reflects H.R. 3821, the Medicaid DOC Act. This bipartisan initiative, introduced by Representatives COLLINS of New York and TONKO, would require States that participate in fee-for-service Medicaid to publish electronic provider directories. This is critical information for patients so they can more easily find doctors in their area.

Currently, managed care plans in Medicaid are already required to maintain these directories, but there is no such requirement for fee-for-service Medicaid programs. While some States are already providing these directories, not every State does so. This commonsense and consumer-friendly legislation will require that all States provide their Medicaid patients with this information, and it does so quickly, requiring directories to be up and running in less than 1 year.

Now, while the bill includes minimum items that must be included in a provider directory, it also encourages States to go beyond these standards. While I am hopeful that States will take the initiative to provide other information, like whether doctors are taking new patients, the timeline set forth in this legislation is so accelerated, it is important that we build this foundation first before adding additional requirements to States. I look forward to continuing to work on this important issue with my colleagues.

The second part of the bill would provide CMS with critical tools to keep patients safe, protect taxpayer dollars, and protect the integrity of the Medicaid program.

This bipartisan bill, introduced by Representatives BUCSHON, WELCH, and BUTTERFIELD, implements previous OIG recommendations and builds on authorities originally authorized under the Affordable Care Act, which prohibited disqualified providers from Medicare or one State Medicaid program from simply crossing State lines and receiving payments in another State Medicaid program.

But the current law has been hard to implement because States don't have a consistent or standardized way of knowing when a specific provider has been terminated by Medicare or another State. Since States are not currently required to report this information or, if it is reported, it is in many

differing formats, it limits the data's usability.

This legislation being considered would require all States to report information on fraudulent providers to the Secretary for inclusion in an existing termination database that is accessible to all States. It also requires the Secretary to develop uniform criteria for States to use when submitting information and ensures those providers in managed care plans are enrolled with the State and also captured in the database.

Finally, the bill preserves and protects all existing provider appeal processes and changes nothing regarding the underlying standard for fraud in this part of the program, an important protection. This is smart policy that stakeholders and the administration agree will improve Federal and State efforts.

I urge Members to support the bill.

Mr. BUCSHON. Mr. Chair, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. LANCE).

Mr. LANCE. Mr. Chair, this is the way Congress should work, in a bipartisan capacity on an issue of importance to better the health of the American Nation.

As is so often true of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, we work in a bipartisan fashion. It is the committee of jurisdiction for so many of the issues that reach this floor, with the support in committee and in subcommittee of both Republicans and Democrats. Legislation coming out of our committee, the Energy and Commerce Committee, is legislation that passes here on the floor, goes over to the other House, and is eventually signed into law by the President of the United States. I am pleased that we are working closely with the other elected branch of government in this area.

I commend Congressman BUCSHON, Dr. BUCSHON, for his legislation that will so improve the issue we are discussing, and I think that Medicaid providers is an important matter for the entire Nation. I also compliment Congressman COLLINS of New York for his involvement on this issue.

With a program as large as Medicaid, it will always be a target for those who engage in fraud, but we can work to limit the impact of those who engage in fraud. The Congressman's bill is a positive step in that direction. It will save millions of dollars and send a message loud and clear that bad actors in one State should not be allowed to participate anywhere.

Medicaid-managed care plans already provide a network of doctors and nurses to care for patients. The requirement in this bill ensures that patients in fee-for-service Medicaid programs do not have to fend for themselves.

Research has shown that access to doctors can be a problem for Medicaid beneficiaries, so this commonsense step will help ensure beneficiaries are empowered with better information and that this happens across the board.

I thank Dr. BUCSHON and Mr. COLLINS, as well as the Health Subcommittee and its chairman, Chairman PITTS, and the full committee, including, of course, Chairman UPTON and Ranking Member PALLONE. Let's work together to ensure passage of this legislation on the floor of the House today.

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BUCSHON. Mr. Chair, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CARTER).

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Chair, I rise today in support of H.R. 3716, the Ensuring Access to Quality Medicaid Providers Act.

A recent report by the HHS inspector general found that more than 1 in every 10 Medicaid providers who were terminated for fraud, integrity, or quality in one State were still participating in another State's Medicaid program.

To ensure that Medicaid patients are receiving their care from a qualified, licensed doctor, H.R. 3716 provides that disqualified providers be reported within 21 days to CMS, and each Medicaid provider must be enrolled with the State Medicaid agency.

H.R. 3716 also provides that State Medicaid programs include an electronic directory of physicians who serve Medicaid patients. Today, many Medicaid patients have a hard time finding a doctor and instead rely on the emergency room. With an established directory, Medicaid patients will be able to know which doctors are available to them and will ultimately get better care.

I encourage my colleagues to support the reforms in H.R. 3716 so we can make sure that Medicaid patients are receiving the care and attention they deserve.

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Chair, again, I just would thank all who have been involved with the effort here—from my perspective, particularly Representative COLLINS, Dr. BUCSHON, Representative WELCH, and others who put together, I think, a good effort here to have a bipartisan, collaborative effort that speaks to sensitivity, speaks to compassion toward the patients, those requiring the access to health care, and certainly has great respect for the taxpayer and the ensuing outcomes.

With that, I would encourage my colleagues to support the legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BUCSHON. Mr. Chair, I would just like to echo the words of Mr. TONKO. This is good legislation. It improves the Medicaid program. It ensures access to quality providers for our Medicaid recipients in all of our States. Also, it helps our States to determine when people have been kicked off the program as a provider in another State and, therefore, helps them protect the patients in their own States.

I urge all of my colleagues to support this legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Chair, today we are making a difference for the nation's most vulnerable. Republicans and Democrats working to strengthen Medicaid, and the White House has officially given its seal of approval to these commonsense reforms.

Today is an important day and underscores what we can accomplish when we work together.

Medicaid is an important lifeline for so many in Michigan and across the country. It is estimated the program will expand to cover 83 million people this year—to put that into perspective, that's one in four Americans. Given its rapidly growing size, it is imperative the program is working as it is intended—providing care for folks who need it most.

The Ensuring Access to Quality Medicaid Providers Act we are considering is the product of two bills authored by committee members Dr. LARRY BUCSHON and Rep. CHRIS COLLINS that unanimously cleared both the Health Subcommittee and full committee last fall.

Dr. BUCSHON led the effort to help cut down on fraud by eliminating bad actors. The bipartisan legislation ensures that providers terminated from Medicare or a state Medicaid program for reasons of fraud, integrity, or quality are terminated across the board from all other state Medicaid programs.

With a program as large as Medicaid, it will always be a target for fraudsters, but we can work to limit their impact, and this bill is an positive step that will save millions of dollars and send the message loud and clear that bad actors in one state should not be allowed to participate anywhere, period.

In addition to reducing fraud, we are helping increase access for those most in need. Finding a doctor is often a difficult task, and Mr. COLLINS led this effort to increase access to care beyond the emergency room. If a state is using a fee-for-service or primary case management system to deliver care to Medicaid patients, this bill requires they provide those patients with a directory of physicians.

Medicaid managed care plans already provide a network of doctors and nurses to care for patients. This requirement ensures that patients in fee-for-service Medicaid programs don't have to fend for themselves.

Research has shown that access to doctors can be a problem for Medicaid beneficiaries, so this commonsense step will help ensure beneficiaries are empowered with better information that is more readily available. And that's a good thing.

This bill doesn't solve all our problems, but it is a significant bipartisan step forward. And yesterday, the Office of Management and Budget announced the administration "supports House passage of H.R. 3716 because it improves program integrity for Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program."

We've got Republicans, Democrats, and the White House all in lockstep supporting meaningful, 21st century reforms for Medicaid. This bill shows that it's possible to work together on Medicaid.

I'd like to once again thank Dr. BUCSHON and Mr. COLLINS, as well as Helath Subcommittee Chairman PITTS and full committee Ranking Member PALLONE. Together, we are building upon the committee's proud bipartisan record of success. Let's keep the momentum going to help our most vulnerable folks.

The CHAIR. All time for general debate has expired.

Pursuant to the rule, the bill shall be considered for amendment under the 5-minute rule.

In lieu of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Energy and Commerce, printed in the bill, it shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the 5-minute rule an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 114–45. That amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read.

The text of the amendment in the nature of a substitute is as follows:

H.R. 3716

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 ''Ensuring Removal of Terminated Providers from Medicaid and CHIP Act''.

SEC. 2. INCREASING OVERSIGHT OF TERMINATION OF MEDICAID PROVIDERS.

(a) INCREASED OVERSIGHT AND REPORTING.—

(1) STATE REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.—Section 1902(kk) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396a(kk)) is amended—

(A) by redesignating paragraph (8) as paragraph (9); and

(B) by inserting after paragraph (7) the following new paragraph:

''(8) PROVIDER TERMINATIONS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Beginning on January 1, 2017, in the case of a notification under subsection (a)(41) with respect to a termination for a reason specified in section 455.101 of title 42, Code of Federal Regulations (as in effect on November 1, 2015) or for any other reason specified by the Secretary, of the participation of a provider of services or any other person under the State plan, the State, not later than 21 business days after the effective date of such termination, submits to the Secretary with respect to any such provider or person, as appropriate—

''(i) the name of such provider or person;

''(ii) the provider type of such provider or person;

''(iii) the specialty of such provider's or person's practice;

''(iv) the date of birth, Social Security number, national provider identifier, Federal taxpayer identification number, and the State license or certification number of such provider or person;

''(v) the reason for the termination;

''(vi) a copy of the notice of termination sent to the provider or person;

''(vii) the effective date of such termination specified in such notice; and

''(viii) any other information required by the Secretary.

''(B) EFFECTIVE DATE DEFINED.—For purposes of this paragraph, the term 'effective date' means, with respect to a termination described in subparagraph (A), the later of—

''(i) the date on which such termination is effective, as specified in the notice of such termination; or

''(ii) the date on which all appeal rights applicable to such termination have been exhausted or the timeline for any such appeal has expired.''.

(2) REPORTING REQUIREMENTS FOR MANAGED CARE ENTITIES.—Section 1932(d) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396u–2(d)) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(5) STATE REPORTING REQUIREMENTS FOR MANAGED CARE ENTITIES.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—With respect to any contract with a managed care entity under section 1903(m) or 1905(t)(3) (as applicable), beginning on the later of the first day of the first plan year for such managed care entity that begins after the date of the enactment of this paragraph or January 1, 2017, the State shall require that such contract include a provision that providers of services or persons terminated (as described in section 1902(kk)(8)) from participation under this title, title XVIII, or title XXI be terminated from participating under this title as a provider in any network of such entity that serves individuals eligible to receive medical assistance under this title.

''(B) NOTIFICATION OF TERMINATION.—For the period beginning on January 1, 2017, and ending on the date on which the enrollment of providers under paragraph (6) is complete for a State, the State shall provide for a system for notifying managed care entities (as defined in subsection (a)(1)) of the termination (as described in section 1902(kk)(8)) of providers of services or persons from participation under this title, title XVIII, or title XXI.''.

(3) TERMINATION NOTIFICATION DATABASE.—Section 1902 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396a) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(ll) TERMINATION NOTIFICATION DATABASE.—In the case of a provider of services or any other person whose participation under this title, title XVIII, or title XXI is terminated (as described in subsection (kk)(8)), the Secretary shall, not later than 21 business days after the date on which the Secretary terminates such participation under title XVIII or is notified of such termination under subsection (a)(41) (as applicable), review such termination and, if the Secretary determines appropriate, include such termination in any database or similar system developed pursuant to section 6401(b)(2) of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (42 U.S.C. 1395cc note; Public Law 111–148).''.

(4) NO FEDERAL FUNDS FOR ITEMS AND SERVICES FURNISHED BY TERMINATED PROVIDERS.—Section 1903 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396b) is amended—

(A) in subsection (i)(2)—

(i) in subparagraph (A), by striking the comma at the end and inserting a semicolon;

(ii) in subparagraph (B), by striking ''or'' at the end; and

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

''(D) beginning not later than January 1, 2018, under the plan by any provider of services or person whose participation in the State plan is terminated (as described in section 1902(kk)(8)) after the date that is 60 days after the date on which such termination is included in the database or other system under section 1902(ll); or''; and

(B) in subsection (m), by inserting after paragraph (2) the following new paragraph:

''(3) No payment shall be made under this title to a State with respect to expenditures incurred by the State for payment for services provided by a managed care entity (as defined under section 1932(a)(1)) under the State plan under this title (or under a waiver of the plan) unless the State—

''(A) beginning on the applicable date specified in subparagraph (A) of section 1932(d)(5), has a contract with such entity that complies with the requirement specified in such subparagraph; and

''(B)(i) for the period specified in subparagraph (B) of such section, has a system in effect that meets the requirement specified in such subparagraph; and

''(ii) after such period, complies with section 1932(d)(6).''.

(5) DEVELOPMENT OF UNIFORM TERMINOLOGY FOR REASONS FOR PROVIDER TERMINATION.—Not later than January 1, 2017, the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall, in consultation with the heads of State agencies administering State Medicaid plans (or waivers of such plans), issue regulations establishing uniform terminology to be used with respect to specifying reasons under subparagraph (A)(v) of paragraph (8) of section 1902(kk) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396a(kk)), as amended by paragraph (1), for the termination (as described in such paragraph) of the participation of certain providers in the Medicaid program under title XIX of such Act or the Children's Health Insurance Program under title XXI of such Act.

(6) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 1902(a)(41) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396a(a)(41)) is amended by striking ''provide that whenever'' and inserting ''provide, in accordance with subsection (kk)(8) (as applicable), that whenever''.

(b) INCREASING AVAILABILITY OF MEDICAID PROVIDER INFORMATION.—

(1) FFS PROVIDER ENROLLMENT.—Section 1902(a) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396a(a)) is amended by inserting after paragraph (77) the following new paragraph:

''(78) provide that, not later than January 1, 2017, in the case of a State plan that provides medical assistance on a fee-for-service basis, the State shall require each provider furnishing items and services to individuals eligible to receive medical assistance under such plan to enroll with the State agency and provide to the State agency the provider's identifying information, including the name, specialty, date of birth, Social Security number, national provider identifier, Federal taxpayer identification number, and the State license or certification number of the provider;''.

(2) MANAGED CARE PROVIDER ENROLLMENT.—Section 1932(d) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396u–2(d)), as amended by subsection (a)(2), is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(6) ENROLLMENT OF PARTICIPATING PROVIDERS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Beginning not later than January 1, 2018, a State shall require that, in order to participate as a provider in the network of a managed care entity that provides services to, or orders, prescribes, refers, or certifies eligibility for services for, individuals who are eligible for medical assistance under the State plan under this title and who are enrolled with the entity, the provider is enrolled with the State agency administering the State plan under this title. Such enrollment shall include providing to the State agency the provider's identifying information, including the name, specialty, date of birth, Social Security number, national provider identifier, Federal taxpayer identification number, and the State license or certification number of the provider.

''(B) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in subparagraph (A) shall be construed as requiring a provider described in such subparagraph to provide services to individuals who are not enrolled with a managed care entity under this title.''.

(c) COORDINATION WITH CHIP.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 2107(e)(1) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1397gg(e)(1)) is amended—

(A) by redesignating subparagraphs (B), (C), (D), (E), (F), (G), (H), (I), (J), (K), (L), (M), (N), and (O) as subparagraphs (D), (E), (F), (G), (H), (I), (J), (K), (M), (N), (O), (P), (Q), and (R), respectively;

(B) by inserting after subparagraph (A) the following new subparagraphs:

''(B) Section 1902(a)(39) (relating to termination of participation of certain providers).

''(C) Section 1902(a)(78) (relating to enrollment of providers participating in State plans providing medical assistance on a fee-for-service basis).'';

(C) by inserting after subparagraph (K) (as redesignated by paragraph (1)) the following new subparagraph:

''(L) Section 1903(m)(3) (relating to limitation on payment with respect to managed care).''; and

(D) in subparagraph (P) (as redesignated by paragraph (1)), by striking ''(a)(2)(C) and (h)'' and inserting ''(a)(2)(C) (relating to Indian enrollment), (d)(5) (relating to reporting requirements for managed care entities), (d)(6) (relating to enrollment of providers participating with a managed care entity), and (h) (relating to special rules with respect to Indian enrollees, Indian health care providers, and Indian managed care entities)''.

(2) EXCLUDING FROM MEDICAID PROVIDERS EXCLUDED FROM CHIP.—Section 1902(a)(39) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396a(a)(39)) is amended by striking ''title XVIII or any other State plan under this title'' and inserting ''title XVIII, any other State plan under this title, or any State child health plan under title XXI''.

(d) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed as changing or limiting the appeal rights of providers or the process for appeals of States under the Social Security Act.

SEC. 3. REQUIRING PUBLICATION OF FEE-FOR-SERVICE PROVIDER DIRECTORY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1902(a) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396a(a)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (80), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(2) in paragraph (81), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(3) by inserting after paragraph (81) the following new paragraph:

''(82) provide that, not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this paragraph, in the case of a State plan that provides medical assistance on a fee-for-service basis or through a primary care case-management system described in section 1915(b)(1) (other than a primary care case management entity (as defined by the Secretary)), the State shall publish (and update on at least an annual basis) on the public Website of the State agency administering the State plan, a directory of the providers (including, at a minimum, primary and specialty care physicians) described in subsection (mm) that includes—

''(A) with respect to each such provider—

''(i) the name of the provider;

''(ii) the specialty of the provider;

''(iii) the address of the provider; and

''(iv) the telephone number of the provider; and

''(B) with respect to any such provider participating in such a primary care case-management system, information regarding—

''(i) whether the provider is accepting as new patients individuals who receive medical assistance under this title; and

''(ii) the provider's cultural and linguistic capabilities, including the languages spoken by the provider or by the skilled medical interpreter providing interpretation services at the provider's office.''.

(b) DIRECTORY PROVIDERS DESCRIBED.—Section 1902 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396a), as amended by section 2(a)(3), is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(mm) DIRECTORY PROVIDERS DESCRIBED.—A provider described in this subsection is—

''(1) in the case of a provider of a provider type for which the State agency, as a condition on receiving payment for items and services furnished by the provider to individuals eligible to receive medical assistance under the State plan, requires the enrollment of the provider with the State agency, a provider that—

''(A) is enrolled with the agency as of the date on which the directory is published or updated (as applicable) under subsection (a)(82); and

''(B) received payment under the State plan in the 12-month period preceding such date; and

''(2) in the case of a provider of a provider type for which the State agency does not require such enrollment, a provider that received payment under the State plan in the 12-month period preceding the date on which the directory is published or updated (as applicable) under subsection (a)(82).''.

(c) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall not be construed to apply in the case of a State in which all the individuals enrolled in the State plan under title XIX of the Social Security Act (or under a waiver of such plan), other than individuals described in paragraph (2), are enrolled with a medicaid managed care organization (as defined in section 1903(m)(1)(A) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 1396b(m)(1)(A))), including prepaid inpatient health plans and prepaid ambulatory health plans (as defined by the Secretary of Health and Human Services).

(2) INDIVIDUALS DESCRIBED.—An individual described in this paragraph is an individual who is an Indian (as defined in section 4 of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (25 U.S.C. 1603)) or an Alaska Native.

(d) EXCEPTION FOR STATE LEGISLATION.—In the case of a State plan under title XIX of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq.), which the Secretary determines requires State legislation in order for the respective plan to meet one or more additional requirements imposed by amendments made by this section, the respective plan shall not be regarded as failing to comply with the requirements of such title solely on the basis of its failure to meet such an additional requirement before the first day of the first calendar quarter beginning after the close of the first regular session of the State legislature that begins after the date of enactment of this section. For purposes of the previous sentence, in the case of a State that has a 2-year legislative session, each year of the session shall be considered to be a separate regular session of the State legislature.

The CHAIR. No amendment to the amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in House Report 114–440. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question.

□ 1330

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MR. BUCSHON

The CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 1 printed in House Report 114–440.

Mr. BUCSHON. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 1, lines 2 and 3, strike ''Ensuring Removal of Terminated Providers from Medicaid and CHIP Act'' and insert ''Ensuring Access to Quality Medicaid Providers Act''.

Page 1, lines 15 and 16, strike ''January 1, 2017'' and insert ''July 1, 2018''.

Page 3, lines 1 and 2, strike ''the effective date of such termination specified in such notice'' and insert ''the date on which such termination is effective, as specified in the notice''.

Page 3, line 16, strike ''REPORTING REQUIREMENTS'' and insert ''CONTRACT REQUIREMENT''.

Page 3, line 20, strike ''STATE REPORTING REQUIREMENTS FOR MANAGED CARE ENTITIES'' and insert ''CONTRACT REQUIREMENT FOR MANAGED CARE ENTITIES''.

Page 3, line 22, strike ''(A)'' and all that follows through ''With respect'' and insert ''With respect''.

Page 3, beginning on line 24, strike ''applicable), beginning on the later of the first day of the first plan year for such managed care entity that begins after the date of the enactment of this paragraph or January 1, 2017, the State shall require that such contract'' and insert ''applicable), no later than July 1, 2018, such contract shall''.

Page 4, strike lines 12 through 21.

Page 6, line 1, strike ''January 1, 2018'' and insert ''July 1, 2018''.

Page 6, line 17, strike ''the applicable date specified in subparagraph (A) of section 1932(d)(5)'' and insert ''July 1, 2018''.

Page 6, line 21, strike ''(i)''.

Page 6, line 21, strike ''for the period specified in subparagraph (B) of such section, has a system in effect that meets'' and insert ''beginning on January 1, 2018, complies with''.

Page 6, line 23, strike ''such subparagraph; and'' and all that follows through page 7, line 2 and insert ''section 1932(d)(6)(A).''.

Page 7, line 5, strike ''January 1, 2017'' and insert ''July 1, 2017''.

Page 10, line 15, strike ''paragraph (1)'' and insert ''subparagraph (A)''.

Page 10, line 21, strike ''paragraph (1)'' and insert ''subparagraph (A)''.

Page 10, lines 23 and 24, strike ''reporting requirements'' and insert ''contract requirement''.

Page 11, after line 15, insert the following:

(e) OIG REPORT.—Not later than March 31, 2020, the Inspector General of the Department of Health and Human Services shall submit to Congress a report on the implementation of the amendments made by this section. Such report shall include the following:

(1) An assessment of the extent to which providers who are included under subsection (ll) of section 1902 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396a) (as added by subsection (a)(3)) in the database or similar system referred to in such subsection are terminated (as described in subsection (kk)(8) of such section, as added by subsection (a)(1)) from participation in all State plans under title XIX of such Act.

(2) Information on the amount of Federal financial participation paid to States under section 1903 of such Act in violation of the limitation on such payment specified in subsections (i)(2)(D) and subsection (m)(3) of such section, as added by subsection (a)(4).

(3) An assessment of the extent to which contracts with managed care entities under title XIX of such Act comply with the requirement specified in section 1932(d)(5) of such Act, as added by subsection (a)(2).

(4) An assessment of the extent to which providers have been enrolled under section 1902(a)(78) or 1932(d)(6)(A) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 1396a(a)(78), 1396u–2(d)(6)(A)) with State agencies administering State plans under title XIX of such Act.

Page 12, lines 1 and 2, strike ''180 days after the date of the enactment of this paragraph'' and insert ''January 1, 2017''.

Page 12, line 10, strike ''a directory'' and all that follows through line 13 and insert the following: ''a directory of the physicians described in subsection (mm) and, at State option, other providers described in such subsection that—''

Page 12, after line 13, insert the following: ''(A) includes—''.

Page 12, line 14, strike ''(A)'' and insert ''(i)''.

Page 12, line 14, insert ''physician or'' before ''provider''.

Page 12, line 15, strike ''(i)'' and insert ''(I)''.

Page 12, line 15, insert ''physician or'' before ''provider''.

Page 12, line 16, strike ''(ii)'' and insert ''(II)''.

Page 12, line 16, insert ''physician or'' before ''provider''.

Page 12, line 17, strike ''(iii)'' and insert ''(III)''.

Page 12, line 17, strike ''of the provider'' and insert ''at which the physician or provider provides services''.

Page 12, line 18, strike ''(iv)'' and insert ''(IV)''.

Page 12, line 18, insert ''physician or'' before ''provider''.

Page 12, line 20, strike ''(B)'' and insert ''(ii)''.

Page 12, line 20, insert ''physician or'' before ''provider''.

Page 12, line 23, strike ''(i)'' and insert ''(I)''.

Page 12, line 23, insert ''physician or'' before ''provider''.

Page 13, line 1, strike ''(ii)'' and insert ''(II)''.

Page 13, line 1, insert ''the physician's'' before ''provider's''.

Page 13, line 3, insert ''physician or'' before ''provider''.

Page 13, line 5, strike ''provider's office.'' and insert ''physician's or provider's office; and''.

Page 13, after line 5, insert the following:

''(B) may include, at State option, with respect to each such physician or provider—

''(i) the Internet website of such physician or provider; or

''(ii) whether the physician or provider is accepting as new patients individuals who receive medical assistance under this title.''.

Page 13, line 6, strike ''PROVIDERS'' and insert ''PHYSICIAN OR PROVIDER''.

Page 13, line 10, strike ''PROVIDERS'' and insert ''PHYSICIAN OR PROVIDER''.

Page 13, line 10, strike ''A'' and insert ''A physician or''.

Page 13, line 12, insert ''physician or'' before ''provider of''.

Page 13, line 15, insert ''physician or'' before ''provider''.

Page 13, line 17, strike ''provider with the State agency, a'' and insert ''physician or provider with the State agency, a physician or''.

Page 14, line 1, insert ''physician or'' before ''provider of''.

Page 14, line 3, insert ''physician or'' before ''provider''.

Page 14, beginning on line 10, strike ''in which all the individuals enrolled in the State plan under title XIX of the Social Security Act'' and insert ''(as defined for purposes of title XIX of the Social Security Act) in which all the individuals enrolled in the State plan under such title''.

Page 15, line 3, insert ''of Health and Human Services'' after ''Secretary''.

Page 15, line 12, strike ''section'' and insert ''Act''.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 632, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BUCSHON) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Indiana.

Mr. BUCSHON. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

This bipartisan amendment makes a few technical changes to the bill.

First, this amendment modifies the short title to better reflect the policies of both sections of the bill.

Second, this amendment updates the effective dates throughout the bill to ensure that States and HHS have the time necessary to correctly implement the provisions.

Next, it includes a requirement that the Office of the Inspector General at HHS review the implementation of the requirements in this bill regarding terminated providers and report back to Congress on what they find. This is an important feedback loop to ensure appropriate oversight.

Finally, the amendment clarifies that the fee-for-service provider directory is required to include physicians and, at a State's option, other providers. The amendment also clarifies the information that could be included in the directory.

MODIFICATION TO AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MR. BUCSHON

Mr. BUCSHON. Mr. Chair, I ask unanimous consent to modify the second instruction relating to page 13, line 1, as provided at the desk.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will report the modification.

The Clerk read as follows:

Modification to amendment No. 1 offered by Mr. BUCSHON:

Page 13, line 1, insert ''physician's or'' before ''provider's''.

The CHAIR. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Indiana?

There was no objection.

The CHAIR. The amendment is modified.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Indiana.

Mr. BUCSHON. Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to support this bipartisan amendment to H.R. 3716.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. Does any Member seek time in opposition to the amendment?

Mr. BUCSHON. Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to reclaim my time.

The CHAIR. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Indiana?

There was no objection.

The CHAIR. The gentleman from Indiana is recognized.

Mr. BUCSHON. Mr. Chairman, I yield to the gentleman from New York (Mr. TONKO).

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Chair, I rise in support of the manager's amendment.

This amendment provides a new bill name that incorporates the underlying policies from each of its component bills and reflects additional technical changes that have been outlined by the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BUCSHON), made in consultation with CMS.

This is a very targeted policy that went through extensive review through regular order in the committee. The manager's amendment reflects the final iteration of that hard work.

I would urge all my colleagues to support this simple refining amendment.

Mr. BUCSHON. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment, as modified, offered by the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BUCSHON).

The amendment, as modified, was agreed to.

The CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 2 printed in House Report 114–440.

It is now in order to consider amendment No. 3 printed in House Report 114–440.

It is now in order to consider amendment No. 4 printed in House Report 114–440.

The question is on the amendment in the nature of a substitute, as amended.

The amendment was agreed to.

The CHAIR. Under the rule, the Committee rises.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. SMITH of Nebraska) having assumed the chair, Mr. HOLDING, Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 3716) to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to require States to provide to the Secretary of Health and Human Services certain information with respect to provider terminations, and for other purposes, and, pursuant to House Resolution 632, he reported the bill back to the House with an amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the rule, the previous question is ordered.

Is a separate vote demanded on any amendment to the amendment reported from the Committee of the Whole?

If not, the question is on the amendment in the nature of a substitute, as amended.

The amendment was agreed to.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. BUCSHON. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 1 o'clock and 38 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1715

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee) at 5 o'clock and 15 minutes p.m.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4557, BLOCKING REGULATORY INTERFERENCE FROM CLOSING KILNS ACT OF 2016, AND PROVIDING FOR PROCEEDINGS DURING THE PERIOD FROM MARCH 4, 2016, THROUGH MARCH 11, 2016

Mr. BYRNE, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 114–443) on the resolution (H. Res. 635) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4557) to allow for judicial review of any final rule addressing national emission standards for hazardous air pollutants for brick and structural clay products or for clay ceramics manufacturing before requiring compliance with such rule, and providing for proceedings during the period from March 4, 2016, through March 11, 2016, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages in writing from the President of the United States were communicated to the House by Mr. Brian Pate, one of his secretaries.

ENSURING REMOVAL OF TERMINATED PROVIDERS FROM MEDICAID AND CHIP ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the unfinished business is the vote on passage of the bill (H.R. 3716) to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to require States to provide to the Secretary of Health and Human Services certain information with respect to provider terminations, 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 passage of the bill.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 406, nays 0, not voting 27, as follows:

[Roll No. 105]

YEAS—406

Abraham
Adams
Aderholt
Aguilar
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Ashford
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera
Beyer
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blum
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Bost
Boustany
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Bustos
Butterfield
Byrne
Calvert
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clawson (FL)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coffman
Cohen
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Connolly
Conyers
Cook
Cooper
Costa
Costello (PA)
Courtney
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Curbelo (FL)
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
Davis, Rodney
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DelBene
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DeSaulnier
DesJarlais
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Dingell
Doggett
Dold
Donovan
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Edwards
Ellison
Emmer (MN)
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farenthold
Farr
Fattah
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foster
Foxx
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Graham
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Grayson
Green, Al
Griffith
Grijalva
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hahn
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings
Heck (NV)
Heck (WA)
Hensarling
Hice, Jody B.
Higgins
Hill
Himes
Holding
Honda
Hoyer
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huffman
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Israel
Issa
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Kaptur
Katko
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kirkpatrick
Kline
Knight
Kuster
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Latta
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lummis
Lynch
MacArthur
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Marchant
Marino
Massie
Matsui
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Meeks
Meng
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Moore
Moulton
Mullin
Murphy (FL)
Murphy (PA)
Nadler
Neal
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nolan
Norcross
Nugent
Nunes
O'Rourke
Olson
Palazzo
Pallone
Palmer
Paulsen
Payne
Pearce
Perlmutter
Perry
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pittenger
Pitts
Pocan
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Polis
Pompeo
Posey
Price (NC)
Price, Tom
Quigley
Rangel
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Russell
Ryan (OH)
Salmon
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanford
Sarbanes
Scalise
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Schweikert
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Speier
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Trott
Tsongas
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Welch
Wenstrup
Westerman
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (FL)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yarmuth
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NOT VOTING—27

Benishek
Black
Brady (PA)
DeLauro
Duffy
Ellmers (NC)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Green, Gene
Gutiérrez
Herrera Beutler
Hinojosa
Johnson (GA)
Larson (CT)
Lewis
Lofgren
Mulvaney
Napolitano
Pascrell
Pelosi
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Rogers (KY)
Sanchez, Loretta
Scott, David
Smith (WA)
Westmoreland

□ 1733

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mrs. BLACK. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 105, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, during rollcall vote No. 105 on March 2, 2016 (H.R. 3716), I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, during rollcall vote No. 105 on March 2, 2016 (H.R. 3716), I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday, March 2, 2016, I was absent during rollcall vote No. 105. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye" on final passage of H.R. 3716—Ensuring Access to Quality Medicaid Providers.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to vote on Wednesday, March 2, 2016, due to important events being held today in our district in Houston and Harris County, Texas. If I had been able to vote, I would have voted as follows: On H.R. 3716, the Ensuring Access to Quality Medicaid Providers Act, I would have voted "yea."

CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT TO UKRAINE—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 114–112)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the

enclosed notice stating that the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13660 of March 6, 2014, is to continue in effect beyond March 6, 2016.

The actions and policies of persons that undermine democratic processes and institutions in Ukraine; threaten its peace, security, stability, sovereignty, and territorial integrity; and contribute to the misappropriation of its assets, as well as the actions and policies of the Government of the Russian Federation, including its purported annexation of Crimea and its use of force in Ukraine, continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. Therefore, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13660 with respect to Ukraine.

BARACK OBAMA.
THE WHITE HOUSE, *March 2, 2016*.

NOTICE

CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT TO UKRAINE

On March 6, 2014, by Executive Order 13660, I declared a national emergency pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701–1706) to deal with the unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States constituted by the actions and policies of persons that undermine democratic processes and institutions in Ukraine; threaten its peace, security, stability, sovereignty, and territorial integrity; and contribute to the misappropriation of its assets.

On March 16, 2014, I issued Executive Order 13661, which expanded the scope of the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13660, and found that the actions and policies of the Government of the Russian Federation with respect to Ukraine undermine democratic processes and institutions in Ukraine; threaten its peace, security, stability, sovereignty, and territorial integrity; and contribute to the misappropriation of its assets.

On March 20, 2014, I issued Executive Order 13662, which further expanded the scope of the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13660, as expanded in scope in Executive Order 13661, and found that the actions and policies of the Government of the Russian Federation, including its purported annexation of Crimea and its use of force in Ukraine, continue to undermine democratic processes and institutions in Ukraine; threaten its peace, security, stability, sovereignty, and territorial integrity; and contribute to the misappropriation of its assets.

On December 19, 2014, I issued Executive Order 13685, to take additional steps to address the Russian occupation of the Crimea region of Ukraine.

The actions and policies addressed in these Executive Orders continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. For this reason, the national emergency declared on March 6, 2014, and the measures adopted on that date, on March 16, 2014, on March 20, 2014, and December 19, 2014, to deal with that emergency, must continue in effect beyond March 6, 2016. Therefore, in accordance with section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)), I am continuing for 1 year the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13660.

This notice shall be published in the *Federal Register* and transmitted to the Congress.

BARACK OBAMA.
THE WHITE HOUSE, *March 2, 2016*.

HOUR OF MEETING ON TOMORROW

Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 9 a.m. tomorrow.

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

There was no objection.

CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT TO ZIMBABWE—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 114–113)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency originally declared in Executive Order 13288 of March 6, 2003, and renewed every year since then, is to continue in effect beyond March 6, 2016.

The threat constituted by the actions and policies of certain members of the Government of Zimbabwe and other persons to undermine Zimbabwe's democratic processes or institutions, contributing to the deliberate breakdown in the rule of law, to politically motivated violence and intimidation, and to political and economic instability in the southern African region, has not been resolved. These actions and policies continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the foreign policy of the United States. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to continue this national emergency and to maintain in force the sanctions to respond to this threat.

BARACK OBAMA.
THE WHITE HOUSE, *March 2, 2016*.

NOTICE

CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT TO ZIMBABWE

On March 6, 2003, by Executive Order 13288, the President declared a national emergency and blocked the property of certain persons, pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701–1706), to deal with the unusual and extraordinary threat to the foreign policy of the United States constituted by the actions and policies of certain members of the Government of Zimbabwe and other persons to undermine Zimbabwe's democratic processes or institutions. These actions and policies had contributed to the deliberate breakdown in the rule of law in Zimbabwe, to politically motivated violence and intimidation in that country, and to political and economic instability in the southern African region.

On November 22, 2005, the President issued Executive Order 13391 to take additional steps with respect to the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13288, including the blocking of the property of additional persons engaged in undermining democratic processes or institutions in Zimbabwe.

On July 25, 2008, the President issued Executive Order 13469, which expanded the scope of the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13288 and authorized the blocking of the property of additional persons who were engaged in undermining democratic processes or institutions in Zimbabwe, facilitating public corruption by senior officials, or were responsible for committing human rights abuses related to political repression.

The actions and policies of these persons continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the foreign policy of the United States. For this reason, the national emergency declared on March 6, 2003, and the measures adopted on that date, on November 22, 2005, and on July 25, 2008, to deal with that emergency, must continue in effect beyond March 6, 2016. Therefore, in accordance with section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)), I am continuing for 1 year the national emergency originally declared in Executive Order 13288.

This notice shall be published in the *Federal Register* and transmitted to the Congress.

BARACK OBAMA.
THE WHITE HOUSE, *March 2, 2016*.

HONORING THE LIFE AND SERVICE OF OFFICER ASHLEY GUINDON

(Mr. WITTMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and service of Officer Ashley Guindon.

Officer Guindon was killed in the line of duty Saturday while responding to a call for help from a domestic violence victim.

She was 28 years old, and during her short life, Officer Guindon had done more for others than most of us will ever do. She spent 6 years in the Marine Corps Reserves before interning and ultimately working with the Prince William County Police Department.

At funeral services Tuesday, Officer Guindon was remembered as a policewoman and as a peace officer.

In Prince William County, the Police Department's stated mission is to ''enhance the quality of life by providing police services through shared responsibility with the public.''

As members of the public, it is incumbent upon us to respect the work that police officers do, the sacrifices that they make, and the lives that they touch across the Commonwealth and the United States of America.

God rest you and keep your family, Officer Guindon. Thank you for your service.

CONGRATULATING NAVY SEAL EDWARD BYERS

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

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I want to add the congratulations and commendations from the people of Ohio's Ninth District to Navy SEAL Edward Byers for his incredible valor, and I thank the President of the United States for awarding him this week the Medal of Honor.

Born in Toledo, Ohio, and raised in Grand Rapids, Ohio, SEAL Team Member Byers is a credit, not only to his service, but to the patriotic people who raised him, and for his enlistment in the U.S. military.

The bravery that he exhibited and the training and readiness that he exemplified through his valorous service in Afghanistan will go down in the annals of American history.

He is only one of a handful of SEALs who have been awarded the Medal of Honor. He handled the ceremony with great dignity, and we send our love and congratulations to his wife, to his family, and to all those who have the pleasure of knowing this really great American.

Congratulations, SEAL Team Member Edward Byers. You distinguished yourself on behalf of the people of your country and for freedom-loving people around our world.

Mr. Speaker, I will include in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD two articles about this Toledo native.

[From The Plain Dealer, Feb. 26, 2016]

TOLEDO NATIVE EDWARD BYERS WILL BE AWARDED MEDAL OF HONOR

(By Brian Albrecht)

CLEVELAND, OHIO.—The rescue of an American hostage in Afghanistan in 2012 will result in Toledo native and Navy SEAL Edward C. Byers Jr. being awarded the Medal of Honor by President Barack Obama in a ceremony at the White House on February 29.

The Senior Chief Special Warfare Operator is only the 11th living service member to be awarded the Medal of Honor for bravery displayed in Afghanistan.

According to Navy information, Byers was born in Toledo in 1979 and grew up in Grand Rapids, Ohio. After graduating from Otsego High School, where he played varsity soccer, he joined the Navy in 1998.

Byers attended hospital corpsman school and also completed a basic underwater demolition/SEAL course and special operations combat medic course in 2003.

He went on 11 overseas deployments, including nine combat tours.

The Medal of Honor is awarded to members of the armed forces who distinguish themselves conspicuously by gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of their own lives above and beyond the call of duty.

The mission that lead to his Medal of Honor award involved the rescue of Dr. Dilip Joseph, an American who was abducted with his driver and Afghan interpreter in December of 2012.

U.S. intelligence located Joseph in a remote mountainous area in a small, single-room building, and Byers was part of the team assigned to the recovery mission.

In a subsequent Navy Interview, Byers detailed his role in that mission:

''So that night was December 8 in Eastern Afghanistan, it was a cool night, we got off the helicopters, did a four- or five-hour pretty arduous hike through the mountains, and upon getting to our target building where we assumed the American hostage was at, our point man Nick Cheque, he was right in front of me, he saw a guard come out of the door, he engaged that guard and we started sprinting towards the door.

''Nick made his way in, and I made my way in right behind him, and I went down by the wall, and I engaged an enemy by the backside of the wall. And then I saw another person moving across the floor, so by the time I got to him he was on his back and I was able to get down on top of him and straddle him with my knees, and I had to adjust my night vision to try to get some facial recognition.

''At the same time this is happening I'm calling out trying to find the location of the American hostage. And finally he spoke up and it was at that time I engaged the person I was on top of and jumped off, and jumped off of the guy I was on and jumped onto the doctor who was about three or four, maybe five feet to my right.

''The reason I did that is because I was wearing body armor, so I wanted to protect him from any other potential threats in the room.

''Anyone who's been in combat knows that in those moments you either react, or you get killed.

''When I did that there was a guy that was right behind him within arm's reach, who was armed, and I was able to pin that guy to the wall by his throat, kind-of holding the doctor, and waiting for my teammates to come in and take care of the threat that was right next to us. When I was done, I still laid on top of him, and kept asking him 'hey can you walk,' you know, and 'is there anything medically wrong with you,' because our goal is to bring this guy back alive.

So, he said he was fine, and once we got outside, I noticed that our medics were working on Nick, and you know, being a medic myself I passed off the American hostage off to our other teammates and I went over to work on Nick, and did resuscitative efforts on him all the way to the hospital, where he was announced dead there.''

The official citation noted: ''Chief Petty Officer Byers displayed superior gallantry, extraordinary heroism at grave personal risk, dedication to his teammates, and calm tactical leadership while liberating Dr. Dilip Joseph from captivity.''

Byers said that when he found out he was being awarded the Medal of Honor, ''I felt very honored and very humbled because I'm gonna be a representative for the Navy and the naval special warfare community, and there's a weight that's carried with that.

''And that weight is the sacrifices that everybody has made within this community. Guys like Nick Cheque and all of our other brothers that have fallen, is it's an affirmation of the job that we do, and an appreciation of the job we do.''

In the interview, Byers also credited the support of his family, and noted that when he told his mother about the award ceremony, ''the first question out of her mouth is 'Do you think I can come to it?' And I said of course, mom, I think you'll be able to come to it.''

He also noted that his daughter ''knows that I'm daddy, and she loves me just for that. If you talk to her one-on-one, she'll tell you all the five nicknames she has for me, and none of them includes 'hero.' ''

He concluded, ''I'm gonna continue to be a SEAL. And I'm gonna take whatever job or mission is next for me, and just continue doing that. I don't have any plans on changing my job at this time. I still love what I do, and as long as I love what I do I'll continue doing it.''

Byers' personal decorations include the Bronze Star with Valor (five awards), the Purple Heart (two awards), the Joint Service Commendation Medal with Valor, the Navy Commendation Medal (three awards, one with Valor), the Combat Action ribbon (two awards), and the Good Conduct Medal (five awards).

He is one of only eight living Navy Medal of Honor recipients. There are 78 living recipients total.

Ohio has had 319 other Medal of Honor recipients with a connection to this state, dating back to the Civil War.

SUMMARY OF ACTION

SENIOR CHIEF SPECIAL WARFARE OPERATOR (SEAL) EDWARD C. BYERS JR.: FOR ACTIONS DURING OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM ON DEC. 8, 2012

Chief Special Warfare Operator (SEAL) Edward C. Byers Jr., United States Navy, distinguished himself by heroic gallantry as an Assault Team Member attached to a Joint Task Force in support of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM on 8 December 2012.

SPECIFIC ACCOMPLISHMENT

Dr. Dilip Joseph is an American citizen, who was abducted with his driver and Afghan interpreter on 5 December 2012. Intelligence reports indicated that Dr. Joseph might be transported to another location as early as 9 December 2012. Dr. Joseph was being held in a small, single-room building.

The target compound was located in a remote area beside a mountain in the Qarghah'i District of Laghman Province, Afghanistan. Chief Byers was part of the rescue team that planned to make entry into the room of guards where the hostage was believed to be located. Success of the rescue operation relied upon surprise, speed, and aggressive action. Trading personal security

for speed of action was inherent to the success of this rescue mission. Each assaulter in the rescue force volunteered for this operation with full appreciation for the risks they were to undertake.

With the approval of the Commander of all International Security Assistance Forces in Afghanistan, the rescue force launched from its forward operating base. The infiltration was an exhaustive patrol across unimproved trails and mountainous terrain. After nearly four hours of patrolling, the rescue force was positioned to make its assault on the target compound.

As the patrol closed to within 25 meters of the target building, a guard became aware of the rescue force. The forward-most assaulter shot at the guard and ran towards the door to make entry as the guard disappeared inside. Chief Byers was the second assaulter in a sprint towards the door. Six layers of blankets securely fastened to the ceiling and walls served as the Afghan door. While Chief Byers tried to rip down the blankets, the first assaulter pushed his way through the doorway and was immediately shot by enemy AK–47 fire. Chief Byers, fully aware of the hostile threat inside the room, boldly entered and immediately engaged a guard pointing an AK–47 towards him. As he was engaging that guard, another adult male darted towards the corner of the room. Chief Byers could not distinguish if the person may have been the hostage scrambling away or a guard attempting to arm himself with an AK–47 that lay in the corner. Chief Byers tackled the unknown male and seized control of him. While in hand-to-hand combat, Chief Byers maintained control of the unknown male with one hand, while adjusting the focus of his night vision goggles (NVGs) with his other. Once his NVGs were focused, he recognized that the male was not the hostage and engaged the struggling armed guard.

By now other team members had entered the room and were calling to Dr. Joseph to identify himself. Chief Byers heard an unknown voice speak English from his right side. He immediately leaped across the room and selflessly flung his body on top of the American hostage, shielding him from the continued rounds being fired across the room. Almost simultaneously, Chief Byers identified an additional enemy fighter directly behind Dr. Joseph. While covering the hostage with his body, Chief Byers was able to pin the enemy combatant to the wall with his hand around the enemy's throat. Unable to fire any effective rounds into the enemy, Chief Byers was able to restrain the combatant enough to enable his teammate to fire precision shots, eliminating the final threat within the room.

Chief Byers quickly talked to Dr. Joseph, confirming that he was able to move. He and his Team Leader stood Dr. Joseph up, calmed him, and let him know he was safe with American Forces. Once Dr. Joseph was moved to the helicopter-landing zone, Chief Byers, a certified paramedic and 18D medic, assisted with the rendering of medical aid to the urgent surgical assaulter. Chief Byers and others performed CPR during the 40-minute flight to Bagram Airfield where his teammate was declared deceased.

Chief Petty Officer Byers displayed superior gallantry, extraordinary heroism at grave personal risk, dedication to his teammates, and calm tactical leadership while liberating Dr. Dilip Joseph from captivity. He is unquestionably deserving of the Medal of Honor.

OFFICIAL CITATION

CHIEF SPECIAL WARFARE OPERATOR (SEA, AIR, AND LAND) EDWARD C. BYERS, JR. UNITED STATES NAVY

For service as set forth in the following citation:

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty as a Hostage Rescue Force Team Member in Afghanistan in support of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM from 8 to 9 December 2012. As the rescue force approached the target building, an enemy sentry detected them and darted inside to alert his fellow captors. The sentry quickly reemerged, and the lead assaulter attempted to neutralize him. Chief Byers with his team sprinted to the door of the target building. As the primary breacher, Chief Byers stood in the doorway fully exposed to enemy fire while ripping down six layers of heavy blankets fastened to the inside ceiling and walls to clear a path for the rescue force. The first assaulter pushed his way through the blankets, and was mortally wounded by enemy small arms fire from within. Chief Byers, completely aware of the imminent threat, fearlessly rushed into the room and engaged an enemy guard aiming an AK–47 at him. He then tackled another adult male who had darted towards the corner of the room. During the ensuing hand-to-hand struggle, Chief Byers confirmed the man was not the hostage and engaged him. As other rescue team members called out to the hostage, Chief Byers heard a voice respond in English and raced toward it. He jumped atop the American hostage and shielded him from the high volume of fire within the small room. While covering the hostage with his body, Chief Byers immobilized another guard with his bare hands, and restrained the guard until a teammate could eliminate him. His bold and decisive actions under fire saved the lives of the hostage and several of his teammates. By his undaunted courage, intrepid fighting spirit, and unwavering devotion to duty in the face of near certain death, Chief Petty Officer Byers reflected great credit upon himself and upheld the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service.

BIOGRAPHY

SENIOR CHIEF SPECIAL WARFARE OPERATOR (SEAL) EDWARD C. BYERS JR.

Senior Chief Edward C. Byers Jr. was born in Toledo, Ohio in 1979. He grew up in Grand Rapids, Ohio. In 1997, he graduated from Otsego High School where he played varsity soccer. Byers joined the Navy in September 1998, and subsequently attended Recruit Training and Corpsman ''A'' School in Great Lakes, Illinois.

Byers started his naval career as a Hospital Corpsman. In 1998, he was assigned to Great Lakes Naval Hospital. In 1999, he served with 2nd Battalion, 2nd Marines in Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, where he deployed with the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit aboard USS AUSTIN (LPD 4). During deployment he earned his Enlisted Surface Warfare Specialist (ESWS) badge and Fleet Marine Force (FMF) warfare device.

In 2002, Byers attended Basic Underwater Demolition SEAL (BUD/S) training and graduated with Class 242. After graduation, he attended the Special Operations Combat Medic (SOCM) course. SOCS Byers has been assigned to East Coast SEAL Teams. He was promoted to the rank of Senior Chief Petty Officer in January of 2016.

Byers has deployed overseas 11 times with nine combat tours. His personal decorations include the Bronze Star with Valor (five awards), the Purple Heart (two awards), the Joint Service Commendation Medal with Valor, the Navy Commendation Medal (three awards, one with Valor), the Combat Action ribbon (two awards), and the Good Conduct Medal (five awards).

Byers holds a National Paramedics License, and has studied Strategic Studies and Defense Analysis at Norwich University. Byers is married and has a daughter.

NAVY MEDAL OF HONOR FACTS

Senior Chief Byers is the 6th Navy SEAL in history to receive the Medal of Honor.

Senior Chief Byers is one of only eight living Navy Medal of Honor recipients. There are 78 living recipients total.

There have been 745 Medals of Honor awarded to Navy personnel. (308 of those were for actions during the Civil War)

Only two Navy service members have received the Medal of Honor for actions subsequent to the Vietnam War, and both of those awards were posthumous. (Lieutenant Michael Murphy and Petty Officer Michael Monsoor, both SEALs)

The most recent Navy recipient of the Medal of Honor was Petty Officer 2nd Class Michael Monsoor, who was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor by President George W. Bush on Apr. 8, 2008.

The most recent living Navy recipient of the Medal of Honor was Robert Ingram, who left the Navy in 1968, and was later awarded the Medal of Honor by President Bill Clinton on Jul. 10, 1998 for actions during the Vietnam War.

Senior Chief Byers is the first living active duty member of the U.S. Navy to receive the Medal of Honor since Apr. 6, 1976, the late Rear Admiral James Stockdale and Lieutenant Thomas Norris (also a SEAL) each received the decoration from President Gerald Ford.

Senior Chief Byers is the first living active duty enlisted member of the U.S. Navy to receive the Medal of Honor since Petty Officer Michael Thornton (also a SEAL) was awarded the Medal of Honor by President Richard Nixon on Oct., 15 1973.

This is the 14th Medal of Honor awarded for actions in Afghanistan. Including Senior Chief Byers, 11 of those 14 awards were to living recipients. Four Medals of Honor were awarded posthumously for actions in Iraq.

CLOSING GUANTANAMO BAY

(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, the cold-blooded, calculating terrorists sitting in Guantanamo murdered and plan to continue killing Americans.

Since President Obama took office, he has released 150 terrorists back to their home countries. In fact, Spanish and Moroccan police just arrested four suspected members of a jihadi cell who recruited fighters for the Islamic State. One is described as a former Gitmo detainee who formerly fought with militants against Americans in Afghanistan.

The 91 high-security prisoners remaining at Guantanamo committed some of the most repulsive crimes known to all of us.

Severely lacking in detail, the plan to close Gitmo fails to describe where, under what authority, and at what cost the relocation of these terrorists will be.

Mr. Speaker, it is against the law to transfer terrorist detainees to American soil without congressional approval.

The United States should do everything it can to keep terrorists out of our country, not purposely bring them here.

Closing Gitmo endangers our U.S. national security, and it is a bad idea.

And that is just the way it is.

□ 1745

SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES NOMINATION PROCESS

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

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Speaker, when our Founders wrote the Constitution, they had the wisdom to create a system of checks and balances among the three branches of government. They knew this would limit power, protect against abuses, and promote liberty.

Under our Constitution, the President has the right to nominate Justices to the Supreme Court, but one House of the Congress, the Senate, has the coequal right to consent to such an appointment. One branch has a power, another has a check.

Today, with a vacancy on the Supreme Court, we have a chance to see this system of checks and balances in action. In deciding whether to consent to an appointment to the Supreme Court, the Senate should assess whether the President has been acting consistent with the Constitution.

The chart to my left highlights just a few of President Obama's unconstitutional actions since he was reelected in 2012. These actions have been frequent, repeated, and grave. These actions have poisoned the well of deliberation for any appointment by this President.

In that light, why wouldn't the Senate withhold consent? It is a game the President chose to play, and withholding consent to his appointment is an appropriate consequence.

GUANTANAMO BAY

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

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, once again, Congress acted to stop the transfer of GTMO detainees to the United States. Guantanamo Bay is a much better venue to hold these known terrorists than to have them on American soil. Yet the President wants to defy Congress and the American people, who desire not to have this happen, and bring them onto American soil.

It endangers our courts, our system of government, and our people by bringing them here or even ultimately releasing them. We need to have the President, if he tries this and loses in court, once again, take a lesson in the final 10 months of his term that he needs to uphold the law that we passed and that he signed.

THE TEXAS WAR OF INDEPENDENCE AGAINST MEXICO

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ALLEN). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today is March 2, 2016. 180 years ago, on March 2, 1836, in a little place called Washington-on-the-Brazos down in Texas, people of what is now Texas declared their independence from the nation of Mexico—March 2, 1836. Tonight I am here to talk a little bit about those folks 180 years ago and the cause and the result of the Texas War of Independence against Mexico.

We have to back up a little bit. For a long time, almost 300 years, what is now Texas was controlled by the Spanish. They claimed the land in Texas. It was sparsely populated: some Indian tribes, but not very many folks. At some point, Spain also controlled what is now Mexico.

Mexico, the nation of Mexico, chose to declare independence from that European country of Spain and went to war with Spain to secure their independence back in 1820. That revolution—they called it the War of Independence—was successful. Mexico set up an independent nation, a democracy. They formed a government and a constitution very similar to the United States. Texas was a part of Mexico at that time and was part of a state called Coahuila. It was the Coahuila de Texas, two areas of northern Mexico that were one state in Mexico.

Things were fine until Mexico elected a President by the name of Santa Anna. When he became President of Mexico, this particular President abolished the democracy, abolished the constitution of 1824 that set up the Government of Mexico, and declared himself the dictator of Mexico. In fact, he destroyed the Republic of Mexico, the democracy of Mexico, and put himself as dictator-in-charge.

Throughout the history of the world, we know of a lot of dictators, but they all seem to have one thing in common: they take away the rights—the civil rights—of the people.

Some people in Mexico didn't like this, and therefore they started their own secession movement, their own revolution, their own independence. Now, most Americans know that Texas was one of those areas in Mexico that declared its independence from Mexico, and that independence, that revolution, was successful. But there were other areas of northern Mexico—and here on this map I have some of those areas—that also declared their independence for the reason they wanted to be free. They wanted independence from the dictatorship.

There was the Republic of the Yucatan, there was the Republic Coahuila, and there were three or four other republics, and the Republic of the Rio Grande. Several areas of population in Mexico declared their independence.

So what happened? Santa Anna not only was the dictator, but he was the commander in chief, and he was the general. He was the guy. He moved his army from Mexico City into these areas of revolution, areas where people were fighting against the government, the republic, or the dictatorship of Santa Anna. He had squelched, really, all of these revolutionary movements; although, portions of these areas did declare independence and appeared to have independence for a period of time.

So that brings us to 1835, several months before Texas declared independence. Here is what started the Texas War of Independence:

While all of these other movements—some were going on, some would go on a few months later. But during this period, there was insurrection in northern Mexico because people were trying to seek independence. It started on October 2, 1835, at Gonzales, Texas, a small little community in Gonzales, Texas.

Remember, Texas is a part of Mexico at this time. The Mexican Government, when it was a free government, had encouraged immigration into this part of Texas—not just from the United States, but from Mexico and from European countries.

But this town of Gonzales, Texas, was in possession of a cannon. The cannon was to protect themselves from the people who lived in the area that were hostiles, as they were called in those days. Native Americans are who they were. And that cannon was for that purpose.

The Mexican Government said: We want the cannon back. You cannot have the cannon in Gonzales, Texas. We don't want you having it.

The Mexican Government made the demand on October 2 to the folks in Gonzales, Texas: Return the cannon to the Mexican military.

The people, the settlers of Gonzales, said: No. We are not going to do it. We are not giving you back the cannon. We need it.

So they resisted. They even made a flag. They called it the Come and Take It flag. You may have seen that recently. It is still popular with a lot of folks. It was a flag that said, ''Come and take it,'' with a cannon on it. They hoisted this, and they had a skirmish with the Mexican Army, who came to take the cannon. Shots were fired on both sides, multiple shots. Apparently, most of the people shooting weren't great marksmen. A couple of Mexican soldiers were wounded, and they retreated without the cannon. But that event started the actual shooting war in the War of Independence.

Months before that, there had been complaints. There had been letters written to the Mexican Government. Stephen F. Austin, the Father of Texas, had been imprisoned in Mexico City trying to get some civil rights for people who lived in what is now Texas. But it all came to a head at this event in October of 1835.

It is interesting what started the Texas War of Independence, the shooting war, is very similar to what started

the shooting war between the colonists and Great Britain. You remember the British were in Boston. We have all heard about the march through Lexington and Concord.

The purpose the British Army marched through Lexington and Concord in the 1770s was to take the firearms, the weapons, away from the colonists, out of the armories in Lexington and Concord. Of course, the colonists refused. They fired back, and it started the shooting war with the British Empire, later a successful War of Independence.

It is interesting that both of them started when government showed up to take the weapons, the firearms, of the people who lived in that area.

The shooting war started, and, quite frankly, it was successful up until about this time in 1836. An army of Texans had entered a place called the Alamo in February of 1836—February 23, 1836—because of the approaching army of Santa Anna that was coming north into Texas—Tejas, as it was called.

The men that assembled at the Alamo to try to stop the invading army coming in were an interesting bunch. There were 100 to 187 of them. They came from almost all of the then-States of the United States. They came from several foreign countries, including Great Britain, Scotland, Ireland, France, Germany, and Austria. Many of them were from what we call Mexico, and they had come into the Alamo.

An interesting name that is unique to Texas history is that Texans of Spanish Mexican descent were called Tejanos, a unique name for Texans, Tejanos of Spanish Mexican or Hispanic descent. There were eleven of them at the Alamo.

The 180 to 187 were from all walks of life. I told you they were from all different countries. They were not only Anglos and Tejanos, but there were two African Americans, two Blacks, at the Alamo, we understand. They were lawyers; they were frontiersmen; they were shopkeepers; they were young, and they were old.

There was even a United States Congressman at the Alamo. His name was David Crockett. He was a former Congressman from the State of Tennessee. He had gone to Texas to help in the revolution and also to see the fortunes that he could make as an individual.

There were a lot of reasons why people came to Texas, but 180 to 187 of them were in the Alamo to defend and to protect that concept of freedom.

This is a painting of what the Alamo looked like at the time those men were in the Alamo.

So they entered the Alamo—let's get the sequence of events correct—February 23. They are in the Alamo on March 2 when Texas declared independence. They were in the Alamo for 13 days. The final battle at the Alamo was on March 6, 1836.

While they were in the Alamo, they were led by the commander of the Alamo, who is really my most favorite person in all of history. He was a 27-year-old lawyer from South Carolina by way of Alabama. He had come to Texas to settle in the 1830s, and his name was William Barret Travis. He was placed in command of the Alamo, of all 180, 187 of the folks that were there. While he was in the Alamo—he entered on February 23—he realized that the enemy was going to be a superior force.

□ 1800

In the cold, damp Alamo, a blue norther, as we called it in those days, had come. It was cold. The Alamo is near San Antonio, Texas. He wrote a letter asking for help. I have a copy of his letter on my wall in my office.

Here is what it said. To me, it is one of the most passionate letters ever written about freedom. It is dated February 24, 1836, in Bexar.

> To the People of Texas and All Patriots and Fellow Citizens. I am besieged by a thousand or more of the enemy under Santa Anna. The enemy is receiving reinforcements daily and will no doubt increase to 3,000 or 4,000 in 4 or 5 days. The enemy has demanded surrender at its discretion. Otherwise, the fort will be put to the sword. I have answered that demand with a cannon shot, and the flag still waves proudly over the wall. I ask that you come to my aid with all dispatch. If this call is neglected, I am determined to sustain myself as long as possible and die like a soldier who never forgets what is due his own honor and his country—victory or death. William Barret Travis, Commander.

That is a portion of the letter that he wrote that he sent out throughout the area of Texas asking for help. The courier was Jim Bonham, another South Carolinian that had come to Texas. He was William Barret Travis' boyhood friend. He would take this letter to different areas of Texas asking for help.

Only one group of folks answered that letter, and it was the men in Gonzales, Texas, where this all started. They decided that they would leave Gonzales, which is near San Antonio, march to the Alamo and help defend the Alamo. There were 32 of them.

When they arrived at the Alamo—some historians have said as they walked into the Alamo—Travis said they came here to die. That brought the total up to about 180 to 187.

If you will, Mr. Speaker, think about what those 32 men left behind. This is a rough area of the world in Texas, just the weather. But the people they left behind were their wives and their kids because the men had gone to defend the Alamo.

After the Alamo fell and all of those men were killed, it was then left up to those wives and children to make an existence in frontier Texas. They, in their own right, were amazing people that went ahead and forged an existence after Texas independence was declared.

So they are in the Alamo. On March 2, Texas declares independence. Probably the men in the Alamo never knew that Texas declared independence.

Finally, on March 6, after 13 days, Santa Anna and his superior army stormed the Alamo. All 187 Texans were killed. If any surrendered, they were executed.

The Mexican casualties, according to Santa Anna, were about 1,000 casualties on the Mexican side. The Tejanos that were in the Alamo, all 11, were also killed in the attack.

Travis made the comment in a later letter that was sent out of the Alamo before this March 6 attack that defeat will cost the enemy more than victory. It turns out he was right.

Anyway, the Alamo fell. The flag that flew over the Alamo—I don't know if you can see it, Mr. Speaker—was not the Lone Star flag. A lot of people think it was the Lone Star flag, which is our Texas State flag.

It is the flag of Mexico with the Mexican eagle removed from the flag. And the date of 1824 was placed on that flag. Most historians think that was the flag that flew over the Alamo.

What is the significance of this? 1824 was the year that the constitution was written for the Republic of Mexico. The defenders of the Alamo wanted a constitutional government.

That is why they flew this flag, the 1824 constitution flag, to let the world know that is why they were defending the concept of liberty, freedom, and a constitutional government as opposed to a dictatorship.

But the Alamo fell. Santa Anna then started moving northeast through Texas. The Alamo is in San Antonio, Bexar County. It was just called Bexar in those days.

Meanwhile, an individual by the name of Sam Houston, who was the commander of all Texas armies, the few that there were, had been preparing an army while the men in the Alamo were at the Alamo.

He was assembling more volunteers—everybody was a volunteer—not only from Texas, but other Tejanos. Other folks from other States formed an army to defeat or to take on Santa Anna.

Santa Anna had actually split his army into three different columns. He was moving his three columns up through northeast Texas from Mexico.

Sam Houston and his army weren't ready; so, he didn't attack Santa Anna. In fact, he moved east. It is called the Runaway Scrape.

Not only was the army moving east away from Santa Anna's invaders, but the people who lived there were leaving, too, because they were afraid of the Mexican Army.

They were afraid of Santa Anna, is who they were afraid of. So you have the army, you have the settlers, and you have everybody moving northeast, called the Runaway Scrape.

Sam Houston continued to move. He would not engage the Mexican Army. In fact, some Texas folks—politicians—were irritated with Sam Houston because he wouldn't go to battle.

They kept moving east. They went through San Antonio, what is now

Interstate 10 between San Antonio and Houston. They went right through that area, right through what is now Houston. The Mexican Army is following him. Santa Anna is following him.

They go to a place called Harrisburg, which is just east of Houston, on the marshes of the San Jacinto River, a marshy area, to a peninsula, and Sam Houston stopped on April 20, 1836.

Santa Anna continued to march and came on the peninsula. Both armies are on the peninsula. On April 21, here is what happened.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, most battles throughout history, no matter where they are, no matter who they are—the Greeks, the Romans, everybody—start at sunup or right before sunup. But that didn't happen on April 21, 1836.

The Texans went to battle in the middle of the afternoon. They weren't going to wait until the next day. The soldiers were ready to do battle. Sam Houston really had no choice but to lead them into battle. And so he did.

In the middle of the afternoon, just one column—there were only a handful of them, more than at the Alamo—a single column, single file, was led by an individual playing a flute, another person carrying the flag, and a third individual beating the drums.

The flutist didn't know any songs. So he played an old—we would call it a house of ill repute song, ''Come to the Bower.'' I don't know the lyrics of it, Mr. Speaker, but you can look it up.

He played on his flute ''Come to the Bower,'' which was the song they marched into battle with, carrying a flag of Lady Liberty, a semi-clothed individual on the flag. Then you had the drummer.

Then you had all of these really scary-looking folks going into battle, the Texas Army. Most of them didn't have any kind of uniforms. They dressed like frontiersmen. They had a shotgun, a long rifle, a tomahawk, knives, well-armed individuals.

Also with them was Juan Seguin. Juan Seguin was a captain in the Texas Army. He was a Tejano. He led this cavalry of Tejanos to protect one of the flanks when the Texans were marching down. He, like the rest of the Texas Army, did not have uniforms. They wore their normal clothes.

Sam Houston wanted to make sure that the Texans and the foot soldiers didn't mix up the Mexican Army with the Tejanos that were in the cavalry.

So he had all of the Tejanos put a playing card in their sombrero. In those days, apparently, the cards weren't small like they are today. They were big.

They stuck this 4x6 card—or something like that—in their hats, their sombreros, so that everybody would know that they were on the side of liberty, not part of the Mexican Army, a unique part of Texas history.

So, in the middle of the day, what had happened was Santa Anna was taking a nap. It was siesta time. Now, some say historically—modern revisionists—that this isn't exactly true, but I believe it because I want to believe it.

Santa Anna was preoccupied with an individual that was loyal to the Republic of Texas, an individual that we fondly call the Yellow Rose of Texas now. Therefore, he wasn't prepared to go into battle when the Texans were coming down this small hill.

In any event, they were caught by surprise. This battle lasted 18 minutes. Eleven Texans were killed, 600 of the enemy were killed, and the rest were captured. In fact, more were captured later than in the Texas Army.

The battle lasted 18 minutes. Military historians studied this battle because of its decisiveness. So General Houston led one battle. It was successful. Santa Anna was captured.

Texas claims independence from Mexico—that was April 21, 1836—and goes ahead and forms a government, forms a republic and, in September of the same year, elects a president and a vice president.

From October of 1835 to September of 1836 was the War of Independence. Declaration of independence was on March 2. April 21 the battle was successful. Texas is a free and independent country and remains so for 9 years.

The battle cry at the Battle of San Jacinto, as you have heard in history, was ''Remember the Alamo.'' ''Remember Goliad.'' That was another place where Texans were massacred that fought Santa Anna's army.

This is what Texas looked like when Texas declared independence from Mexico. Maybe you can see it, Mr. Speaker. I don't know.

You see what is now Texas over here, but you see a lot of other land. You see Oklahoma, part of Kansas, part of New Mexico, part of Colorado. It even goes up to part of Idaho, almost to the Canadian border. All of this area here, Texas claimed all of—that is the Republic of Texas—and claimed it for 9 years.

Texas periodically would try to join the United States as the 28th State. Two times Texas tried to join the Union, and two times Congress rejected Texas' approval into the Union.

On the third time, rather than have a treaty with Texas—because Texas was an independent country—a joint resolution was filed.

It passed the House of Representatives and it passed the Senate, because you didn't need two-thirds vote then. We still have those discussions today, don't we? A joint resolution.

By one vote, Texas was admitted to the Union in 1845 and, in 1846, actually came into the United States as the 28th State.

It was a republic once. A lot of people in Texas still think we are a republic, and we seem to act like it sometimes. But we have a unique history.

The history of Texas, why I like it so much, is because everybody wanted to live in Texas, wanted to come to Texas, of all races, of all nationalities, from all States.

They fought in a war against another nation, a dictator, for the same reason that the 13 colonies fought for independence against Great Britain: for freedom and for liberty.

□ 1815

There is an independent streak that runs through all Texans. It is a state of mind for Texas.

Mr. Speaker, how much time remains?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman has 34 minutes remaining.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, we are of an independent mind, of an independent philosophy. March 2 is an important day for us because our ancestors and people we don't even know about decided that it was worth their lives to fight against tyranny—against a totalitarian government run by a dictator. They were volunteers. They were normal people who just had that flame of liberty in their souls, and they refused to have it taken away from them.

So we remember those folks who created Texas, who fought for independence for Texas, those men at the Alamo—William Barret Travis, Davy Crockett, Jim Bowie, Jim Bonham, and 187 more individuals. The youngest was 15, Tapley Holland from Ohio. The oldest was 68—who fought and died for that liberty.

When Texas became part of the United States, it had great depth because of the War of Independence. Part of the deal for Texas to be admitted to the Union, even by one vote, was this land that I mentioned to you that was all sold to the Federal Government, to the Union, to pay off the debts of the Republic of Texas. Thus, as we know now, Texas looks like this. All of these other areas became other States that were later admitted to the United States.

When there was the agreement between Texas and the United States to join the Union, it was agreed—and it is still possible—that Texas may divide now the State of Texas into five different States. Now, that is not going to happen, because nobody is going to be able to agree on what should be called ''Texas''; but we can divide into five States, and that is the decision of the people who live in Texas.

One of the other provisions of the joint resolution was that Texas may fly its flag, the Lone Star Flag—the flag of the one star, the Lone Star, the Lone Republic—even with the American flag. When you go to Texas, you will see a lot of American flags, and you will see a lot of Texas flags, but most of the Texas flags are flying level with the American flag. They can do that by law. Texas does that because of its agreement and admission into the Union.

Our country has a great history, Mr. Speaker, with 50 States, with all of our territories. Our history is unique. No place on Earth is like the United

States. It is because of our history, because of the diversity of the peoples and cultures in this country. The diversity of Texas, the diversity of the United States is what gives it strength. It is not a weakness. It is a strength.

It is, I think, quite important that we as Members of the House of Representatives, who represent the 50 States of the United States, make sure that we talk about our history—how we are a unique Nation among peoples, how we have always been a unique Nation among peoples—and preserve what those folks at the Alamo fought for and what our folks fought for in the Colonies in wars since then, which are freedom and liberty. Those are not trite words. They are core words. The concept of liberty lives in every person ever born in history. Most people never see it. Most people in the world today aren't free, but there are a few, and those few—some of those few—are in what we call the United States of America.

I thank all of those Texans back in Texas for honoring Texas Independence Day, March 2, 1836. Especially, we should always honor those people who lived in our history who gave their lives for the rest of us, because they were good folk.

And that is just the way it is.

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

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DONOVAN). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on the subject of this Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from New Jersey?

There was no objection.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, this week, we open Women's History Month—an opportunity for us to celebrate the progress women have made and the amazing contributions that we are responsible for.

We have more women in Congress now than ever before. Women are now the leading breadwinners or are the only breadwinners in 40 percent of households. We have more women who lead major companies and who are in prominent positions, like on the Supreme Court. Women today are more likely to earn college degrees and to attend graduate school than are their male counterparts, and more women are entering traditionally male-dominated fields. That progress has been incredibly swift. We are talking about gains that have really only happened in the past 60 years. Still, there are many, many milestones that women have yet to reach.

Even with the most women Congress has ever seen, this body, supposedly elected to both represent and reflect the United States, is still overwhelmingly 80 percent male, in fact. Women still make 78 cents for every dollar a man earns, particularly troubling when you think about the 40 percent of women I just mentioned who are supporting their families. Black women make even less at 64 cents on the dollar while Latina women make just 66 cents on the dollar. If this week is any indicator, there are still great numbers of people, primarily men, who feel we are incapable of making our own decisions about our health care.

We have got a long way to go, Mr. Speaker. Part of the reason we can't get all the way there is that we have not passed the Equal Rights Amendment. We have been avoiding ensuring protection for women in the Constitution for almost 100 years. Quite frankly, there is only so much we can do until we offer that basic level of protection.

Mr. Speaker, the ERA was first drafted and introduced in the 1920s. It finally passed in 1972 and was sent to the States for ratification, where it received 35 of the 38 approvals that it needed. Unfortunately, time ran out. One of the reasons we have yet to solve some of the greatest challenges facing our Nation's women is the lack of true protection in the Constitution.

What better way to ensure the right to fair pay for women? What better way to ensure equal treatment in the workplace? What better way to protect against laws that inherently limit women? What better way to protect all of the progress we have made and to ensure that women can continue to excel?

The Equal Rights Amendment would provide the foundation for legislation that protects women from discrimination at every level—legislation that is more necessary now than it has ever been with more and more women leading at home and in the workplace.

We will spend a lot of time in the coming weeks talking about what we need to do for women—from the passage of the Fair Pay Act to ensuring paid leave for women and men. Yet there is one thing that we should have done long ago, and my colleagues are here tonight, on the floor with me, to call for action where we have failed before.

It is now my pleasure to yield to the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY), the primary sponsor of the ERA bill.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend, Representative BONNIE WATSON COLEMAN, and the Congressional Progressive Caucus for dedicating this time to talk about passing the Equal Rights Amendment—a cause I have fought for my entire time in Congress.

March is Women's History Month, and we have many accomplishments to celebrate and to be proud of, but we must remain focused on the continued struggle for full equality for women. Without the ERA, this goal will not be fully realized, and half of Americans will not realize their full potential. All of us, men and women, stand to benefit from true gender equality.

Consider, for instance, some laws that are being proposed across the Nation that have disparate negative impacts on women:

In Illinois, a bill sponsored by men is pending that would deny a birth certificate to a newborn of a single mother unless a father is listed on the birth certificate. This would make it impossible for a single mother to enroll her child in a public school, for her child to obtain a driver's license, or for her to collect child support and other benefits for the child. The law is silent on single fathers.

In Kentucky, the State senate has passed a bill sponsored by a man that would force all women who are seeking to terminate pregnancies to undergo ultrasounds, whether they want to or not, and to have doctors describe the images to them. While we cannot know for sure how an ERA would affect the outcome of future Supreme Court cases, we have seen that its absence leaves women vulnerable to discrimination without their having legal recourse.

These legislative efforts to roll back hard-won progress and to curtail rights are directed squarely at women. You will not find equivalent examples of bills that roll back or constrain the rights of men—and men only. Unfortunately, that noble and empowering declaration in our founding document that ''all men are created equal'' left some of us out. In fact, it leaves about half the population of America out.

Many people are actually surprised when they realize that the United States Constitution does not mention women. That omission has, unfortunately, become a glaring problem when it comes to achieving full equality—and not just a problem for women but for families as well—for everyone. For instance, when women make less than men just because they are women, it is an issue that affects their entire families.

We saw that in the case of Lilly Ledbetter. The Supreme Court found that she had been paid less for doing the very same job as her male counterparts. This not only meant that, for years, she made less money than her male colleagues in order to support her family and to provide for her children throughout her working life, but it meant that she would also spend her entire retirement being less financially secure.

Such unfair and unequal treatment should certainly be prohibited under our Constitution. Yet the late Supreme

Court Justice Antonin Scalia famously told an interviewer for the California Lawyer Magazine that he believed that the Constitution does not outlaw this kind of discrimination because, in his view, the 14th Amendment does not apply to women.

The 14th Amendment reads that no State shall ''deny to any person . . . the equal protection of the laws.''

To most people, that would seem to be pretty simple and straightforward; but Justice Scalia argued that the word ''person'' should not apply to women. In his view, when it was written, it was only meant to apply to the recently emancipated slaves.

The problem here is that there is ambiguity about whether or not gender discrimination is explicitly prohibited by the Constitution. The only solution to this challenge is to plainly include women in the Constitution. So between the State and congressional legislators who believe it is permissible to roll back hard-won rights and to pass legislation that unfairly and unequally burdens women—and the idiosyncratic views of Supreme Court Justices who declare women are not people—it is essential to pass the Equal Rights Amendment in a brief amendment that simply reads:

''Women shall have equal rights in the United States and every place subject to its jurisdiction. Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.''

□ 1830

Let's put women in the Constitution at long last.

Research shows that 75 to 90 percent of Americans mistakenly believe that the ERA has already passed and that men and women are equal under the law. In 2012, a poll asked: Do you think the Constitution should guarantee equal rights for men and women? And 91 percent said yes, including 86 percent of Republicans.

The way things stand now, the Supreme Court has ruled that the Constitution provides strict guidelines against discrimination based on race and national origin, but it is silent on issues of gender discrimination.

When it comes to gender discrimination, the Court has applied a lesser standard that makes it easier to get away with discriminating against women. Plain old common sense and your basic sense of fairness should tell you that the same strict scrutiny, protection against discrimination based on race and national origin, should also apply to discrimination based on sex.

So the ERA would establish unequivocally, once and for all, that women are entitled to equal treatment under the law. Equal treatment means equal treatment. Equal means equal for all, women included. The ERA would, once and for all, provide clear, constitutional guidance on gender equity issues. The ERA would lend the force of the Constitution to existing prohibitions against sex discrimination in the workplace or schools. The ERA would stop bias in wages, benefits, hiring practices, and other conditions of employment.

If America wants to be a world leader in the promotion of human rights, it needs to lead by example on women's rights. Sadly, in this area, America is exceptional only in a bad way.

The U.S. stands out as one of the few nations that does not even address gender equality in its Constitution. As the world's leading democracy, we are falling behind on women's equality. At a time when we seek to champion democracy around the world, we must guarantee equality here at home. It is time for the United States to secure equal rights for women across our Nation by ratifying the ERA.

Progress can all too easily be rolled back. Laws can be repealed, and judicial attitudes can shift, turning women into second class citizens. It seems like I spend a majority of my time here in Congress just fighting to hold on to what we already have, trying to keep it from being rolled back. An ERA would protect the progress made on women's rights from any shifting political trends.

Women are still not receiving equal pay for equal work. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, women still earn 78 cents for every dollar earned by a man, and this has contributed to older women being the largest segment of poverty in our great Nation. Because when you are paid less, your pension is less, your 401(k) is less, your Social Security is less, and that happens to have profound effects on women.

Just this past week there was an article in The Wall Street Journal that talked about the largest group of people that are growing in the workforce are older women, and this is because they cannot afford to retire. They have to continue working because of the discrimination in pay and because of having taken times when they weren't in the workforce to take care of a sick parent or to nurse and raise a child.

Sex and pregnancy discrimination persists in the workforce. Governmental programs, such as Social Security, still unequally provide benefits to men and women.

An ERA would be a woman's best defense against harmful practices that punish her simply because she is a woman. We cannot keep fighting discrimination against women one battle at a time, constantly playing defense. Passing the ERA will put women on equal footing in the legal system of all 50 States, particularly in areas where women have historically been treated as second class citizens.

We have 186 bipartisan cosponsors of H.J. Res. 52 in the House, which I proudly introduced with Representative CYNTHIA LUMMIS of Wyoming—just 32 shy of a majority. It reflects the strength of the belief that women should be included in the Constitution and guaranteed equal treatment under the law.

It is time to stop making excuses. Women and like-minded men have to demand that Congress and State governments get this done. Equal means equal.

I thank the gentlewoman for yielding, and I thank her from the bottom of my heart for really organizing this important Special Order.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for being with us this evening.

I yield to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. GRAHAM).

Ms. GRAHAM. Mr. Speaker, first I want to thank Congresswoman WATSON COLEMAN for holding this special session and bringing attention to the Equal Rights Amendment.

When I was born in 1963, we lived in a different world. It was legal to openly discriminate against hiring women; it was legal to discriminate against women in lending and credit; it was legal to pay women substantially less than men; and it was legal to fire a woman just for becoming pregnant.

Fortunately, when I was born, things were beginning to change. Women were fighting for and gaining greater equality.

Today, women are better protected from those forms of discrimination. We have made great strides, but we haven't yet been able to recognize our equality in the Constitution. There is nothing more sacred, nothing more important to America than our Constitution.

I support the Equal Rights Amendment because I grew up in a changing world, but I want my daughter and the next generation to grow up in a changed world. I want my daughter to live in a country where her and every woman's equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.

To illustrate why I believe we should and still can ratify the Equal Rights Amendment, I want to specifically speak about the history of the ERA in my home State of Florida.

Our House of Representatives voted for ratification of the ERA three separate times—in 1972, 1975, and 1979—but our Senate remained more divided on the issue.

Bill Cotterell, a columnist for the Tallahassee Democrat, recently opined:

> It was still a very different world, where a Member of the legislature walked around with a toy pig under his arm, proudly proclaiming himself a male chauvinist.

It was a different world, one still changing, but I am proud to say there were men who stood up for the women of our State in the State senate. One of them was my father, Bob Graham, who bucked his own Democratic Party leadership to support the ERA, a move that helped earn him the title of a doghouse Democrat.

After repeated failures in the Senate, some thought the ERA was dead, but it resurfaced in Florida in 1982. That summer, just a few weeks remaining before

the ratification deadline, more than 10,000 men and women marched on our State capitol in support of the amendment.

Hearing their call and supporting their cause, my father, who had moved out of the doghouse into the Governor's mansion, called our legislature into special session. For the fourth time, the House voted in favor of the amendment, but unfortunately the senate blocked ratification. That was 34 years ago.

And today I believe our State is better than that. I believe, given another chance to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment, Democrats and Republicans in Florida could be united to support equality for women.

I am proud to have grown up in a changing world, but it is time for our daughters and the next generation of women to grow up in a changed world. It is time to recognize their equality in our Constitution.

I thank the Congresswoman for bringing attention to this issue and for all that you do on behalf of women.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SPEIER), the sponsor of legislation that would retroactively lift the deadline for the ratification of the ERA.

Ms. SPEIER. I thank the gentlewoman from New Jersey for bringing us together tonight to talk about one of the most fundamental issues facing women in this country. I would hope that we would do these Special Orders on a monthly basis or maybe even more frequently to kind of beat the drum about how important it is for us to address this issue.

Today we see everything we need to see to convince us of the need to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment and put women's equality into the Constitution. We have a pay gap that has not closed where women are making 79 cents for every dollar that men make. For African American women that is 63 cents, and for Latina women it is 54 cents for every dollar earned by a man.

In fact, women in this country have to work until April 15 of the following year—tax day, ironically—to make as much money as their male counterparts. We can't afford that. We can't afford that in a country that speaks of equality.

Meanwhile, we have a Congress and State legislators who are focused like a laser beam on attacking women's health. We just spent 5 hours today in a hearing of a special committee designed specifically to attack women's health. Since the start of 2016—merely 2 months ago, and for the last 2 months—there have been more than 201 anti-choice bills introduced in State legislatures across this country, efforts to undermine a woman's right to choose.

We have a Supreme Court seat at stake and issues of gender equality hanging in the balance. It is important to quote what the late Justice Scalia said about discrimination against women. He was a constitutional expert, an originalist, and he said the following:

''Certainly the Constitution does not require discrimination on the basis of sex. The only issue is whether it prohibits it. It doesn't.''

When I read that quotation by Justice Scalia—may he rest in peace—I had shivers up and down my spine because it was so direct. It was so clear. It makes the point that the Constitution of this country does not prohibit discrimination based on sex, even though the vast majority of Americans believe it is already in the Constitution.

Ninety-six percent of U.S. adults believe that male and female citizens should have equal rights, and 72 percent mistakenly believe it is already in the Constitution. As Justice Scalia pointed out, it is not.

So what does that mean?

That means that every single woman in this country can be subject to discrimination and not have a legal foot to stand on.

Probably one of the most obvious cases is the case of Peggy Young. Peggy Young worked for United Parcel Service for 10 years. She was a good worker, a hard worker. And then, lo and behold, she gets pregnant. She gets pregnant. She goes to her supervisor and she says: I am pregnant.

He says: Okay. Go to your doctor and find out what accommodations you will require.

□ 1845

She went to her doctor, and her doctor said: Well, you can do anything except you can't lift more than 10 pounds.

So she came back to her supervisor and said: I can do anything except I can't lift more than 10 pounds.

He said: Oh, my gosh, that is a terrible liability.

For all intents and purposes, she was fired from her job. She was told she will have to take a leave of absence, that she will not be paid, and that she would not be eligible for health benefits. So her entire pregnancy she had no prenatal care and no health insurance.

Now, what makes this story particularly insidious is that during that same timeframe, men at the United Parcel Service who had heart disease, heart attacks, had had a DUI, or had diabetes were asked to go to their doctors and find out what accommodations they should propose. Some of them came back with the exact same accommodation: that they could not lift more than 10 pounds.

What did United Parcel Service do? United Parcel Service accommodated them. That is profound discrimination.

But guess what. Peggy Young filed a lawsuit. It went all the way to the Supreme Court, and it got remanded. It got remanded in part because not only did she have to prove that there was discrimination, which clearly there was; she had to prove that it was intentional discrimination by United Parcel Service, and she couldn't prove that.

Now, in all the other forms of discrimination, whether it is based on race or religion, you only have to prove that there was discrimination, not that there was intentional acts of discrimination. So that is why it is so important that we get this in the Constitution.

We have a new generation of women who are more independent, more able to support themselves, and more politically empowered than ever. I just read an article that shows single women are now our most potent political force in this country. Single women—whether they are single never been married, single divorced, single separated, single—are our most potent electoral force. They deserve the right to full legal equality under our Constitution. How can this body, of all bodies, not recognize the importance of equality among men and women?

So I have introduced H.J. Res. 51. It is very simple.

The ERA was introduced first in 1923 by Alice Paul, and introduced every Congress since then, and then it was introduced and actually passed the House and passed the Senate. It then had to be ratified by three-quarters of the States. Unfortunately, when that was drafted, in the preamble they put a timeline. It was ratified by 35 States, but not 38. So it came back to Congress, and they amended the preamble and extended the length of time in which the ERA could be passed by other States. And then nothing happened.

What this resolution does—and it would only require a majority of the Members of this body to pass it—is basically use the precedent and take the preamble and the time deadline and just strike it.

There is no need for a deadline in a constitutional amendment. Most constitutional amendments have not been subject to a deadline. There is precedent that they were willing to change it as it relates to the ERA, and I say let's make it yet another precedent and just take the timeline out of it. That would give us the opportunity to get three more States to pass the ERA, to ratify it.

We already know in Virginia it has been passed by the senate, and we are waiting for action in the house. As my good friend from Florida said, in Florida they could pass it, conceivably, now.

So why not do what is fundamentally right? Why not do what is so simple? Twenty-four simple words, that is all the ERA is. It is on one page, and it is simply: ''Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.''

The time has come, Members, and I applaud my good colleague from New Jersey for bringing us together. We

should do it again. I enjoy working with you on any number of issues.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentlewoman, and I want to say tonight that we definitely will be coming back here again on a Special Order hour and addressing this issue. We will just continue to do it until we can see some movement. I thank you for that.

Mr. Speaker, the women tonight, the Members of the House, have spoken so eloquently and so compellingly on this issue and the urgency with which we need to take this issue up. But the women of this Nation, they are very strong and intelligent and capable citizens as well.

As our laws in our society have given women a turn at bat, we have stepped up to the plate, and we have proven time and again that we can do what men do just as well as they do it, and often even better.

Although expectations and stereotypes are changing, women are still lacking in equal footing. Last year the United States fell to 28th place in the annual world equality rankings, behind even Rwanda and the Philippines. We are one of only a few nations that fails to specifically affirm the legal equality of men and women in our governing documents, a failure we would hold any other nation accountable for.

The ERA is the biggest and most basic step we can take to ensure equality for every woman. We need it, and we need it now. So let us work together to give women equal rights once and for all.

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

BILLS PRESENTED TO THE PRESIDENT

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported that on February 12, 2016, she presented to the President of the United States, for his approval, the following bills:

H.R. 757. To improve the enforcement of sanctions against the Government of North Korea, and for other purposes.

H.R. 907. To improve defense cooperation between the United States and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

H.R. 1428. To extend Privacy Act remedies to citizens of certified states, and for other purposes.

ADJOURNMENT

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 6 o'clock and 52 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, March 3, 2016, at 9 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

4518. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter on the approved retirement of Lieutenant General Bennet S. Sacolick, United States Army, and his advancement to the grade of lieutenant general on the retired list, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 1370(c)(1); Public Law 96-513, Sec. 112 (as amended by Public Law 104-106, Sec. 502(b)); (110 Stat. 293); to the Committee on Armed Services.

4519. A letter from the Chief Counsel, FEMA, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Suspension of Community Eligibility; Massachusetts: Boston, City of, Suffolk County; [Docket ID: FEMA-2015-0001] [Internal Agency Docket No.: FEMA-8421] received February 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4520. A letter from the Under Secretary, Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's intent to sign a Project Agreement Concerning Small Intelligent Unmanned Aerial Systems with the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of India, Transmittal No.: 03-16, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2767(f); Public Law 90-629, Sec. 27(f) (as amended by Public Law 113-276, Sec. 208(a)(4)); (128 Stat. 2993); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4521. A letter from the Principal Deputy Under Secretary, Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's Cooperative Threat Reduction Program Annual Report to Congress for Fiscal Year 2016, pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 3715; 50 U.S.C. 3741 — 3743; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4522. A letter from the Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Legislative and Public Affairs, United States Agency for International Development, transmitting the Agency's formal response to the GAO report entitled, ''Foreign Aid: USAID Has Taken Steps to Safeguard Government-to-Government Funding but Could Further Strengthen Accountability'' (GAO-15-377), pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 720; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4523. A letter from the Chairman, Federal Maritime Commission, transmitting the Commission's Annual Report to Congress on EEO Complaint Activity for Fiscal Year 2015, pursuant to Public Law 107-174, 203(a); (116 Stat. 569); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4524. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting the Office's Federal Equal Opportunity Recruitment Program Reports for Fiscal Years 2013 and 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 7201(e); Public Law 89-554 (as amended by Public Law 95-454, Sec. 310); (92 Stat. 1153); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4525. A letter from the Senior Counsel for Regulatory Affairs, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Management, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the Department's final rule — Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (RIN: 1505-AC48) received February 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4526. A letter from the President and Chief Executive Officer, Amtrak, National Railroad Passenger Corporation, transmitting Amtrak's Fiscal Year 2017 General and Legislative Annual Report, pursuant to 49 U.S.C. 24315(b); Public Law 103-272, Sec. 1(e); (108 Stat. 918); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4527. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Drawbridge Operation Regulation; Acushnet River, New Bedford and Fairhaven, MA [Docket No.: USCG-2016-0058] (RIN: 1625-AA09) received February 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4528. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's interim rule — Drawbridge Operation Regulation; Lake Pontchartrain, Slidell, LA [Docket No.: USCG-2015-0814] (RIN: 1625-AA09) received February 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4529. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Safety Zone; Closure of Morro Bay Harbor Bar Entrance; Morro Bay, CA [Docket No.: USCG-2015-1083] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received February 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4530. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Safety Zone; New Years Eve Firework Displays, Chicago River, Chicago, IL [Docket No.: USCG-2015-1074] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received February 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4531. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's interim rule — Regulated Navigation Area; Reporting Requirements for Barges Loaded with Certain Dangerous Cargoes, Illinois Waterway System located within the Ninth Coast Guard District; Expiration of Stay (Suspension) and Administrative Changes [Docket No.: USCG-2013-0849] (RIN: 1625-AA11) received February 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4532. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Security Zone; Kailua Bay, Oahu, HI [Docket No.: USCG-2015-1030] (RIN: 1625-AA87) received February 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4533. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Drawbridge Operation Regulation; Missouri River, Atchison, KS [Docket No.: USCG-2014-0358] (RIN: 1625-AA09) received February 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4534. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Drawbridge Operation Regulation; Duwamish Waterway, Seattle, WA [Docket No.: USCG-2015-0285] (RIN: 1625-AA09) received February 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4535. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland

Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Moving Security Zone; Escorted Vessels; MM 90.0 — 106.0, Lower Mississippi River; New Orleans, LA [Docket No.: USCG-2014-0995] (RIN: 1625-AA87) received February 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4536. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's interim rule — Moving Security Zone; Escorted Vessels; MM 90.0 — 106.0, Lower Mississippi River; New Orleans, LA [Docket No.: USCG-2014-0995] (RIN: 1625-AA87) received February 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4537. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Safety Zone; Intracoastal Waterway; Lake Charles, LA [Docket No.: USCG-2015-1086] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received February 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4538. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Safety Zone; Richland, Apra Harbor/Philippine Sea, GU [Docket No.: USCG-2015-1101] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received February 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4539. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Safety Zone; Bayou Chene beginning at mile 130.0 on the Atchafalaya River extending through the Bayou Chene ending at Mile 85.0 on the Intercoastal Waterway Morgan City, LA [Docket No.: USCG-2016-0016] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received February 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4540. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Safety Zone; Transit Restrictions, Lower Mississippi River Mile Marker 311.0 — 319.0 [Docket No.: USCG-2016-0023] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received February 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4541. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Safety Zone; Transit Restrictions, Lower Mississippi River Mile Marker 365.0 — 361.0 [Docket No.: USCG-2016-0014] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received February 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4542. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Safety Zone; Bayou Petite Caillou, Boudreaux Canal Floodgate; Chauvin, LA [Docket No.: USCG-2015-1125] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received February 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); ; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4543. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Safety Zone; James River, Newport News, VA [Docket No.: USCG-2016-0044] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received February 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4544. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Safety Zone; Hudson River, Anchorage Ground 19-W [Docket No.: USCG-2016-0028] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received February 29, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4545. A letter from the Assistant Secretary of the Army, Civil Works, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's Edisto Beach interim final integrated feasibility report and environmental assessment for March 2014 (H. Doc. No. 114—109); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and ordered to be printed.

4546. A letter from the Assistant Secretary of the Army, Civil Works, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's Bogue Banks final integrated report and environmental impact statement for August 2014 (H. Doc. No. 114—110); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and ordered to be printed.

4547. A letter from the Assistant Secretary of the Army, Civil Works, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's Flagler County hurricane and storm damage reduction final integrated feasibility study and environmental assessment for September 2014 (rev. October 2014) (rev. April 2015) (H. Doc. No. 114—111); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and ordered to be printed.

4548. A letter from the Secretary and the Attorney General, Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Justice, transmitting the Departments' Annual Report to Congress on Health Care Fraud and Abuse Control Program for FY 2015, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 1395i(k)(5); Aug. 14, 1935, ch. 531, title XVIII, Sec. 1817(k)(5) (as added by Public Law 104-191, Sec. 201(b)); (110 Stat. 1996); jointly to the Committees on Energy and Commerce and Ways and Means.

4549. A letter from the Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Justice, transmitting the Department's First Quarterly Report for FY 2016 on the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994, pursuant to 38 U.S.C. 4332(b)(1); Public Law 103-353, Sec. 2(a) (as added by Public Law 110-389, Sec. 312(c)); (122 Stat. 4165); jointly to the Committees on the Judiciary and Veterans' Affairs.

4550. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting the Department's determinations and the associated report, pursuant to Public Law 112-239, Secs. 1244(c)(1), 1246(a), and 1247(a); jointly to the Committees on Foreign Affairs, the Judiciary, Oversight and Government Reform, and Financial Services.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. BISHOP of Utah: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 4119. A bill to authorize the exchange of certain land located in Gulf Islands National Seashore, Jackson County, Mississippi, between the National Park Service and the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 114–441). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 482. A bill to redesignate Ocmulgee National Monument in the State of Georgia and revise its boundary, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 114–442). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. BYRNE: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 635. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4557) to allow for judicial review of any final rule addressing national emission standards for hazardous air pollutants for brick and structural clay products or for clay ceramics manufacturing before requiring compliance with such rule, and providing for proceedings during the period from March 4, 2016, through March 11, 2016 (Rept. 114–443). Referred to the House Calendar.

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 Mr. KING of New York (for himself, Mr. OLSON, Mr. BLUM, Mr. WEBSTER of Florida, Mr. WELCH, and Mr. VALADAO):

H.R. 4660. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow an increased work opportunity credit with respect to recent veterans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Ms. FUDGE (for herself, Mr. HINOJOSA, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Ms. PLASKETT, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. VEASEY, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. RICHMOND, Mr. COURTNEY, and Mr. TAKANO):

H.R. 4661. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to include Parent PLUS loans in income-contingent and income-based repayment plans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. ROE of Tennessee (for himself and Mr. HOYER):

H.R. 4662. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to increase the preference given, in awarding certain asthma-related grants, to States that allow trained school personnel to administer asthma-related rescue medications, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. JOLLY:

H.R. 4663. A bill to forbid Federal agencies from buying Apple products until Apple provides the Federal Government with technical support necessary to access encrypted information sought by a warrant that may be materially relevant to the commission of terrorism; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, and in addition to the Committees on the Judiciary, and House Administration, 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. NADLER (for himself, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. POE of Texas, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. GRAYSON, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Ms. MENG, Mr. O'ROURKE, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. KING of New York, and Mr. DONOVAN):

H.R. 4664. A bill to direct the President to submit to Congress a report on actions the Department of State and other relevant Federal departments and agencies have taken regarding steps to ensure that a just, comprehensive Arab-Israeli peace accord also finds resolution of the issue of Jewish refugees from Arab countries and Iran; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. BEYER (for himself, Mr. REICHERT, Mr. WELCH, and Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS):

H.R. 4665. A bill to require the Secretary of Commerce to conduct an assessment and analysis of the outdoor recreation economy of the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mrs. BLACKBURN:

H.R. 4666. A bill to require State educational agencies that receive funding under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to have in effect policies and procedures on background checks for school employees; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. CLAWSON of Florida (for himself, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, Mr. BUCHANAN, and Mr. HASTINGS):

H.R. 4667. A bill to direct the Secretary of the Army to expedite the completion of repairs to the Herbert Hoover Dike, Florida, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, 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 Ms. DUCKWORTH (for herself, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. HANNA, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. LYNCH, Ms. NORTON, Mr. NADLER, and Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN):

H.R. 4668. A bill to affirm that Federal employees are protected from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity and to repudiate any assertion to the contrary; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. FOSTER:

H.R. 4669. A bill to support the establishment of a Standards Coordinating Body in Regenerative Medicine and Advanced Therapies; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. HECK of Nevada (for himself, Mr. HARDY, and Mr. AMODEI):

H.R. 4670. A bill to adjust the boundary of the Mojave National Preserve; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan (for himself and Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York):

H.R. 4671. A bill to amend title 18, Unites States Code, to eliminate Federal Prison Industries advantages over the private sector and small business in the procurement of commercially available goods and services; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. JENKINS of Kansas:

H.R. 4672. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make permanent the exception for marginal production from the taxable income limit on percentage depletion for oil and natural gas wells; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. LOEBSACK (for himself, Mr. WALZ, Mr. PETERSON, Mr. POCAN, and Mrs. BUSTOS):

H.R. 4673. A bill to amend the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 to establish a competitive grant program for renewable fuel infrastructure, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, and in addition to the Committee on Natural Resources, 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. MENG (for herself, Mr. CRENSHAW, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. SALMON, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. CROWLEY, and Mr. POLIS):

H.R. 4674. A bill to support the sustainable recovery and rebuilding of Nepal following the recent, devastating earthquakes near Kathmandu; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Ms. NORTON:

H.R. 4675. A bill to direct the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration to prohibit the use of leaded fuel by aircraft operating within United States airspace; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. ROONEY of Florida (for himself and Mr. DEUTCH):

H.R. 4676. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide an additional tool to prevent certain frauds against veterans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. ASHFORD (for himself, Mr. CUELLAR, Ms. SINEMA, Mr. SCHRADER, Mr. COSTA, and Mr. COOPER):

H.J. Res. 83. A joint resolution proposing a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution of the United States; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. PERRY (for himself and Mr. SALMON):

H.J. Res. 84. A joint resolution to authorize the use of United States Armed Forces against organizations that support Islamist extremism, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. PEARCE (for himself, Mr. COLE, and Ms. MCCOLLUM):

H. Con. Res. 122. Concurrent resolution supporting efforts to stop the theft, illegal possession or sale, transfer, and export of tribal cultural items of American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians in the United States and internationally; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committees on Foreign Affairs, and Natural Resources, 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. SALMON (for himself, Mr. ROYCE, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, Mr. BERA, Mr. DESJARLAIS, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. CICILLINE, and Mr. ROHRABACHER):

H. Res. 634. A resolution recognizing the importance of the United States-Republic of Korea-Japan trilateral relationship to counter North Korean threats and nuclear proliferation, and to ensure regional security and human rights; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

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. KING of New York:

H.R. 4660.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 1

The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.

By Ms. FUDGE:

H.R. 4661.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3, otherwise known as the Commerce Clause.

By Mr. ROE of Tennessee:

H.R. 4662.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18

By Mr. JOLLY:

H.R. 4663.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I. Section 8

By Mr. NADLER:

H.R. 4664.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, clauses 1, 3, and 18.

By Mr. BEYER:

H.R. 4665.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution.

By Mrs. BLACKBURN:

H.R. 4666.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The Commerce Clause: Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3 of the U.S. Constitution gives Congress the power ''to regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian tribes.''

By Mr. CLAWSON of Florida:

H.R. 4667.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1 Section 8 of the United States Constitution

By Ms. DUCKWORTH:

H.R. 4668.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 18, Section 8, Article 1 of The Constitution of the United States

By Mr. FOSTER:

H.R. 4669.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8, Clauses 1 and 18 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. HECK of Nevada:

H.R. 4670.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2:

''The Congress shall have Power to dispose of and make all needful Rules and Regulations respecting the Territory or other Property belonging to the United States; and nothing in this Constitutions shall be construed as to Prejudice any Claims of the United States, or of any particular State.''

By Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan:

H.R. 4671.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3—To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.

Amendment X—Nothing in the Constitution authorizes the Federal government to do anything other than those things enumerated (coin money, enter into treaties, conduct a Census—which are inherently governmental). Thus, under Amendment X, the right to carry out commercial activities is reserved to the States, respectively, or to the people.

By Ms. JENKINS of Kansas:

H.R. 4672.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8:

The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defense and general Welfare of the United States.

By Mr. LOEBSACK:

H.R. 4673.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the Constitution.

By Ms. MENG:

H.R. 4674.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution

By Ms. NORTON:

H.R. 4675.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

clause 3 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution.

By Mr. ROONEY of Florida:

H.R. 4676.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8—to make rules for the Government and Regulation of the land and Naval Forces.

By Mr. ASHFORD:

H.J. Res. 83.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article V of the Constitution, that grants Congress the authority, whenever two thirds of both chambers deem is necessary, to propose amendments to the Constitution.

By Mr. PERRY:

H.J. Res. 84.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Section 8 of Article 1 of the Constitution

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 140: Mr. BOUSTANY.
H.R. 228: Mrs. BLACKBURN and Mr. BARR.
H.R. 239: Mr. GRAYSON and Mr. SERRANO.
H.R. 244: Mr. OLSON.
H.R. 292: Mr. GRAYSON.
H.R. 333: Mr. PETERSON.
H.R. 359: Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York.
H.R. 448: Mr. POLIS.
H.R. 563: Mr. YOUNG of Alaska.
H.R. 605: Mr. SMITH of New Jersey and Mr. TONKO.
H.R. 616: Mr. DEUTCH.
H.R. 624: Ms. BROWNLEY of California.
H.R. 654: Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN, and Mr. POMPEO.
H.R. 699: Mr. PRICE of North Carolina.
H.R. 775: Mr. BLUM.
H.R. 793: Mr. OLSON.
H.R. 802: Mr. SCHRADER.
H.R. 845: Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee.
H.R. 863: Mr. GOODLATTE.
H.R. 923: Mr. KING of Iowa.
H.R. 932: Mrs. BEATTY.
H.R. 953: Mr. BISHOP of Michigan and Mr. GUTIÉRREZ.
H.R. 986: Mr. ROSS and Mr. KING of Iowa.
H.R. 989: Mr. LARSON of Connecticut.
H.R. 999: Mr. BOUSTANY.
H.R. 1093: Mr. GUTIÉRREZ.
H.R. 1333: Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina.
H.R. 1431: Mr. PALAZZO.
H.R. 1432: Mr. PALAZZO.
H.R. 1486: Mr. BABIN.
H.R. 1550: Mr. SESSIONS.
H.R. 1598: Mr. NORCROSS.
H.R. 1625: Mrs. DAVIS of California.
H.R. 1655: Mr. CARNEY.
H.R. 1769: Mr. POE of Texas, Mr. FORBES, and Mr. STEWART.
H.R. 1811: Mr. COHEN.
H.R. 1923: Mr. RENACCI.
H.R. 1941: Mr. MCKINLEY and Mr. RUSH.
H.R. 2016: Mrs. BEATTY.
H.R. 2054: Mr. DESAULNIER.
H.R. 2058: Mr. WOMACK.
H.R. 2090: Mr. GRIJALVA.
H.R. 2121: Mrs. COMSTOCK.
H.R. 2170: Mr. NEWHOUSE.
H.R. 2215: Mr. LAMALFA.
H.R. 2355: Mr. ISRAEL.
H.R. 2399: Mr. GIBSON.
H.R. 2430: Mr. PERLMUTTER.
H.R. 2461: Mr. ROSS.
H.R. 2536: Mr. FOSTER.
H.R. 2646: Mr. DONOVAN.
H.R. 2747: Mr. NOLAN and Mr. EMMER of Minnesota.
H.R. 2799: Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. POLIS, Mr. HECK of Nevada, Mrs. DAVIS of California, and Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee.
H.R. 2802: Mr. RIGELL.
H.R. 2844: Ms. MCCOLLUM.
H.R. 2846: Ms. NORTON.
H.R. 2894: Ms. FRANKEL of Florida.
H.R. 2896: Mr. ROTHFUS and Mr. MILLER of Florida.
H.R. 2901: Mr. ROTHFUS.
H.R. 2911: Mr. SMITH of Nebraska.
H.R. 3099: Ms. MATSUI, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, and Mr. DENHAM.
H.R. 3137: Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia.
H.R. 3183: Mr. JONES.
H.R. 3222: Mrs. LUMMIS and Mr. GRAVES of Georgia.
H.R. 3326: Mr. ROONEY of Florida and Mr. GUINTA.
H.R. 3351: Mr. NORCROSS.
H.R. 3377: Mr. KILMER.
H.R. 3381: Mr. GUINTA and Ms. MATSUI.
H.R. 3406: Mr. POLIS and Ms. LEE.
H.R. 3446: Mr. PETERS.
H.R. 3516: Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina.
H.R. 3520: Ms. TSONGAS and Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois.
H.R. 3637: Mr. RANGEL.
H.R. 3660: Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas.
H.R. 3687: Mr. WESTERMAN.
H.R. 3706: Ms. ADAMS, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. WELCH, Mr. DESJARLAIS, Mr. HULTGREN, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. NORCROSS, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, and Mr. CAPUANO.
H.R. 3713: Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN and Mr. RYAN of Ohio.
H.R. 3779: Mr. COHEN.
H.R. 3808: Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. TROTT, and Mr. HARDY.
H.R. 3817: Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, and Mr. RUSH.
H.R. 3880: Mr. TROTT.
H.R. 3886: Mr. HONDA.
H.R. 3913: Mr. LARSON of Connecticut.
H.R. 3952: Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana.
H.R. 3977: Mr. CARTWRIGHT.
H.R. 4055: Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H.R. 4062: Mr. ZINKE.
H.R. 4063: Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H.R. 4073: Ms. SLAUGHTER and Mr. GRAVES of Missouri.
H.R. 4096: Mr. MESSER.
H.R. 4126: Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois and Mr. JOYCE.
H.R. 4137: Mr. ELLISON.
H.R. 4167: Mr. SHIMKUS, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. BROOKS of Alabama, and Mr. VELA.
H.R. 4262: Mr. BOST, Mr. OLSON, Mr. STUTZMAN, Mr. ROKITA, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, and Mr. MILLER of Florida.
H.R. 4264: Mr. MCGOVERN.
H.R. 4277: Mr. ZINKE and Mr. BOUSTANY.
H.R. 4305: Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia.
H.R. 4336: Mr. EMMER of Minnesota, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, and Mr. NADLER.
H.R. 4380: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. SINEMA, and Ms. EDWARDS.
H.R. 4381: Mr. BOUSTANY.
H.R. 4396: Mr. TAKANO, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. NORTON, and Mr. CÁRDENAS.
H.R. 4399: Mr. LEVIN.
H.R. 4447: Mr. LEWIS.
H.R. 4448: Mr. OLSON.
H.R. 4451: Mr. OLSON.
H.R. 4456: Ms. DUCKWORTH.
H.R. 4472: Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana.
H.R. 4479: Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. NORTON, and Mr. ELLISON.
H.R. 4480: Mr. GRIJALVA.
H.R. 4488: Mr. O'ROURKE, Mr. ENGEL, and Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.
H.R. 4499: Mr. TONKO and Mr. DOLD.
H.R. 4505: Mr. FINCHER, Mr. HINOJOSA, and Mr. ELLISON.
H.R. 4535: Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. KEATING, and Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.
H.R. 4544: Mr. BRAT.
H.R. 4552: Mr. GRIJALVA.
H.R. 4555: Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. PITTENGER, Mr. BABIN, Mr. HARPER, Mr. ALLEN, and Mr. BISHOP of Utah.
H.R. 4570: Ms. ESHOO, Ms. STEFANIK, and Mr. HONDA.
H.R. 4584: Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. MOOLENAAR, Mr. BABIN, Mr. MCCAUL, and Mr. PALAZZO.
H.R. 4592: Mr. LYNCH, Mr. MOULTON, Mr. WELCH, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. TONKO, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. KING of New York, and Ms. PLASKETT.
H.R. 4603: Mr. RICHMOND and Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.
H.R. 4612: Mr. PALAZZO and Ms. MCSALLY.
H.R. 4617: Mr. KEATING.
H.R. 4625: Mr. RANGEL, Mr. ISRAEL, Ms. ESTY, Ms. KUSTER, and Mr. LOBIONDO.
H.R. 4636: Mr. CRAMER, Mr. GROTHMAN, Mrs. LOVE, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, and Mr. SMITH of Missouri.
H.R. 4640: Mr. KEATING.
H.R. 4642: Mr. HASTINGS.
H.R. 4651: Mr. CARTER of Georgia, Mr. KING of New York, and Mrs. MILLER of Michigan.
H.R. 4653: Ms. MATSUI, Mr. SARBANES, Mr. RUSH, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Ms. NORTON, Ms. EDWARDS, Ms. LEE, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, and Mr. ISRAEL.
H.R. 4655: Mr. SENSENBRENNER.
H.R. 4657: Mr. WELCH.
H.J. Res. 22: Mr. NADLER.
H.J. Res. 55: Mr. GARRETT, Mr. GUINTA, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. FINCHER, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. RATCLIFFE, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, and Mr. LOUDERMILK.
H. Con. Res. 36: Mr. NORCROSS.
H. Con. Res. 40: Mr. KING of New York.
H. Con. Res. 89: Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. BRIDENSTINE, Mr. FARENTHOLD, and Mr. SENSENBRENNER.
H. Con. Res. 121: Mr. PAULSEN.
H. Res. 245: Ms. MENG.
H. Res. 377: Mr. EMMER of Minnesota.
H. Res. 436: Ms. MENG.
H. Res. 518: Ms. MENG.
H. Res. 551: Mr. SERRANO, Mr. MCCAUL, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. KING of New York, and Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California.
H. Res. 613: Mr. RENACCI.
H. Res. 616: Mr. RYAN of Ohio and Mr. GUTIÉRREZ.
H. Res. 617: Mr. PEARCE, Mr. MEADOWS, Mr. YOHO, Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia, Mr. MULVANEY, Mr. ROKITA, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. FLEMING, Mr. BRAT, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. ABRAHAM, and Mr. BYRNE.
H. Res. 626: Ms. MENG.
H. Res. 629: Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr.

SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Mr. DELANEY, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. MCGOVERN, and Mr. MCNERNEY.

PETITIONS, ETC.

Under clause 3 of rule XII,

47. The SPEAKER presented a petition of the Jackson County Board of Supervisors, relative to a resolution to join with coast cities and counties in requesting the legislature to appropriate at least 80% of the $750 million in economic damages from the Deepwater Horizon oil spill to the local governments of the three coastal counties to be used for strategic, economic development to create new jobs, and expand the state's tax base from sales and income taxes generated from Mississippi coast businesses; which was referred to the Committee on Financial Services.