United States of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 114th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 162 WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, APRIL 20, 2016 No. 61

House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
April 20, 2016.

I hereby appoint the Honorable JOHN J. DUNCAN, Jr. 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.

PUERTO RICO AND WHO WILL BAIL OUT AMERICA?

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

Mr. BROOKS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, America has blown through the $19 trillion debt mark and rapidly approaches the $20 trillion debt mark.

The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office warns Washington that America faces an unending string of trillion-dollar-a-year deficits beginning a mere 6 years from now and that America's debt will blow through the $29 trillion debt mark in a decade. Further, as debt principal and interest rates surge, America's debt service costs will increase by $600 billion a year within a decade.

For perspective, $600 billion is more than America spends on national defense, which begs the question: Where will that $600 billion in additional debt service cost come from?

America must learn from financially reckless nations like Greece and Venezuela, and from Puerto Rico, an American territory that has had its credit rating cut to junk bond status and is defaulting on its $70 billion in debt. For emphasis, Puerto Rico owes roughly 40 percent of all Puerto Rican tax collections, $4.1 billion, in debt payments this year. That is tax revenues not building roads, not educating children, and not growing the economy.

Puerto Rico, like America, suffers from a bloated central government, welfare programs that undermine the work ethic, decades of financial mismanagement by elected leaders, and a resulting anemic economy and shrinking job market that causes roughly 7,000 citizens to flee Puerto Rico each month.

Only 40 percent of Puerto Ricans are employed or looking for work. Why bother to get a job when American taxpayers pay Puerto Ricans to not work by doling out free food, free health care, and other welfare worth $1,743 per month, almost $600 more than minimum wage take-home earnings?

Puerto Rico's debt defaults and resulting economic morass have forced Puerto Rico to delay tax refunds, fire public sector workers, raise sales taxes to a record 11.5 percent, and close over 100 schools.

Unfortunately, these austerity measures, and more, are inadequate because Puerto Rico's self-serving and financially irresponsible elected officials waited too long. Puerto Rico still cannot pay its bills or creditors.

Puerto Rico Governor Alejandro Padilla recently stated that, if Congress does not intervene, ''a humanitarian crisis will envelop the 3.5 million American citizens on the island.''

Puerto Rico asks Congress to let Puerto Rico default on its legal operations via bankruptcy or force American taxpayers to bail out Puerto Rico's decades of financial mismanagement. Never mind that, according to a 2010 Government Accountability Office report, mainland American taxpayers already subsidize Puerto Rico to the tune of $16 billion per year, or roughly $4,500 per Puerto Rican.

As Puerto Rico desperately seeks an American taxpayer bailout, Americans should ask: Who will bail out America when America defaults on its debt?

Mr. Speaker, America must learn from Puerto Rico, a territory that is spiraling into bankruptcy and insolvency because of a $20,000-per-capita debt burden—a debt burden, I might add, that is three times better than America's $60,000-per-capita debt burden.

If America's creditors stop loaning America money, if America is forced to go cold turkey on its debt addiction, America could be forced to slash military pay or eliminate the volunteer Army altogether and go back to a draft, cut Social Security and Medicare benefits, and the like.

Mr. Speaker, America's spending binge and accompanying debt and deficits are unsustainable. If voters do not elect financially responsible officials to Washington, America will endure the same debilitating insolvency and bankruptcy that wreaks havoc in Greece and Puerto Rico—with one major difference. Unlike Greece, which has been bailed out three times by the European community, and unlike Puerto Rico, which may yet be bailed out by American taxpayers, there is no one—no one—who can or will bail out America.

Printed on recycled paper.

AN OPEN LETTER TO PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA

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

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, an open letter to President Barack Obama.

Dear Mr. President:

In 2009, less than a year after assuming the Presidency, you accepted the Nobel Peace Prize. You began your acceptance of this honor by acknowledging that it was bestowed at the ''beginning, and not the end of, my labors on the world stage.''

You spoke on that day with eloquence and conviction about fundamental human rights, rights that are endowed not by accidents of birth like nationality or ethnicity or gender, but by our common humanity. And the principles that you articulated have indeed guided and defined your Presidency.

In your foreign policy, you have emphasized the rights of ethnic and religious minorities worldwide and put these causes closer to the center of our foreign policy. You have extended aid to refugees fleeing horrific violence. You established the Atrocities Prevention Board to coordinate and monitor our efforts to prevent mass atrocities and genocide.

In a few days, you will have a chance to add to your legacy. On April 24, the world will mark 101 years since the systemic extermination of 1.5 million Armenians by the Ottoman Empire, from 1915 to 1923. The facts of the slaughter are beyond dispute, and I know that you are well-acquainted with these horrors visited upon the Armenian people, having spoken eloquently about them as a Senator.

I have sat with survivors of the genocide, men and women, their numbers dwindling year after year, and heard them recall the destruction of their lives and their families and all they had known. As children, they were forced from their homes and saw their family beaten, raped, and murdered. They fled across continents and oceans to build lives in our Nation.

Mr. President, for them and for their descendants, the word ''genocide'' is sacred because it means that the world has not and will not forget. To deny genocide, on the other hand, is profane. It is, in the words of Elie Wiesel, a ''double killing.''

This April 24 will be your final opportunity to use the Presidency to speak plainly about the genocide. In past years as President, you have described the campaign of murder and displacement against the Armenian people as a ''mass atrocity,'' which it surely was.

But, of course, it was also much more; and you have avoided using the word ''genocide,'' even though it has been universally applied by scholars and historians of the period. In fact, as you know better than most, the Ottoman Empire's campaign to annihilate the Armenian people was a prime example of what Raphael Lemkin was trying to describe when he coined the very term, ''genocide.''

I know that, as you consider your words this year, you will hear the same voices as in the past who will tell you to hold your tongue and speak in euphemisms. They will say that the time is not right, or that Turkey is too strategically important, or that we should not risk their ire over something that happened a century ago. Mr. President, regardless of what you say on April 24, there can be little doubt that Turkey will do exactly as it has always done in its relations with the United States, and that is whatever Turkey believes to be in its self-interest.

Many of our European allies and world leaders, including Pope Francis, have recognized the genocide, yet they have continued to work closely with Turkey because that has been in Turkey's interest. The same will be true after U.S. recognition of the genocide.

I dearly hope, as do millions of Armenians descended from genocide survivors around the world, that you take this final opportunity to call the Armenian genocide what it was—genocide; to say that the Ottoman Empire committed this grotesque crime against the Armenians, but their campaign of extermination failed; and that, above all, we will never forget and we will never again be intimidated into silence. Let this be part of your legacy, and you will see future administrations follow your example.

When you spoke in Oslo more than 7 years ago, you closed your remarks by returning to the counsel of Dr. Martin Luther King and said: ''I refuse to accept the idea that the 'isness' of man's present condition makes him morally incapable of reaching up for the eternal 'oughtness' that forever confronts him.''

Mr. President, confronting painful, difficult but vital questions ''is'' who you are. Help us be the America we ''ought'' to be, that beacon of freedom and dignity that shines its light on the darkness of human history and exposes the vile crime of genocide.

Sincerely, Adam Schiff.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to direct their remarks to the Chair and not to a perceived viewing audience.

CELEBRATING SOUTH FLORIDA'S NATIONAL PARKS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight south Florida's wild and wonderful national parks—Biscayne, Dry Tortugas, and Everglades—during National Park Week and the National Park Service Centennial.

American Pulitzer Prize-winning writer and historian Wallace Stegner is quoted as having said that our national parks were ''the best idea we have ever had. Absolutely American, absolutely democratic, they reflect us at our best rather than our worst.''

Indeed, south Florida is supremely fortunate to have Superintendent Pedro Ramos in charge of Dry Tortugas and Everglades National Parks. Superintendent Ramos understands and appreciates the importance of public access, the importance of the public's experiences, and the importance of continuing to reconnect the people of south Florida with the natural lands and waters that surround and support our community.

Ultimately, enhancing public access and recreational opportunities in our national parks are vital to conserving America's natural and cultural heritage. That is why I am so troubled, Mr. Speaker, by the fishing access restrictions included in the 2015 general management plan of another iconic south Florida park, Biscayne National Park.

The plan's marine reserve zone imposes a permanent moratorium on fishing across 10,500 acres of State waters, including 30 percent of the reef tract, denying fishing access to families and professional fishermen alike, without adequate scientific evidence to back it up.

My Preserving Public Access to Public Waters Act, which passed the House in February as part of the SHARE Act, and its newly introduced Senate counterpart, from Senators BILL CASSIDY and MARCO RUBIO, would help ensure that Federal bureaucrats and special interest groups do not overrule local community needs and concerns in this way anymore.

□ 1015

If our national parks are to remain absolutely American and absolutely democratic, then it is long since time for the National Park Service to consistently represent the Federal Government at its best rather than at its worst once again.

The Park Service's stated mission is to preserve ''unimpaired the natural and cultural resources and values of the National Park System for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of this and future generations by cooperating with partners to extend the benefits of natural and cultural resources conservation and outdoor recreation throughout the country and the world.''

Everglades National Park Superintendent Ramos has demonstrated that he is a true ambassador for this lofty and worthy mission. He represents the National Park Service and the Federal Government at its best: open and inclusive, seeking balanced solutions, and guided by a profound sense of service to the American people.

Meanwhile, Biscayne's general management plan represents some of the worst aspects of the National Park Service and the Federal Government. It is focused so much on a narrow definition of preservation that it continually and completely fails the National Park Service's mission and disregards a whole community of park users.

What is worse, with the varied threats facing south Florida's coral reefs, from changing ocean conditions to water quality issues, today fishing is a relatively minor contributor to coral reef decline in Biscayne.

The real effect of Biscayne's marine reserve zone plan will be to continue losing coral at a drastic pace while also undercutting the public support needed to develop and implement real solutions to what ails our reefs.

The National Park Service can, should, and must do better, and they should look to Superintendent Ramos and his leadership over similar issues at Everglades National Park for inspiration.

Everglades National Park's own recently finalized general management plan, lauded by both fishermen and environmentalists, clearly represents what is possible when guided by a true sense of the Park's mission.

CELEBRATING EARTH DAY

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

Mr. QUIGLEY. Mr. Speaker, as we celebrate our 46th Earth Day, it is critical that we recognize the opportunities that stem from addressing some of our most pressing environmental problems.

All too often we hear the argument that environmental policies are agents of economic destruction. From the Clean Power Plan to renewable energy development and energy-efficient technologies, every time a new environmental policy is proposed, we hear the same rhetoric: This will kill jobs, drive up costs, destroy trade, and stifle America's ability to succeed.

But the reality is those claims are simply not true. They have been debunked and proven wrong time and again, but the truth doesn't seem to matter when it comes to protecting our environment.

Without a doubt, one of America's greatest assets is the ingenuity of its people. Throughout our Nation's history, American innovation has triumphed in the face of great challenges. Unleashing that American innovation can bring big wins for both the environment and the economy.

There is no better example of this than when we look at our renewable energy sector. For decades, America has chased the promise of clean, domestic energy.

In recent years, costs for numerous critical clean energy technologies—wind power, solar panels, super-energy-efficient LED lights and electric vehicles—have fallen dramatically.

The accompanying surge in deployment has been impressive. While these technologies still represent a small percentage of their respective markets, that share is expanding at a rapid pace and influencing other markets.

Today the U.S. generates 3 times as much wind power and 20 times as much solar power as we did in 2008. This kind of thinking will help States meet the EPA's requirements laid out in the Clean Power Plan.

Compared with fossil fuel technologies, which are typically mechanized and capital-intensive, the renewable energy industry is more labor-intensive.

This means that, on the average, more jobs are created for each unit of electricity generated from renewable sources than from fossil fuels.

In addition to creating new jobs, increasing our use of renewable energy offers more important economic development benefits. Local governments collect property and income taxes and other payments from renewable energy project owners while owners of the land that wind projects are built on also receive lease payments ranging from $3,000 to $6,000 per megawatt of installed capacity.

A new study from the U.S. Energy Information Administration suggests that, in the coming year, the booming solar sector will add more new electricity-generating capacity than any other energy sector, including natural gas and wind.

The more we support clean energy innovation and new technological ideas, the better positioned we are to reap the economic rewards.

Examples of those wins are all around, leading to States and communities investing in clean energy innovation and developing smart, low-cost technologies to help reduce energy costs.

On this front, my home State of Illinois is moving full steam ahead. The city of Chicago has partnered with utility companies and citizen groups to work on a new initiative to get 1 million smart thermostats into northern Illinois homes by 2020.

The innovative partnership offers rebates that will nearly halve the cost of thermostats that allow residents to control the temperatures of their homes via mobile devices. This helps us once again move the needle against climate change.

Of course, clean energy technology isn't our only energy innovation success story. Energy efficiency is truly our Nation's greatest energy achievement.

Without the gains in energy efficiency made since 1973, it is estimated that today's U.S. economy would require 60 percent more energy than we currently consume.

Energy efficiency improvements over the last 40 years have reduced our national energy bill by more than $700 billion.

Instead of working from the assumption that tighter regulations will hurt our government's export share, we should focus on the edge that we gain from innovation.

This Earth Day, I challenge my colleagues to realize the opportunity that climate change provides us and support solutions that allow us to turn what used to be daunting challenges into profitable opportunities.

MINNESOTA'S SIXTH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT IS THE LAND OF HOCKEY

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

Mr. EMMER of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate two young men from my district, Riley Tuft and Nick Althaus; Nick Althaus for his memorable performance at the Minnesota High School State Hockey Tournament last month, and Riley Tuft for his performance on the hockey rink all year.

Riley Tuft of Blaine has been named Mr. Hockey, an award given to the best high school senior hockey player in our great State of Minnesota. This season alone, Tuft scored an incredible 49 goals and had 36 assists for 85 points in only 31 games. That is an amazing 2.74 points per game.

Nick Althaus of St. Cloud won the Frank Brimsek Award, an annual award given to Minnesota's top senior goaltender.

In Minnesota, hockey is not just a sport, it is a way of life. Many young men and women work and train to win and participate in the best State hockey tournament in the country.

Congratulations to Nick and Riley for their hard work and incredible success this year, and best of luck in the future, both on and off the rink.

A STRONG WOMAN—INSIDE AND OUT

Mr. EMMER of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the strength and endurance of St. Cloud native Laura Knoblach, who just, last month, became the youngest woman to finish a double triathlon.

Laura finished the Double ANVIL Ultra Triathlon, a rigorous event that consisted of swimming 4.8 miles, biking 224 miles, and running two consecutive marathons. She finished all of this in less than 36 hours.

Not only did Laura complete an arduous triathlon, but she did so for a good cause. She created a GoFundMe page titled ''A Tri to End Trafficking,'' which raised money to help educate South African girls and prevent them from becoming victims of sex trafficking.

Laura Knoblach is currently a junior at the University of Boulder in Colorado, where she studies secondary education and majors in English and Spanish. She hopes to one day teach English as a second language.

I have no doubt that Laura will accomplish all of her goals and more, as she is the perfect example that anything is possible if you work hard enough.

A COACH REMEMBERED

Mr. EMMER of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember the astounding life and legacy of Coach Dean Taylor, who recently passed away.

Coach Taylor founded the football program at Sartell High School and built it into the powerhouse program it is today.

From Sartell, he went on to become an assistant coach at St. John's University for eight seasons and then became head coach at St. Cloud Cathedral from 2009 to 2012. Coach Taylor's impressive football resume ultimately led to his induction into the Minnesota State Coaches Association Hall of Fame.

However, it is not just the X's and O's of coaching that we will remember about Coach Taylor. Coach Taylor will also—and maybe even more importantly—be remembered for the incredible impact he made on the lives of all the student athletes he touched.

Condolences to his wife, Kathy; his children, Steve and Kristi; as well as his many friends and loved ones. I thank you for sharing your husband and father with our community.

RESTORING AMERICANS' TRUST IN GOVERNMENT

Mr. EMMER of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, in recognition of the fact that

we just experienced yet another tax day in America, I rise today to discuss a Federal agency that the American people have become extremely disenchanted with, the Internal Revenue Service.

Over recent years, Americans have watched information coming out detailing the inappropriate and unfortunate conduct by the IRS playing politics rather than implementing policy.

The American people should not fear that a government agency will make decisions based on partisan politics, which is why it is crucial Congress address this problem now and not in the future.

This is why I cosponsored H.R. 1798, which will prohibit the Department of the Treasury from assigning a tax status to organizations based on their political beliefs and activities.

I thank my colleague, Congressman RANDY NEUGEBAUER, and Senator TED CRUZ for their efforts in this initiative to restore some of the faith and trust the American people have lost in its institution of government.

END HUNGER NOW

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, on April 1, thousands of poor Americans started losing their SNAP, or food stamp, benefits.

All told, over the course of this year, as many as 1 million adults will be cut off from SNAP. That is because one of the harshest provisions in the 1996 welfare reform law says that adults working less than 20 hours a week or not enrolled in a job training program can only receive 3 months of SNAP in a 36-month period.

The problem is, however, that many areas of the country haven't fully recovered from the recession. There are no open jobs, and worker training slots are all full.

The economic recovery has been uneven across the country, and for many individuals—through no fault of their own—getting back to work has been difficult.

At the height of the recession, Governors across this country, both Democratic and Republican, asked the U.S. Department of Agriculture to allow them to temporarily waive work requirements and provide SNAP benefits to unemployed, childless adults for longer periods of time.

But now some Governors are refusing to extend those work waivers even in areas of their States with high unemployment. For 1 million of the poorest Americans, to lose food assistance in the midst of this is unconscionable.

Mr. Speaker, we are talking about the poorest of the poor. These are childless adults whose income averages 29 percent of the poverty line, or about $3,400 a year, a year. No one can live on that.

Many face multiple barriers to employment, including disability, limited education, and chronic homelessness. Their employment can be sporadic, often cycling in and out of low-wage jobs with unpredictable hours that do not lift them out of poverty.

What is most appalling is that about 60,000 of those who will be cut off from SNAP this year are veterans. That is right. These are the brave men and women who stood up to protect our country, and now we don't have the decency to help them put food on the table when they come home. We should be ashamed.

Mr. Speaker, let me be clear about something. The 3-month limit on childless adults receiving SNAP is not a work requirement, despite what some of my Republican colleagues say. It is a time limit. There is no requirement that States offer work or job training to those who are about to lose their benefit. There is nothing here that incentivizes work. Rather, it penalizes those who are struggling the most.

Work requirements and other Federal assistance programs typically require people to look for work or accept any job or job training slot that is offered, but do not cut people off who are willing to work and are looking for a job simply because they cannot find one.

But that is not the case with SNAP. So individuals who have been searching for a job for months, who have applied to every job posting they have seen, and who can't get into a job training program because the wait list is too long are punished.

Study after study shows that the longer someone is unemployed, the harder it is to get hired. It is baffling to me that the Republicans' answer to them is: Sorry. You are out of luck.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that it takes someone who is unemployed about 6 months of looking to find a job.

□ 1030

That is twice as long as the 3-month time limit. For the life of me, I can't understand how making someone hungrier helps them find a job faster. We should be making people's lives better, not harder.

This notion that some on the Republican side peddle that somehow SNAP is this overly generous program that people are just jumping to get into, it is ridiculous. It is false. The average SNAP benefit is $1.40 per meal per day. That is meager. It is inadequate.

And this idea that SNAP is the root of our budget problems is outrageous. New data released from the Department of Treasury just last week shows that SNAP spending is falling. In the first half of the current fiscal year, SNAP spending was at its lowest level since 2010. Not only that, but SNAP caseloads are falling, too. That is due to the improving economy.

SNAP operated like it was supposed to during the recession. It was expanded to meet the needs of the millions who lost their jobs, of middle class families who never imagined they would need food assistance in the first place. And now, as our economy improves, fewer people need the assistance. But we are not there yet.

Cutting 1 million of the poorest Americans off from food assistance is wrong. Increasing hunger is wrong. And I would say to the Republican leadership of this House, the narrative that you have put forward about those in poverty does not reflect the reality. Rather than demonize the poor and diminish their struggle, we ought to come together to help, not hurt, people. We ought to end hunger now. This war on the poor has to stop.

IMPEACHMENT OF JOHN KOSKINEN

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

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about the subject of justice.

As we look around the Capitol, there are effigies and paintings. Even in this Chamber, there are paintings of George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, George Mason, the visionaries of this Nation who envisioned a Nation and a government that was committed to liberty, tempered by law and justice. Their idea of justice was an equal application of the law to everyone, that there weren't two sets of laws—one law for the citizen and a different law for the bureaucrat or the elected official—but all laws were equally applied to every person.

I want to tell you the story of two Johns and how the law doesn't apply equally. The first John is a Mr. John Yates who, in 2007, was fishing for grouper in the Gulf of Mexico when a State conservation officer, who had Federal authority, approached his boat and asked to inspect his catch. Upon the inspection, he found that there were 72 grouper that were suspected to be under the minimum size. He ordered Mr. Yates to return to shore.

Now, Mr. Yates understood that this was not a serious crime, it was actually a civil action, and he could face a fine or he could lose his fishing license, a license issued by the government that he made his living with. But Mr. Yates made a mistake. He made a bad decision, because he ordered those suspect fish to be thrown back into the water. It was a mistake.

But after being punished for what he did wrong, catching small fish, 4 years later, in 2011, Mr. Yates was convicted of a Federal offense of destroying evidence under the Sarbanes-Oxley statutes. He went to jail. He also spent 3 years on a supervised release program for a Federal offense of destroying or tampering with evidence.

When the government wants to seek justice upon a citizen, there are over 4,500 criminal statutes and an endless

number of regulations that can be enforced criminally that they can use to find a way to punish you for a deed, regardless of how minor or major it was. But that doesn't always apply to the government itself.

The same year that John Yates was sent to jail for destroying small fish, the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform issued a subpoena to another John, who was then, and is still, the Commissioner of the IRS, John Koskinen.

They demanded that he provide, under subpoena by the force of law, all of the documents relating to Lois Lerner and the targeting of conservative groups by the IRS. However, instead of responding to that subpoena, the IRS destroyed over 24,000 of those documents. But yet, today, Mr. Koskinen is still the Commissioner of the IRS.

There are two types of enforcement of laws in this Nation—one for the citizen and one for the government official. You see, the Sarbanes-Oxley catchall that has been used to successfully prosecute for destruction of cars and weapons, even bodies, as well as documents and evidence, excludes government agencies.

The American people deserve justice. But we do have one tool, and that is the tool of this Congress to impeach those who violate the trust of the American citizens.

Mr. Speaker, I have cosponsored, with the chairman of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, House Resolution 494, which would bring the Commissioner of the IRS before this body on charges of impeachment for violating the trust of the American people.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that that resolution be brought forward and be brought forward in this House for a vote so that justice will be served and we can once again restore the confidence of the American people that there is one definition of justice in this Nation, and that is equal application of the law for everyone.

COMMENDING STATE OFFICIALS ON SIGNING THE ABLE ACT

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commend lawmakers in Pennsylvania's House and Senate for their work on passing the Commonwealth's new ABLE, or Achieving a Better Life Experience Act, which was signed into law by the Pennsylvania Governor on Monday.

The measure's passage at the State level follows the signing of a 2014 Federal law, also known as the ABLE Act. I was happy to cosponsor that legislation along with a majority of my colleagues here in the House of Representatives. The law empowers people with disabilities and their families to create flexible accounts to help save for medical and dental care, education, community-based support, employment training, housing, and transportation.

The State law passed easily in the Pennsylvania House and Senate last week, clearing the way for the State to administer the new accounts created by the Federal law.

The State eliminates a $2,000 cap on cash assets for medical assistance for those with certain intellectual and developmental disabilities, which acted as a financial roadblock preventing individuals from reaching their full potential.

Mr. Speaker, thanks to this new law, parents of children with developmental and intellectual disabilities will be able to save up to $100,000, with no impact on eligibility for medical assistance.

Last week here in Washington, I joined the National Down Syndrome Society, where I was proud to be presented with their Champion of Change Award. I also had the chance to connect with people from Pennsylvania's Fifth Congressional District, including Alek Masters. Alek is a wonderful young man who, despite living with Down syndrome, is an Eagle Scout, the highest honor earned by the members of the Boy Scouts of America.

I also was with Isabel Ross, a toddler from Centre County who attended the event with her parents, Steve and Raquel.

There are so many people such as Alek and Isabel across the Pennsylvania Fifth Congressional District, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and our great Nation. Alek is already making a difference in his community, and this new law ensures that he and Isabel, along with the help of their parents, can work towards achieving their goals.

I know that the ABLE Act, on both the State and the Federal level, will play a role in improving the lives of those who are living with developmental and intellectual disabilities. I firmly believe that our communities will be much better because of it.

HONORING BROTHER JAMES GAFFNEY

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

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Brother James Gaffney who, after 28 years, will retire from his storied career as president of Lewis University in Romeoville, Illinois.

Born and raised on the west side of Chicago, Brother Gaffney attended St. Mel High School. While at St. Mel, he became involved in outreach and youth service programs with the De La Salle Christian Brothers. It was at this time that Brother Gaffney heard his calling to become a brother and elected to attend seminary at St. Mary's University in Minnesota.

Brother Gaffney went on to receive his BA from St. Mary's University and several master's degrees from both St. Mary's and Manhattan College in New York. He also holds a doctorate in pastoral theology from the University of St. Mary of the Lake in Mundelein, Illinois.

Brother Gaffney's teaching career started at the Christian Brothers High School in St. Joseph, Missouri. He also served for 11 years at the provincial for the De La Salle Christian Brothers in the Chicago district.

Brother Gaffney was chosen to be president of Lewis University in 1988. Under his leadership, the school's student body nearly tripled in size, dozens of new programs were added, and several new educational sites were built around the Chicago area and the Nation, including one in Albuquerque, New Mexico. He guided the university to nationwide recognition and influenced students around the world.

In 2015, Lewis University honored Brother Gaffney by naming him an honorary founder of the university because of the tremendous contributions he made to the school's growth.

In addition to his service to the school, Brother Gaffney is active in numerous other organizations. He chairs the Community Foundation of Will County, as well as the Lasallian Association of College and University Presidents. He is a member and former chair of the Federation of Independent Illinois Colleges and Universities, and a board member and former chair of the South Metropolitan Regional Higher Education Consortium and the Great Lakes Valley Athletic Conference.

Brother Gaffney has also been the recipient of countless awards in connection with Lewis University. Most recently, he was awarded with the Brother John Johnston FSC Award, which honors those dedicated to the Lasallian mission of providing education to all youth, as well as the Distinguished Citizen Award from the Rainbow Council Boy Scouts of America.

I have had a number of opportunities to spend time with Brother Gaffney since Lewis University was added to my district in 2013. I have always been impressed by his strong commitment to the university and its Catholic and Lasallian mission. It is obvious in his interactions with students, faculty, staff, trustees, and everyone who is a part of Lewis University. He knows his flock and they know him, and the respect and love between them is mutual. There could not be a higher dedication that anyone has as an educator and as a Catholic Brother.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking Brother James Gaffney for all he has done in his 28 years as president of Lewis University, and to congratulate him on his retirement. Lewis University and its students have greatly benefited from his long tenure leading the school, and we all look forward to his continued service.

WATER AND ESA

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

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak on the need to fix California's broken water system, a broken water system that no longer can provide for the needs of the State of California, designed years ago for a population of 20 million and the agriculture that we had in the sixties. Today we have 41 million people. By the year 2030, it is estimated California will have 50 million people.

The water system we have today cannot sustain a growing State. As solutions are offered, I believe amending the Endangered Species Act to more effectively protect species while minimizing the harm to California communities should be a part of this conversation.

The ESA has an important role in ensuring species protection, but it is clear that there are major challenges with its implementation. In California, one of those challenges is the Act's implementation limits on the ability to move water from north to south when we have an excess of water in the system, as we have had over the last 5 months.

□ 1045

Simply put, California faced 4 record dry years, which was noted throughout the country and throughout the world; and, this year, we had El Nino conditions that gave us average and above average rain and snow in northern California.

Now, I don't believe anybody thought that 1 year of good rainfall would completely dig us out of the devastating circumstances that California farmers, farmworkers, and farm communities have faced; but, last December, I was hopeful because the rain and snow conditions that were occurring, coupled with the weather forecasting, indicated that there was a high likelihood that there would be enough water in the system to help recover—but not end—the devastating drought conditions that the San Joaquin Valley faced as well as other parts of California. However, as a result of what I believe are flawed biological opinions that govern the operations of the water projects that move water from north to south, we failed to pump over 244,000 acre-feet of water that would have been very helpful today in areas that were most impacted by the drought conditions and still are.

Some farmers, this year, are receiving only 5 percent of their total allocation. It is made worse because, over the last 2 years, they received a zero water allocation because of these conditions that I am stating. To put it in perspective, this year, 7 million acre-feet of water flowed through the Sacramento-San Joaquin Bay-Delta system out to the ocean, and only 963,000 acre-feet were pumped for human and agricultural use. Seven million acre-feet went through the delta out to the ocean, and we pumped less than 1 million acre-feet for human and agricultural use.

This is unconscionable in a State that has been ravaged by drought for the last 4 years. It also was avoidable. There is a host of technical reasons as to why this water flowed into the ocean, but the simple fact is that conservative decisionmaking, enabled by inflexible provisions in the biological opinions that were promulgated under the Endangered Species Act, led to this avoidable outcome.

Therefore, it is time to reform the Endangered Species Act because it needs to be more flexible in order to provide adaptability to changing conditions. It is time to reform the Endangered Species Act because it must effectively recover species, which it doesn't do, and not simply maintain an unsustainable status quo like that in California, especially when you have a drought crisis. Finally, it is time to reform the Endangered Species Act because both people and our environment deserve better.

I look forward to working with my colleagues to update the Endangered Species Act for today's conditions and not for those of the past.

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

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

Reverend John DeSocio, St. Mary's Catholic Church, Elmira, New York, offered the following prayer:

Lord, make me an instrument of Your peace.

Where there is hatred, let me sow love;

Where there is injury, pardon;

Where there is doubt, faith;

Where there is despair, hope;

Where there is darkness, light;

Where there is sadness, joy.

O divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console, to be understood as to understand, and to be loved as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive, it is in pardoning that we are pardoned, and it is in dying to self that we are born to eternal life.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. 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. Will the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DOLD) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. DOLD 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.

WELCOMING REVEREND JOHN A. DESOCIO

The SPEAKER. Without objection, the gentleman from New York (Mr. REED) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mr. REED. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, and it is my pleasure and privilege to host the Very Reverend John A. DeSocio, pastor of St. Mary's Church in Elmira, New York, for today's opening prayer over the House of Representatives.

Father DeSocio has committed his life to both his faith and his country, displaying an extraordinary level of service and dedication to others.

The Elmira-Corning native dedicated his early years to service in his community by volunteer firefighting. He went on to complete his undergraduate career at St. John Fisher College in Pittsford, New York. He would later receive his master of divinity and master of arts from Saint Bernard's Seminary in Rochester, New York. Father DeSocio was ultimately ordained as a Roman Catholic priest in 1978. Father was also chaplain for Ithaca College.

Mr. Speaker, in 1992, which I am very proud of, Father DeSocio was commissioned in the U.S. Navy and served 17 years before being honorably discharged in 2009.

Following his military service, Father returned to his hometown and resumed working with groups like Lions International, the Knights of Columbus, and the Southport and Elmira volunteer fire departments.

He is a pillar in our community, Mr. Speaker, and we are tremendously honored to have him with us here today.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana). The Chair will entertain up to 15 further requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

VETERANS ACHIEVE JOBS IN SOUTH CAROLINA

(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, just 5 years ago, South Carolina veterans struggled to find a job, facing an unemployment rate of over 20 percent. Today, veteran unemployment has dropped to just 4.4 percent, one of the lowest in the country. Veterans have unique training, education, and experiences that are valuable to any workplace.

Last month I hosted the fourth annual Veteran Resource Fairs in the Midlands and the Aiken/Barnwell communities. These resource fairs bring together over 40 agencies and employers to help returned veterans find a job.

I was grateful to partner with Operation Palmetto Employment under the leadership of Program Director Elisa Edwards, the South Carolina Army National Guard with Colonel Ronnie Taylor, Shannon Banks, Fred Pasley, led by Adjutant General Bob Livingston, and the Department of Employment and Workforce directed by Cheryl Stanton.

I appreciate the work of the community leaders; the National Federation of Independent Business, NFIB; and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce for their work promoting efforts to hire veterans. I believe that we should assist those who defend our freedoms to be a top priority.

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

VICTIMS OF GUN VIOLENCE

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

Mr. PETERS. Mr. Speaker, Columbine, Colorado, April 20, 1999:

William ''Dave'' Sanders, 47 years old;
Isaiah Shoels, 18 years old;
Lauren Townsend, 18 years old;
Cassie Bernall, 17 years old;
Cory Depooter, 17 years old;
Rachel Scott, 17 years old;
John Tomlin, 16 years old;
Kyle Velazquez, 16 years old;
Mathew Kechter, 16 years old;
Kelly Fleming, 16 years old;
Daniel Rohrbough, 15 years old;
Daniel Mauser, 15 years old;
Steven Curnow, 14 years old.

CONGRATULATING DANIEL DENNIS

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

Mr. DOLD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the achievements of Daniel Dennis.

Just this past week, Daniel earned the right to represent the United States in the 2016 Olympic Games being held in Rio as a member of the United States Wrestling Team. He is one of only six wrestlers who were selected.

Throughout his career, Daniel has stood out as a rare talent in the sport. While he attended Grant Township High School in Fox Lake, Illinois, Daniel set the school record for career wins, technical defaults, and most team points.

Daniel built upon that success while wrestling at the University of Iowa, where he was a two-time All-American and placed second at the NCAA championships.

Congratulations to Daniel on being named to the Olympic Wrestling Team. We wish you good luck as you take your talents to the international stage. We are all rooting for you to bring home the gold to Illinois' 10th Congressional District.

DAPA AND SOPHIE

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

Ms. HAHN. Mr. Speaker, you might recognize this image. This is a photo of Sophie Cruz, my 6-year-old constituent from South Gate, California, who made headlines when she ran through the barricades to meet Pope Francis last year.

Sophie is one of 5 million children who is an American citizen but whose parents are undocumented and face deportation. She asked Pope Francis to support DAPA, a program which could prevent her family from being separated.

On Monday, DAPA was deliberated in the Supreme Court, and now the fate of millions of children like Sophie and their families is in the hands of the Justices.

Sophie was in D.C. on Monday ready to tell her story. She rallied a crowd of hundreds of people on the Supreme Court steps and asked the Justices to think about her family.

I could not be more proud of Sophie. But a 6-year-old girl, however courageous she may be, should not have to come all the way to Washington, D.C., to advocate for fixing the broken immigration system. That is our job.

The Supreme Court should unfreeze DAPA—but we in Congress need to finally pass comprehensive immigration reform—for Sophie and for millions of children she represents.

LOUISIANA IS STILL FEELING THE IMPACTS OF DEEPWATER HORIZON

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

Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, 6 years ago on April 20, 2010, the Deepwater Horizon exploded and resulted in the loss of 11 lives, destroying or disrupting many families, businesses, restaurants, and livelihoods of south Louisiana, which is known as the Sportsman's Paradise, profoundly impacting recreational and commercial fishing and oiling in my home State of Louisiana, over 600 miles of what is known as one of the most productive ecosystems on the North American continent.

Mr. Speaker, since that time, countless hours have been invested by State, local, and Federal employees trying to help restore and recover the Gulf. It resulted in one of the largest settlements, in fact, the largest settlement, from a single company in United States history.

Mr. Speaker, during the height of that disaster, we heard the administration, the President and others talking about the importance of this productive ecosystem. Yet, since that time, we have seen nothing but Federal actions to take funds away from restoring and protecting coastal Louisiana.

Mr. Speaker, we are asking the administration to remain consistent and to honor those lives that were lost and to honor the coast of Louisiana.

EARTH DAY

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

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, this Friday, April 22, is Earth Day, a time to remember our responsibility to be good stewards of this planet and our urgent responsibility to respond to global climate change.

Ninety-seven percent of climate scientists agree that human activity is causing global warming. The evidence is all around us. The last 11 months have been the hottest such months on record. Sea levels have risen more than half a foot in the last century. Glaciers around the world are in retreat.

We cannot afford to ignore this any longer. It is critical that Congress take up legislation to address the dangers of climate change and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

We have to end the subsidies to Big Oil companies, take up the Clean Ocean and Safe Tourism Anti-Drilling Act, which my colleague, Mr. PALLONE, has introduced, take up H.R. 1814 to permanently reauthorize the Land and Conservation Fund, and work together to respond to this urgent challenge.

History will not judge this Chamber kindly if we fail to act. All of us have a responsibility to address the threat of climate change before it is too late.

THANKING STEVE BEGNOCHE FOR HIS SERVICE

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

Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to thank Steve Begnoche for his service to the city of Ludington, Mason County, and the Second Congressional District in Michigan.

Last Thursday, Steve hung up his hat as the managing editor of the Ludington Daily News. For the past 29 years, Steve served the Ludington community with the type of journalistic

integrity that all residents should expect from their newspapers.

As a newsman, Steve challenged the status quo while giving all sides a fair shake. Steve also played a vital role as a journalist on the national stage by reporting how economically important the S. S. Badger, the last of the Great Lakes ferries, was not only for Ludington, but also for the entire State of Michigan, the Great Lakes, and even Wisconsin.

Frankly, they don't make them like Steve anymore.

Steve, thank you for your countless hours of hard work to ensure residents of northwest Michigan had accurate and reliable reporting.

I hope you will be able to enjoy spending time with your grandchildren while still providing a thoughtful column for the Ludington Daily News now and again. Thanks, my friend.

NEW JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE REPORT ON GENDER PAY INEQUALITY

(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, last week I released a new report by the Democratic staff of the Joint Economic Committee about the effects of the gender pay gap on women and families in America. This report on gender pay inequality is the most comprehensive, up-to-date report on the gender pay gap.

A typical woman working full time and year-round is paid only 79 cents to the male dollar. This adds up to a loss of roughly $10,800 per year, and it compounds over a lifetime to roughly a half a million dollars in less pay than a man because of the pay gap.

Over a lifetime, this jeopardizes a woman's retirement because the lower pay results in a lower pension, lower Social Security, lower savings, and contributes to the fact that women over 75 years of age are twice as likely as their male counterparts to live in poverty. Millions of women, children, families, and husbands are hurt by unequal pay for equal work.

Let's finally make equal pay a reality by passing the Paycheck Fairness Act and finally putting women into the Constitution for equality.

YOUNG WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

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

Ms. MCSALLY. Mr. Speaker, with education and opportunity, women can transform a society. This is true all around the world, but especially in America, where women still have untapped potential.

As a society, we must do a better job of showing girls they can be whatever they want to be and making sure they have the opportunity to achieve their fullest potential.

That is why, on June 11, my office will hold southern Arizona's first ever Congressional Young Women's Leadership Program. This one-day event provides young women currently in high school with the opportunity to meet and interact with successful women from southern Arizona who hold leadership roles in a variety of fields.

Quite simply, this program is about encouraging young women to be fearless, dream big, and let nothing stand in their way.

The deadline for applications, which can be found on my Web site, mcsallyhouse.gov, is May 9.

I encourage high school girls throughout the Second Congressional District to take advantage of this unique opportunity and apply at my Web site.

□ 1215

FUNDING FOR NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION RESEARCH

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

Mr. MCNERNEY. Mr. Speaker, as a mathematician, it is my pleasure to discuss recent developments in the topic of prime numbers. Historically, it was assumed that prime numbers were randomly distributed in the sense that any large section of consecutive integers would have an equal number of primes ending in 1, 3, 7, and 9.

Prime numbers are used in generating pseudo random numbers, found in all sorts of applications, and in some methods of encryption. Heck, even the lowly cicada insects only emerge after a prime number of years to avoid regularly appearing predators.

Recently, Dr. Soundararajan and Dr. Lemke Oliver, both of Stanford University working under NSF funding, discovered that consecutive prime numbers have preferences for the digits they end in. For example, consecutive primes don't like having the same digit, while primes ending in 9 prefer to be followed by primes ending in 1. We must provide funding to the National Science Foundation to investigate this and other important mathematical questions.

CONGRATULATING MID-AMERICA SCIENCE MUSEUM

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

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Mid-America Science Museum in my hometown of Hot Springs, Arkansas, for being awarded the 2016 National Medal for Museum and Library Service.

Mid-America has not only made a difference in the lives of local families, but it has impacted generations of Arkansans. The museum's focus on bringing science education to the masses in a fun way has made it a leader in the State and Nation.

Mid-America's recent expansion continues its mission, bringing science to life for generations to come. The museum's 2016 national medal confirms what we in Arkansas have known for many year—that Mid-America is a world-class museum, providing world-class educational experience to Arkansas' next generation.

LET'S GET BACK TO DOING AMERICA'S BUSINESS

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

Mr. JEFFRIES. Mr. Speaker, when House Republicans came to power, they promised to effectively govern on behalf of the American people. But instead, over the last 5 years, House Republicans have majored in obstruction, minored in dysfunction, and pursued a degree in legislative malpractice.

House Republicans are responsible for painful sequestration cuts, responsible for a 16-day government shutdown that cost the American people $24 billion in lost economic productivity, responsible for constantly undermining the full faith and credit of the United States of America, and are now responsible for the failure to deliver an on-time budget.

The American people have had enough. It is time to invest in transportation and infrastructure, invest in education and job training, invest in technology and innovation, and abandon the reckless efforts of House Republicans to obstruct any progress on behalf of the American people. Let's get back to doing their business.

WAR ON DRUGS

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I just returned from the United Nations where there is a special session on the drug problems. This is a serious and complex issue, but the war on drugs, where we have spent over $1 trillion, has been an abject failure.

Drugs are still readily plentiful in the United States, the cost is down, and we have caught hundreds of thousands of innocent people in Latin American countries in the crossfire. Yet, the United States is on the sidelines here. There are countries that are stepping forward for reform, for harm reduction, trying to deal with the death penalty. Yet, the United States is trying to balance out the reformers of seeking a middle ground between them and Iran and China and Russia.

That is not what the United States should be doing. We should be involved in reform. We should minimize the danger that is a result of misguided practice. We can deescalate this and make

a difference for people around the world and, in fact, do a better job of dealing with the drug problem in America.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana) laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, April 20, 2016.

Hon. PAUL D. RYAN,
The Speaker, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on April 20, 2016 at 9:26 a.m.:

That the Senate passed H.R. 2722.
That the Senate passed S. 2755.
With best wishes, I am
Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

IRS OVERSIGHT WHILE ELIMINATING SPENDING (OWES) ACT OF 2016

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 687, I call up the bill (H.R. 4885) to require that user fees collected by the Internal Revenue Service be deposited into the general fund of the Treasury, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 687, in lieu of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Ways and Means printed in the bill, an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 114–50 is adopted and the bill, as amended, is considered read.

The text of the bill, as amended, is as follows:

H.R. 4885

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 ''IRS Oversight While Eliminating Spending (OWES) Act of 2016''.

SEC. 2. DEPOSIT OF IRS USER FEES INTO GENERAL FUND OF THE TREASURY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The second sentence of section 3 of title I of Public Law 103–329 (26 U.S.C. 7801 note), under the heading ''ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS-INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE'', is amended by striking ''The Secretary of the Treasury may spend'' and all that follows through ''and thereafter:'' and inserting the following: ''Any fees collected pursuant to this section shall be deposited in the general fund of the Treasury and shall not be expended by the Internal Revenue Service unless provided by an appropriations Act:''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The last proviso of such section is amended by striking ''and how they are being expended by the Service''.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to fees collected after the date of the enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The bill shall be debatable for 1 hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Ways and Means.

The gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SMITH) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Missouri.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative day in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on H.R. 4885, currently under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

The IRS OWES Act is about protecting the American taxpayer, those who elected us to represent them, from an IRS proven incapable of best serving their interests.

President Thomas Jefferson said: ''When the people fear the government, there is tyranny. When the government fears the people, there is liberty.''

Right now, the people of Missouri's Eighth District fear the IRS. They fear an unjust audit, political or religious targeting, and, most recently, they fear spending an average of 8 hours to complete their tax returns. That is simply not right.

This bill is about liberating the folks of Missouri, along with all Americans, from the IRS. It is about making the IRS beholden to them and not the other way around. And it is about exerting our Article I authority of the power of the purse of Congress, making sure that unelected bureaucrats are not spending taxpayer money improperly and unwisely.

A Democrat Congressman from the State of Missouri once said: ''I come from a State that raises corn and cotton, cockleburs, and Democrats. And frothy eloquence neither convinces, nor satisfies me. I'm from Missouri; you've got to show me.''

The IRS has not shown this body, they have not proven to the Missourians whom I represent, and they have not proven to the American people that they are responsible stewards of user fees. Through user fees, the IRS collects almost $500 million. It is nothing but a slush fund.

Mr. Speaker, that is why we filed the IRS OWES Act. It provides Congress and the American public with greater oversight in how the IRS is spending valuable taxpayer resources.

As is, the IRS collects various user fees that sit in an account where they can spend the money without Congressional approval. In the past, the IRS dedicated significant amounts of its collected user fees to improving the services provided to taxpayers who need assistance.

The IRS in the past few years has turned these fees into a slush fund, diverting this money away from serving the taxpayer and, instead, putting it towards whatever they want—in particular, the implementation of ObamaCare mandates, something Congress has specifically withheld funding for.

In 2014, the IRS allocated $183 million in user fees to serving the needs of taxpayers. That is 44 percent of the entire slush fund. Yet, in 2015, the IRS allocated a mere $49 million in user fees to help taxpayers. That is 10 percent. So in one year, they went from 44 percent of serving taxpayers to 10 percent in serving taxpayers, at their own discretion.

Just yesterday I asked the IRS Commissioner in a hearing whether it was Congress or the IRS that cut funding for taxpayer customer service. Here were my questions and his answers:

''In 2014, you appropriated $183 million for taxpayer assistance; is that correct?''

The Commissioner said: ''Yes.''

I then followed up: ''In 2015, you appropriated $49 million for taxpayer assistance; is that correct?''

The Commissioner said: ''That is correct.''

I then followed up: ''So it was your decision to cut taxpayer assistance by $130 million; is that correct?''

The Commissioner of the IRS said: ''Yes.''

Instead of using those resources to grow taxpayer services, reduce wait times, and improve the public's interactions with the IRS, they are dedicating close to $200 million on technology to help implement and track the ObamaCare mandates. It is no wonder that last year the Commissioner of the IRS would call the level of taxpayer services abysmal. That is simply unacceptable.

The pattern here is alarming. When the IRS has discretion, the agency uses that discretion in ways that harm Americans. It is the duty of the IRS to work for the taxpayers, not against them.

I encourage my colleagues to do the citizens they represent a favor and support the IRS OWES Act.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Here is the story. Here are the honest facts.

Republicans have cut the IRS budget by close to $1 billion over the past 5 years. This bill is just another budget cut, further reducing the IRS' budget by as much as $500 million.

The consequences of these budget cuts for taxpayers are significant, as you can see from this chart. What has happened since 2011 is the appropriations have gone down and waiting times have gone up. The average wait is shown by this blue line. The dollars

are in the yellow. The only improvement was when we appropriated a couple hundred million dollars at the initiative of Democrats, and the waiting times went down as money went up.

The Republicans who complain about poor IRS customer service, they have only to look in the mirror to see who is responsible. Here are the facts.

Republican cuts to the IRS budget from 2010 to 2015 resulted in—and everyone listen to this—13,000 fewer full-time IRS employees; a significant number of taxpayer phone calls being dropped, as indicated by this chart; delays in much-needed upgrades to information technology and cybersecurity; and the lowest level of audits in a decade with less than 1 percent of taxpayers being audited last year. This is all despite the fact that the number of tax returns being filed increased by $9 million, or 7 percent, since 2010.

□ 1230

This effort today is motivated entirely by politics instead of good policy. The IRS has had the authority to offset the cost of taxpayer services with user fees since 1995. The Republicans have never tried to tamper with that. This is the first time the Republicans have tried to prevent the IRS from using these moneys.

We heard the Republicans argue that the IRS used some of this funding to implement the Affordable Care Act. True, as those are taxpayer services. Taxpayers are applying for help through the Affordable Care Act. It is the IRS' responsibility to implement that. The IRS is doing exactly what they should be doing: implementing a law passed by Congress, a law that has resulted in there being 20 million more Americans with healthcare coverage.

This bill is, in essence, another effort—it might be—what?—No. 63, 64, 65—to undermine healthcare reform. That is really what this is all about, and the gentleman who presented the case made that case. The IRS' helping people get access to healthcare reform is a taxpayer service.

The White House issued a Statement of Administration Policy, which reads, if the President were presented with this bill, his senior advisers would recommend he veto it.

The statement reads as follows: ''By further constraining IRS resources, H.R. 4885 would have detrimental effects on the IRS' ability to provide quality service to taxpayers, administer the Tax Code, and enforce tax laws.''

That is really what this is all about.

The statement continues: ''The IRS needs more resources, not fewer, to deter tax cheats, serve honest taxpayers, and protect taxpayer data.''

The Republicans are using these IRS bills this week to attack the IRS and its employees as a distraction. They don't want hardworking Americans to know what they missed the deadline on: to come up with a budget. They are doing absolutely nothing to help the people of Flint or of Puerto Rico, who so desperately need our help.

I urge my colleagues to vote ''no'' for the reasons outlined by this chart: for the need of more resources for customer services and to thwart a further effort by the Republicans to undermine the ACA, which has meant so much to millions and millions and millions of Americans from all walks of life. This should be resoundingly voted down, surely by us Democrats, who believe in customer service and who want the ACA implemented, not destroyed by the Republican Party of this House or of the Senate.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. SCALISE).

Mr. SCALISE. I thank my colleague from Missouri for bringing this bill to the floor and for his leadership in holding the IRS accountable.

Mr. Speaker, I guess we should start with the question of who is attacking whom. When you look at the actions of the IRS, especially in the last few years—and we have exposed this through our oversight here in this House majority—we have found it is the IRS that has been attacking the hardworking taxpayers of this country.

It has not only been documented, but it has come out in hearings that the IRS was actually targeting people—American citizens—based on their political views. The IRS was. You could expect this, maybe, in a Third World country where the government would actually be attacking people based on their political views, but, here in America, this IRS was doing just that, and we exposed it.

One is seeing with the bill that Congressman SMITH is bringing forward that the IRS has created, in essence, a slush fund, using user fees for things that weren't even intended and that aren't even in the purview of Congress. What are they afraid of? Why are they afraid of having some real transparency so that we can actually hold the IRS accountable for these user fees? Hundreds of millions of dollars of user fees, by the way, are paid by hardworking families out there who are struggling to get by. When somebody actually calls the IRS hotline right now, estimates are that fewer than 40 percent of Americans who call the IRS hotline to get help are able to get help.

The IRS is not helping people they are supposed to be helping. They have these slush funds, and they don't want them to be under the purview of Congress? What are they afraid of hiding? Is it, maybe, that we are going to expose more things, like they are using taxpayer money to target people? Maybe we are going to expose more things, like they were actually hiring people who were fired from the IRS because they were improperly accessing people's taxpayer data, or the fact that they have given out bonuses to people when they can't even show they have a customer service plan.

When one is looking at so many abuses by the IRS, it is an agency that is out of control. Now we have a bill by the gentleman from Missouri to at least bring some of that into the purview of Congress so that it is exposed in the sunshine of transparency. Why be against transparency? Let's pass this bill.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 2 minutes.

Look, as happened yesterday, I expect the Republicans to try to bring up the issue relating to the IRS and how it handled 501(c)(4) applications. As I did yesterday, I just want to read an answer given by the inspector general on this issue.

On May 17, 2013, I asked him as follows: ''Did you find any evidence of political motivation in the selection of the tax exemption applications?''

Inspector George said: ''We did not, sir.''

Next, customer service. You have the gall to come forth here and complain about customer service when you cut the IRS' budget over 5 years by almost $900 million. That really takes gall. It is so inconsistent. As I said earlier, look in the mirror, and you will see who is responsible for those problems.

I want to finish by saying: Slush fund? Implementing healthcare reform that has helped 20 million people, that is a slush fund? No. That is the implementation by the IRS of a necessary function that affects the lives and the health care of millions of Americans.

So you are really bankrupt to come forth here and support this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) control the remainder of my time.

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

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to direct their remarks to the Chair.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 1 minute.

I would like to respond to the gentleman's prior comments.

As a matter of fact, since fiscal year 2013, in budget sequestration, Congress has either maintained or increased funding for taxpayer services each and every year—never cutting it one time. Any cuts to taxpayer services have come at the clear discretion of the IRS Commissioner.

Yesterday, in committee, the IRS Commissioner said that it was his discretion to cut taxpayer services. In fact, in the last year, they cut $134 million. In the last 4 years, Congress has not cut $1 in taxpayer services; so let's get the record straight while we are on the House floor.

I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Kansas (Ms. JENKINS), a member of the Ways and Means Committee and the vice chair of the Conference.

Ms. JENKINS of Kansas. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to come to the House floor in support of the IRS Oversight While Eliminating Spending Act, sponsored by my colleague, Mr. SMITH.

I spent many years practicing in the tax area as a certified public accountant, so I understand firsthand why tax day has become a dreaded annual burden to so many Americans. The economy has yet to rebound from the recession, and wage growth is stagnant; but, in 2016, individuals will spend more on their taxes than on clothing, food, and housing combined.

While Americans continue to face the threat of increasing taxes—thanks to this administration—the tax process has gotten only more complicated and confusing. On top of that, the IRS has mishandled taxpayer funds, has provided inadequate customer service, and has proven to be unwilling or unable to change.

This commonsense legislation brings us one step closer to providing the proper oversight over the IRS' activities. At the moment, the IRS currently charges user fees, and Congress has no say as to how these fees are used.

I am extremely disappointed this agency is playing politics with these fees. They cut the fees allocated to customer service by 73 percent this year, and they reallocated those funds in an effort to try to extract additional fees from the American taxpayer. Folks are already paying more than enough in taxes.

If the IRS wants taxpayers to pay fees, then they need to account for how they are using every last cent of that money. Oversight from Congress will ensure no frivolous use by a wasteful IRS.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation. We cannot continue to reward inefficient bureaucracies. The American people deserve to have a say in how the IRS spends our hard-earned tax dollars.

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

It is painful to listen to some of the rhetoric here on the floor that suggests that, somehow, the use of resources by the IRS is not dealing with customer service. The gentleman admitted that, under Republican leadership, they have worked to not fund the necessary resources for the Affordable Care Act. Now, this is a bill that is law. This is a bill that is impacting 16 million Americans, and 7.3 million people have gotten the tax credits.

I would ask the gentleman from Missouri what the impact would be on 7.3 million taxpayers if we had no money available to implement the Affordable Care Act.

I yield to the gentleman from Missouri.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, the question that we have before us is: Did we appropriate adequate funding for taxpayer services?

Mr. BLUMENAUER. In reclaiming my time, I am asking the gentleman: What would be the impact on the 7.3 million people who are claiming the tax credit under the Affordable Care Act, which you have not yet repealed and which still is the law of the land? What would the impact be on them if you had your way and there was no money?

I yield to the gentleman from Missouri.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, the law of the land is Article I of the Constitution. Congress has the power of the purse to appropriate funds, and Congress appropriated the funds in 2016, but the IRS is not following that appropriately. This is wrong.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. In reclaiming my time, if I may reframe the question, because I am not trying to trick the gentleman. I want to know what the impact would be on 7.3 million people if there were no money available to implement the Affordable Care Act.

I yield to the gentleman from Missouri.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, what I am talking about is that Congress appropriated the necessary resources. The gentleman is talking about there being over $11 billion to the IRS, and they cannot appropriate the funds correctly.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, in reclaiming my time, I would appreciate the gentleman, on his own time, elaborating on this, and the gentleman is not answering.

What would be the impact, as the gentleman said in his opening statement, if the money were not allocated to implement the Affordable Care Act? It is sort of a backdoor way via the budget process, which you can control, to defund the Affordable Care Act.

The fact is, for those 7.3 million people who get the tax credit and for the over 17 million Americans who have received health care under the Affordable Care Act, being able to implement the law is customer service. I would think that my Republican friends would become very cranky if the bureaucracy in the IRS just decided that they weren't going to implement part of the law. So what the IRS has done within some areas that it does have budgetary discretion is to make sure that there are adequate people to try and implement these provisions.

□ 1245

Now, it is true that the Tax Code becomes more and more complex, but that is not the fault of the IRS. Those are the people who are charged with implementing what Congress does.

Since I have been in Congress—and my Republican friends have been in charge most of this time—the Tax Code has become longer, more complex, even as they have cut back the resources to that critical agency.

What business assaults its accounts receivable department?

The Internal Revenue Service is the largest customer service agency in the world, and they have a very difficult job because Congress in the last 25 years has cut 30,000 people out of the workforce. In the last 10 years, we have seen an additional reduction.

I am glad that our Republican friends were embarrassed because of their continued cuts to the IRS budget and the service got so bad that they restored almost $300 million.

But it is not, by any stretch of the imagination, enough to give the service that we want, and it does not make up for the fact that the IRS has a legal obligation to administer the Affordable Care Act, which is still on the books, which is serving millions of Americans and has become more complex and actually more onerous for individual taxpayers.

Remember, they have made changes to make a sharper cliff if people make a mistake in the estimate of their income because it is graduated. You get less help the more money you make.

Under the Republican assault on the Affordable Care Act, there is more of a cliff that faces people if they have a change in circumstance. If they misallocate, if they lose a job, if they get a bonus, that can have significant consequences.

Mr. Speaker, the United States Internal Revenue Service has been a whipping boy for everybody. This a service that people love to hate. Republicans have taken their war against taxes to high art by assaulting the IRS, making it hard to serve, and attacking it repeatedly.

Mr. Speaker, this has significant consequences. The United States relies on voluntary compliance from the taxpayers. Every 1 percent less voluntary compliance costs the taxpayers $30 billion that could be used to reduce the deficit or to pay for badly needed services or maybe rebuild our fraying infrastructure. This has consequences.

Now, I would respectfully suggest that this is a cut of a half billion dollars to a budget that is already stressed and can't deal with the needs of today.

People in the IRS are dealing with a computer system that those of you who took computer science in the 1960s—I didn't—but you would feel comfortable with some of the programming language they have.

It is hopelessly out of date. The employees are overwhelmed on the phone lines. And Congress keeps changing the Tax Code.

Taking away a half billion dollars in user fees and throwing it into the general fund makes it very unlikely that it will be available for the priorities that are going to be necessary to administer the IRS.

My friend doesn't care if the Affordable Care Act is not administered. In fact, he would rather that it not be administered, but that is not the law. That is not fair to the taxpayers.

Taking away these user fees, putting it in the appropriations process, is going to have sort of a grab bag in Congress for those moneys, and I don't know where those would end up.

But given the composition and the attitude of the people who control it now, it wouldn't be available to administer the Affordable Care Act, something the IRS is obligated to do and which we owe to the American people.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BABIN).

Mr. BABIN. Mr. Speaker, the American people are fed up with the IRS and rightfully so. With such a troubled and incompetent record, it is hard to imagine how anyone could trust this corrupt agency.

This week the House will take action, thanks in large part to my friend and colleague from Missouri (Mr. SMITH). We will pass a series of bills to rein in the IRS and bring much-needed accountability to this broken and dysfunctional agency.

We will take steps to end the politicization of the IRS, which has illegally and intentionally targeted conservative Americans.

We will vote to eliminate the IRS slush fund—and I call it a slush fund—that has allowed this agency to skirt congressional authority.

We will vote to make sure that IRS employees are held to the same standards as the taxpayers by firing those who are delinquent in their own taxes.

These are commonsense steps that need to be taken, but we cannot truly solve these problems and bring real change to the Internal Revenue Service under the current leadership of Commissioner John Koskinen.

Mr. Koskinen has blatantly lied under oath and misled congressional investigators. He has supported Lois Lerner's track record of deceit and obstruction. It is time for him to go.

As a cosponsor of legislation to impeach Commissioner Koskinen, I call on congressional leaders to bring that bill forward as well.

American taxpayers deserve much better than they are getting, and we need to turn the page on Mr. Koskinen's failed leadership.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DOGGETT), a senior member of the Ways and Means Committee and someone who understands the value of protecting the Federal Government's accounts receivable department.

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, Monday, as all Americans know, was, of course, Tax Day. Today should be officially designated as ''Republican Tax Distraction Day'' because that is exactly what is going on here.

Rather than address the many inequities and complexities in our tax system, Republicans distract by attacking the tax collector, which is one of the oldest tactics around that goes back, I guess, many civilizations.

I believe it was Mark Twain who suggested the difference between a taxidermist and a tax collector is that the taxidermist only takes your skin.

The problem we have today is that there are many of our largest and most profitable corporations that don't have any skin in the game.

For the patriotic taxpayers that were out there last weekend trying to figure out how they would complete their taxes and how they would make the payments or who were lined up on Monday night at the post office to make their payments—those taxpayers have a lot of boxes on their tax form, but they don't have one that they can check that shifts their income off to some offshore tax haven. They can't decide that they will just defer paying on some of their income until they feel like it.

Yet, some of America's largest and most profitable companies use just these type of tax loopholes to dramatically lower their tax bill. These Republicans, especially on the House Ways and Means Committee, have shown no interest in addressing the problem whatsoever.

Only last week a major development before this Republican tax development was a report that found that 20 percent of large, profitable corporations paid no Federal income tax in 2012, the last year of the survey.

That is no. That is none. That is zero. That is zilch. It is not what those folks that were working last weekend trying to figure out their taxes were faced with, but it is what is occurring.

If Republicans were serious about making the Internal Revenue Service work better, they would be addressing injustices like this instead of making it worse by slashing the IRS budget. Shorting that budget is short-circuiting the collection of taxes from all those people that are out there trying to dodge their taxes.

Under these Republican budgets, almost one in four of the enforcement tax staff at the IRS have been eliminated over the last 7 years. Every additional dollar that we spend on tax enforcement yields an estimated $4 in increased revenue.

Even a remarkable return on investment like that is modest compared to the return that America's largest corporations are getting by lobbying this Congress and participating in the political process. Oxfam America this month reported that tax dodging by multinationals is costing the United States perhaps as much as $111 billion each year.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 1 minute to the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, recovering that revenue could pay for the entire budget of The National Institutes of Health, the Centers for Disease Control, and the Department of Education.

Tax dodging is not a victimless crime. It is like those seaside resorts where you hear: Grandpa went to the Caymans and all I got was this lousy T-shirt.

Well, you don't get a T-shirt out of this kind of tax dodging, but you do get a tax bill, because the hardworking American families and small businesses that are picking up the tab for all of those loopholes are having to pay more than their fair share.

What we should be doing on this Republican Tax Distraction Day is getting about those loopholes and seeing that the IRS enforces our laws fairly and equitably. That is not being done today.

This and the rest of this package should be rejected in favor of a system that is fair to all Americans.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the fine gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. SMITH).

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Mr. Speaker, I want to point out that most folks in this room today and right now understand that there is an effort underway to pursue tax reform, to make our Tax Code simpler, easier to enforce, and to actually prevent the need to even pass legislation such as the IRS OWES Act.

Until such time, we need legislation like this because it will bring much-needed transparency to an agency with a proven track record of poor management.

The IRS' offenses include targeting taxpayers and irresponsibly directing resources away from its core function of taxpayer services, resulting in the abysmal 2015 tax filing system.

It has probably been said in this room before, but this simple bill would subject IRS user fees to congressional oversight by directing them to the Treasury's general fund and subjecting them to the congressional appropriations process.

In 2014, the IRS only used 44 percent of its user fees account on taxpayer services. Last year this number dropped significantly, with the IRS using only 10 percent of its user fees account on taxpayer services.

American taxpayers all over the country felt the pain of that choice last year. Our tax system depends on voluntary compliance. Poor taxpayer assistance like the IRS provided last year would likely encourage taxpayers to perhaps cheat and actually make it more difficult for taxpayers to even comply.

According to a GAO report, last year only 38 percent of callers wanting to speak to an IRS representative were able to reach one. This is unacceptable from an agency whose core function is revenue collection.

H.R. 4885 will strengthen congressional oversight over the IRS not by limiting funding, but by ensuring the IRS uses its funding for its core functions of revenue collection and taxpayer assistance and not for unrelated purposes, which make it harder for taxpayers to comply with an already complicated Tax Code.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. I yield to the gentleman from Oregon.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Who are the 7.3 million people who get the tax credit

under the Affordable Care Act? Does helping them fall within your definition of taxpayer assistance?

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. I don't want innocent people to be hurt. And with what has taken place at the IRS, I would hope all of us would agree it is unacceptable.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Let me rephrase my question:

Does assisting the 7.3 million people who get tax credits under the Affordable Care Act qualify in your definition of taxpayer assistance?

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Well, I don't have the actual definition at the top of my mind. But, clearly, the IRS has chosen priorities—some over others—that I think——

Mr. BLUMENAUER. If I have more time later, I would be happy to be involved in a colloquy with you on this.

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Mr. Speaker, I urge the passage of this bill.

□ 1300

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 20 seconds.

It is striking that somehow giving assistance to 7.3 million people who get the tax credits—16 million people who are under the Affordable Care Act—to implement that does not fall within the definition of taxpayer assistance. And my friends, Smith, neither one of them, could actually answer that, and I think it is telling.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. BECERRA), the distinguished leader of the Democratic Caucus and a senior member of the Committee on Ways and Means, who thinks that we ought to provide service to our taxpayers.

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, one of the easiest things you can do to get people to cheer for you is to bash someone or something that everyone loves to hate, as you have heard it said before. I don't know if there is a better example of this than the IRS. Everyone loves to hate the IRS.

At the end of the day, though, if you want to have our troops paid, if you want to have our security handled at our airports, if you want to make sure that our national parks are protected, you need to have the revenues; and so we need the IRS so that all of us who voluntarily are supposed to pay our taxes do so and pay our fair share.

Again, we could all point to the story of the case where the IRS flubbed it, didn't do a good job, and so it is easy to pile on. If we could create a pinata that looked like the IRS, I guarantee you it would be the hottest selling pinata in the history of pinata making. So let's just put that on the table. Let's grant that to everyone. It is easy to bash the IRS.

Let's go to this bill, though. What will this bill do?

First, it does some really strange things, and then it does some really harmful things. But worse than that, it is never going to become law. So we are spending time talking about something that is never going to become law.

But on what the bill does, let me give you a clear example of why it is so unfortunate that we do this IRS bashing. One of these provisions tells the IRS that it cannot retain the dollars it collects as user fees for having provided services to individuals or corporations that seek out special services from the IRS.

You have got a big corporation; you just broke it up into pieces; you want to make sure you are filing your taxes correctly. You need a special advisory opinion from the IRS, which isn't something they typically do for most Americans, so they say: Well, that is extra stuff; we are going to have to charge you a user fee for having done that for you.

Principally, these user fees come from wealthier companies or wealthier individuals who have more complicated tax filings that they have to submit. We charge them that because not every American has to request that kind of service from the IRS. IRS collects that fee.

This bill says: IRS, you don't get to keep the money, even though you had to provide the service and pull your resources and your personnel from doing the regular taxpayers' filings and examining those to do this special work. You cannot keep that even though you expended resources to do that work.

The best way I could compare it is to a situation I encountered recently. I participated in a funeral service, and it was a very dignified service. At the end of the service in the place of worship in the church, we all caravanned together with the hearse and the family of the deceased individual to the cemetery. It was a long line of vehicles. It was a great service. A lot of people showed up.

We were fortunate to have the assistance of police officers who directed traffic because we went through a whole bunch of intersections. We had to make sure that, to the degree possible, we didn't disrupt traffic a whole lot and we didn't have a whole bunch of accidents on the way to the cemetery. It all worked out perfectly. At the end, once we reached the cemetery, the officers left.

Now, the officers did that job not because that is the usual course of business for police officers in our cities and our counties. They did that because the police department offers that service so that we don't disrupt the greater activity around our city when there is a funeral. That way you offer the dignity to that family as well in the services for that deceased individual. You pay for that service to the police department because you pulled police officers off their regular beat to do that work. That is a user fee.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ROTHFUS). The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentleman an additional 1 minute.

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, this bill's proposal on user fees is tantamount to telling the police department: You must provide that service for people to be able to have their funeral service, but you will not get compensated for your police officers being pulled from their regular duty of protecting our streets to help with that funeral service.

It is inane. It is crazy to do that. So rather than do bills that are going to go nowhere, let's get our job done. We get elected to do some very important things. On the tax side, we certainly could do what Mr. DOGGETT mentioned earlier. Let's go after those Benedict Arnolds who decide they are going to leave the country not because they want to go live somewhere else, it is that they don't want to pay taxes in America. So they are going to leave their place of legal residency as America. They are still going to have their home here, but they are just going to call home somewhere else for legal purposes so they don't pay taxes. Billions of dollars we are losing, we know, as a result of corporations and all our wealthy individuals incorporating in places like the Cayman Islands.

Secondly, all the money that is being spent in campaigns today is being done by what are called not-for-profit organizations that we used to think used to do social welfare.

Now guess what they are doing?

They are spending their money on campaigns. We need to stop that as well. That is what we should be doing—doing our job, not taking money out of an agency that is trying to make sure that we do this the right way for everyone who pays their fair share of taxes.

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

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

I hope that there is an opportunity here for us to take a hard look at some of the issues surrounding the Republican assault on the IRS. We have documented that they have dramatically cut not just the resources, but the ability of people to implement it. There has been a refusal to hire people in some cases who make for the government $5,000 an hour or more.

Now, these are people who would be dealing with audits for the people who, you know, for one reason or another give themselves the benefit of the doubt when it comes to filling out the tax form. So this audit function makes a significant amount of money for the taxpayers, money that doesn't have to come from increased taxes or reduced services.

Mr. Speaker, there is a tax gap. It is well known and well documented, $400 to $450 billion or more a year. Being able to adequately fund the Internal Revenue Service will enable the government to deal with an amount of money that is due and payable and owing, and it is usually because they have more money to lose track of or to be able to have different alternatives for how they characterize it or how

they choose to move forward. It tends to be larger, they tend to be business enterprises and people who have more money.

But it is not just dealing with the audit function. I had a fascinating roundtable discussion in my hometown last month where I had attorneys and accountants who specialize in the practice dealing with tax practices. They were lamenting the problems, not just the fact that there isn't effective audits anymore. They think there are very few. But it is more fundamental than that.

They often will look one of their clients in the eye and say: Yes, you are right, there is a problem. The mistake is in your favor, but because the service level has been allowed to deteriorate so badly, it will cost you more money in my fees to get the $500 or $2,000 error corrected.

That just makes one cringe. Now, the notice that somehow putting money to implement the Affordable Care Act is not customer service is ludicrous, and I tried to get my friends on the other side of the aisle to talk to me about customer service.

How is it not customer service to help people with the tax credits that are involved with the Affordable Care Act, which over 7 million people get?

How is it not customer service to make sure that it is administered fairly for over 16 million people who fall under the Affordable Care Act?

Absolutely it is. This $500 million cut would further degrade the ability to provide the service that not only should we require, but our employees in the IRS want. I would strongly urge the rejection of this ill-guided proposal.

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

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

The IRS has not shown this body, they have not shown the Missourians that I represent, and they have not shown all of the American taxpayers that they have been good stewards of user fees. They have a slush fund of nearly $500 million. This body, over a course since fiscal year 2013, has not cut $1; not $1 has this body cut in assistance to taxpayer services to the IRS.

The Commissioner yesterday testified before the Committee on Ways and Means and said that he is the one who cut $134 million last year alone in taxpayer services. The government is supposed to help serve the people. The people are not supposed to serve the government.

Mr. Speaker, there should not be one agency that is independent of Congress. Agencies were created by Congress. They should be funded by Congress. And no agency should have a $500 million slush fund that they can decide to spend the money any way that they want. This is not an uncommon practice for us to require agencies, when they collect user fees, to have congressional oversight and to be subject to appropriations. We are just trying to make sure that the IRS is held accountable, like numerous other agencies.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the body to support this great piece of legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired.

Pursuant to House Resolution 687, the previous question is ordered on the bill, as amended.

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. BLUMENAUER. 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.

PERMISSION TO POSTPONE ADOPTION OF MOTION TO RECOMMIT ON H.R. 1206, NO HIRES FOR THE DELINQUENT IRS ACT

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the question of adopting a motion to recommit on H.R. 1206 may be subject to postponement as though under clause 8 of rule XX.

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

There was no objection.

□ 1315

NO HIRES FOR THE DELINQUENT IRS ACT

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 687, I call up the bill (H.R. 1206) to prohibit the hiring of additional Internal Revenue Service employees until the Secretary of the Treasury certifies that no employee of the Internal Revenue Service has a seriously delinquent tax debt, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 687, in lieu of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Ways and Means printed in the bill, an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 114–47 is adopted and the bill, as amended, is considered read.

The text of the bill, as amended, is as follows:

H.R. 1206

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 ''No Hires for the Delinquent IRS Act''.

SEC. 2. PROHIBITION ON IRS HIRING OF NEW EMPLOYEES UNTIL CERTIFICATION THAT NO IRS EMPLOYEE HAS A SERIOUSLY DELINQUENT TAX DEBT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—No officer or employee of the United States may extend an offer of employment in the Internal Revenue Service to any individual until after the Secretary of the Treasury has submitted to Congress either the certification described in subsection (b) or the report described in subsection (c).

(b) CERTIFICATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The certification referred to in subsection (a) is a written certification by the Secretary that the Internal Revenue Service does not employ any individual who has a seriously delinquent tax debt.

(2) SERIOUSLY DELINQUENT TAX DEBT.—For purposes of this section, the term ''seriously delinquent tax debt'' means an outstanding debt under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 for which a notice of lien has been filed in public records pursuant to section 6323 of such Code, except that such term does not include—

(A) a debt that is being paid in a timely manner pursuant to an agreement under section 6159 or section 7122 of such Code;

(B) a debt with respect to which a collection due process hearing under section 6330 of such Code, or relief under subsection (a), (b), or (f) of section 6015 of such Code, is requested or pending;

(C) a debt with respect to which a levy has been made under section 6331 of such Code (or a debt with respect to which the individual agrees to be subject to a levy made under such section); and

(D) a debt with respect to which relief under section 6343(a)(1)(D) of such Code is granted.

(c) REPORT.—The report referred to in subsection (a) is a report that—

(1) states that the certification described in subsection (b) cannot be made;

(2) provides an explanation of why such certification is not possible;

(3) outlines the remedial actions that would be required for the Secretary to be in a position to so certify; and

(4) provides an indication of the time that would be required for those actions to be completed.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall apply to offers of employment extended after December 31, 2016.

SEC. 3. NO ADDITIONAL FUNDS AUTHORIZED.

No additional funds are authorized to carry out the requirements of this Act. Such requirements shall be carried out using amounts otherwise authorized.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The bill shall be debatable for 1 hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Ways and Means.

After 1 hour of debate, it shall be in order to consider the further amendment printed in House Report 114–502, if offered by the Member designated in the report, which shall be considered read and shall be separately debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent.

The gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HOLDING) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members

may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on H.R. 1206, currently under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

H.R. 1206, the No Hires for the Delinquent IRS Act, prohibits the IRS from expanding its workforce unless the agency either certifies to Congress that IRS employees do not have seriously delinquent tax debts or explains why the agency is unable to provide this required certification.

I want to commend my friend and colleague from North Carolina (Mr. ROUZER) for helping bring attention to the fact that some of the IRS' own employees, Mr. Speaker, have serious delinquencies on their personal tax obligations.

The American public expects IRS employees—the same people, the same employees that audit American taxpayers—to abide by the Federal tax laws they enforce. However, Mr. Speaker, just last year, the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration reviewed the IRS' handling of employees that were found to have willfully violated the tax laws. So, that is how the IRS is handling the matter of their own employees who have willfully violated the tax law.

Shockingly, Mr. Speaker, in 61 percent of those cases of IRS employees who have willfully violated the tax law, the IRS decided to retain the employees and failed to document why these employees were not fired.

Mr. Speaker, this is unacceptable and the American people deserve better. Allowing IRS employees to continue administering our tax laws when they, themselves, are in violation of that law undermines the trust of the American taxpayer.

My friend Mr. ROUZER's legislation is an important step forward towards creating accountability and restoring the public's trust in the IRS.

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

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

This is really a couple of sad days for this institution. Here we are filling in time with bills that are going nowhere and are deeply mistaken. No action on the budget, no action on the tragedy in Flint, no action on the needs of Puerto Rico, no action on Zika—essentially, the Republicans are about no action. So instead, they bring up this series of bills, and now, H.R. 1206.

Let's look at it carefully. What this bill says is that the IRS cannot hire a single person until the Secretary of the Treasury issues a written certification that not a single employee in the entire agency has a serious tax debt. So when an employee quits or is terminated, that position could not be filled until an examination was completed of the tax status of every one of the 80,000 IRS employees.

Realistically, to certify that no single employee has a significant tax debt, the IRS would need to immediately and continuously terminate any employee with a Federal tax lien. The IRS already has the authority to terminate an employee for delinquent taxes. This was established in 1998 in section 1203 of the IRS Restructuring and Reform Act.

The White House's Statement of Administration Policy says that the bill is ''unworkable in operation, as 'seriously delinquent' debts could be as low as $1 and tax liens are recorded on a case-by-case basis.''

This bill is yet another politically motivated attack on the IRS and its 80,000 employees, who have one of the lowest rates of tax delinquency in the Federal Government at around 1 percent.

I wish you would just look at the chart and see where the IRS is compared to the Congress. If you are really worried, ladies and gentlemen, about tax delinquency, we would need to look no further than here in the House, where tax delinquency among employees is more than 5 percent.

The administration opposes this bill, stating further: ''These bills would impose unnecessary constraints on the Internal Revenue Service's operations without improving the agency's ability to administer the Tax Code and serve taxpayers.''

As I said at the beginning, there is a lot of work that should be undertaken in this House. Instead, this is essentially an empty Chamber with empty legislation. These bills are nothing more than a distraction to cover up the basic failure of the Republican majority to bring on legislation that would truly meet the needs of the American people. I urge that we oppose this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS), a most distinguished member of our committee, control the remainder of my time.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. ROUZER), the sponsor of this legislation.

Mr. ROUZER. I thank my colleague and friend from North Carolina (Mr. HOLDING) for yielding time to discuss this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I filed this bill, H.R. 1206, the No Hires for the Delinquent IRS Act, in response to reading news reports of more than 1,500 employees at the IRS who willfully failed to follow their own tax guidelines and, in a number of cases, were found to be seriously delinquent on their taxes.

For starters, it is the height of hypocrisy for the very agency that is charged with collecting taxes to have employees who refuse to adhere to the standards and guidelines which the rest of us must follow and abide by. Of course, this is in addition to the egregious behavior and abuse of power some in the agency displayed when they targeted organizations for their political affiliations and beliefs. We all remember how the IRS misled taxpayers and the Congress in an effort to deny that such activity ever even occurred. Thankfully, the truth always has a way of being revealed, at least eventually.

I think we can all agree that the American people deserve a government that works for them, not against them. Certainly, the IRS is one of the most cumbersome, customer-unfriendly agencies in the Federal Government, regardless of how much they are funded. Anyone who denies this hasn't been listening to the American people.

Now, let me be clear. There are plenty of fine civil servants working hard at the IRS and in all other agencies of the Federal Government. It is the culture of arrogance and unchecked bureaucratic power that has developed within these agencies that is the problem and is the catalyst for the type of disregard and double standard this bill aims to help address. This culture starts with the leadership at the top.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is very simple. It prohibits the IRS from hiring any new additional employees until the agency can certify that every one of their employees who are out of step with the tax requirements imposed on the American people have a plan to achieve compliance. Now, who can argue against this?

For all the moaning and groaning I have heard from the other side of the aisle the past couple of days, this is not a bill that merits even one vote of opposition. This is a commonsense bill that will help encourage the IRS to clean up its act, and I encourage my colleagues to vote for it.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to the bill, H.R. 1206, preventing the IRS from hiring anyone—not one person, not one individual—until the IRS proves that there is not a single employee in the entire agency with a serious tax debt.

Mr. Speaker, I ask: How can a hiring freeze possibly help taxpayers? Every person in this body knows that the IRS already has the authority to fire anyone—any employee—for serious Federal tax issues. Congress gave the IRS this power in section 1203 of the IRS Restructuring and Reform Act. It was signed into law in 1998, and it is working.

Last year, Mr. Speaker, the Department of the Treasury had a lower tax delinquency rate than any Federal agency and lower than the American public. It was lower than the Congress.

This is a mean piece of legislation and it is not right. It is not fair. It is

mean-spirited. So, I ask you: Why do we want to punish these Federal employees? Why do we want to go after the majority of IRS workers who are just hardworking, dedicated public servants? More importantly, Mr. Speaker, what good does this bill do?

Every year—not one year, but every year—the IRS is expected to do more with less. We cannot get blood from a turnip. This legislation does nothing to help taxpayers get the service they need and deserve. It does nothing—not one thing—to fight identity theft. This does nothing to stop stolen returns. It does nothing to help the taxpayers speak to a live IRS staff person in a timely manner.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is all about a message. It is a talking point. It is so sad that we have come to this point. As a Congress, we can do better.

Mr. Speaker, some of us here are ready to do the people's work. This is purely a waste of time. As Mr. LEVIN stated, this piece of legislation is not going anywhere.

Last week, I introduced the Taxpayer Protection Act. My bill responds to the real needs of American taxpayers.

□ 1330

There are many other good ideas to help taxpayers, but these bills are not being considered by this body this week.

Instead, Mr. Speaker, we are considering a bill, as I said before, that is mean, downright mean, a bill that is unnecessary, a bill that would do more harm than good.

We owe it to ourselves and we owe it to the American people, to the American taxpayer, to do better. We can do better.

Mr. Speaker, I urge each and every one of my colleagues to vote ''no'' on this pointless and harmful piece of legislation. It is the right thing to do, to vote ''no.'' This is not good for the Congress. It is not good for the Ways and Means Committee.

Why do we want to point? It is pointless to punish one IRS worker. More than 80,000 employees, and for one person, just one person, one individual, for tax debt, then they cannot hire an employee.

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

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, the American people deserve and expect all IRS employees to abide by the Federal tax laws that the IRS is charged with administrating, period, end of story.

I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. MIMI WALTERS).

Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the No Hires for the Delinquent IRS Act.

Between 2004 and 2013, nearly 1,600 IRS employees intentionally violated tax laws, according to the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration.

Just last year, the same Inspector General reported that the IRS rehired 141 former employees who had bungled their own tax returns. Five of those rehires had intentionally failed to file their returns at all.

Think about that for a moment. The Federal bureaucrats who are responsible for ensuring the American people pay their taxes are not paying their own taxes, and they face no repercussion for botching their own returns.

This is one more example of how Washington is out of touch with the people it is meant to serve. It is no wonder the American people do not have faith in this Federal agency.

This bill will require the IRS to exclusively hire employees who pay their own taxes. It is essential to protecting American taxpayers and ensuring the IRS is held accountable. It is just common sense.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 1206.

Mr. LEWIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DOGGETT).

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman.

This bill is just the next segment of Republican Tax Distraction Day.

Certainly, we should focus on misconduct, on delinquencies, from whatever the source. But here, on Republicans Tax Distraction Day, they are about distracting attention from their failure to address the real problem with reference to delinquencies and misconduct, and that is a problem that they have just shown total indifference about.

For anyone who was listening even a little bit last week, world news around the globe focused on something called the Panama Papers, 11.5 million files explored over the course of an entire year by the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists detailing how some people, especially the very wealthy, have used the secrecy of an offshore tax haven in Panama to avoid paying their taxes and, in some cases, illegal money laundering by organized crime and other forms of official corruption. This isn't just an American problem, but there is no American exceptionalism to it either. It is an international problem.

Our European allies have responded to the Panama Papers by initiating new efforts to try to get at this problem of tax abuse. And the truth of the matter is, this is just the tip of the iceberg with this 11.5 million papers because it is only about abuse in one of a number of secret tax havens.

But, of course, it did not attract universal attention. If you were in Beijing today and you were to search for the Panama Papers on the Web, what you would find is: Sorry, no relevant material.

There is another place that you will find nothing about the Panama Papers, and that is in the House Ways and Means Committee and the Republican Caucus because they haven't been interested. They have shown constant indifference to problems that are generated from these tax havens, from the dodging, from the avoidance, from the evasion that has been going on, when that ought to be the focus of our attention. Instead of real abuse, they focus on imagined abuse.

And keep in mind, by the way, this particular piece of legislation is designed to cover IRS employees for their delinquencies. They bother to exempt the Congress of the United States from that provision.

But I think the focus ought to be on these abuses and delinquencies that are occurring in other places that are costing us real dollars. The Panama Papers show the importance of our working together with our allies to address lawlessness and money laundering and tax evasion. They show why we need to be participating in the Base Erosion and Profit Shifting initiative.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. LEWIS. I yield the gentleman another 30 seconds.

Mr. DOGGETT. They show why the Stop Tax Haven Abuse legislation that I have introduced and the Corporate EXIT Fairness Act, to deal with those who renounce their citizenship, why they deserve a hearing and attention, the attention that they are not getting today or any day from this Republican Congress.

If this Congress will do nothing to address this tax evasion and avoidance, the least we can do is to do no harm. But today's action does do harm. Rather than getting at the real problems, they seek to limit an already underfunded agency.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has again expired.

Mr. LEWIS. I yield the gentleman another 30 seconds.

Mr. DOGGETT. They seek to limit, impair, and hinder an already underfunded agency in doing its job of tax avoidance so that everyone contributes to the costs of our national security and vital services.

We need to be strengthening the law, ensuring fair enforcement, and ensuring that we have the resources necessary to keep America the strongest country in the world.

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, it is pretty straightforward. The IRS needs to earn and keep the trust of the American taxpayer. And I say ''earn'' with emphasis because the IRS has lost the trust of the American taxpayer.

Allowing IRS employees to continue administering our tax laws when they are in violation of the law undermines the people's trust. It does not earn the people's trust.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. WALBERG).

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, I say thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to my colleagues for their hard work on this package of bills to rein in the IRS and make it more accountable to taxpayers.

Earlier this week, the taxpayers in my home State of Michigan and across the country reflected on another year of a tax burden that is too high and take-home pay that is too low. But not only is our current tax system broken, the agency in charge of enforcing it is, too. Time after time, the IRS has proven that it can't be trusted to clean up its act and fails to practice what it preaches.

In a report last year, the IRS inspector general found that hundreds of employees are violating IRS guidelines and failing to pay their personal tax obligations. Those are obligations, and I tend to think that the good employees of the IRS would be encouraged as well if their colleagues paid their taxes.

The No Hires for the Delinquent IRS Act would simply—and this is what we are talking about—prevent the IRS from any additional hiring until it verifies that its current employees have paid their own taxes.

Now, a good friend and colleague of mine has described this as a waste of time. The single mom in Monroe, Michigan, doesn't think that this is a waste of time. The family farmer in Jackson doesn't think that this is a waste of time. The small-business owner in Charlotte doesn't think that this is a waste of time. Why? Because they all have to pay their taxes on time.

People who work at the IRS should have to play by the same rules as everyone else does. And, in fact, that might assist them in making sure that congressional employees pay their taxes too, and any other department of the Federal Government pays their taxes too, because why? They pay their taxes, and now they can do what their job asks them to do.

The good colleague and gentleman from Georgia understands, I am certain, the principle that we both know well, where it says: To whom much is given, much is required. Much responsibility has been given to the IRS, and much is required. Pay your taxes.

I urge my colleagues to support this commonsense bill.

Mr. LEWIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER).

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I enjoyed listening to my friend from Michigan, and I would just say why shouldn't we lead by example here in Congress, to whom much has been given? Shouldn't we have the credibility?

I would have supported this bill in Ways and Means, with one simple amendment. I offered an amendment to apply the same provisions to Congress.

The House of Representatives has a worse record of compliance with our employees than the IRS. The IRS has the best record in the Federal Government. Every single department in the executive branch has a better record in Congress.

Why should we have over 500 people on that chart not paying their taxes?

If it is such a great idea that you can implement this smoothly and simply for the IRS, why shouldn't it be easier to implement with Congress, which has about 10 percent of the employees but has four times more delinquency?

Well, people on the committee were all aflutter. They did not, on a technical basis, allow me to offer this amendment, so I went to the Rules Committee.

I think this is a good principle. People ought to pay their taxes. But if you are going to use a sledgehammer like this and it is possible to administer, why doesn't it apply to Congress?

Congress sets the rules. Congress funds the IRS. Congress passes that crazy Internal Revenue Code that people hate and then blame the IRS for administering what Congress passed.

Now, I am mystified. If this is not just a stunt to try and divert attention from the fact that Congress and the Republican leadership has been attacking the IRS, defunding it, making its job a difficult job under the best of circumstances, why not apply it to Congress?

Why shouldn't we set the example, particularly when we have more people under our employment who are on that big list? Don't we lead by example? Shouldn't people look to us?

The hypocrisy in not allowing my amendment to apply to Congress may be one of the reasons why Congress is the only entity in the Federal Government that has probably lower ratings than the IRS. It is because we are not willing to be accountable, because we play games, because we do things that we know will never be enacted into law but would be a good sound bite on somebody's Web site or a quick interview.

□ 1345

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. LEWIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. I am going to give all of my colleagues an opportunity to step up and to cosponsor legislation that would extend to Congress the same degree of scrutiny as they want to have for the IRS.

Even though the IRS problem is much smaller than ours—it is less than one-quarter—what is good for the goose is good for the gander. I don't know if this is sauce, but I would invite my colleagues to step up and not play games. Have Congress be accountable.

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, the American people deserve and expect IRS employees to follow the same tax laws that they administer. It is very simple.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. ROUZER), the sponsor of the legislation.

Mr. ROUZER. Mr. Speaker, there are several things that come to mind here. Number one, each Member of Congress is held accountable every 2 years by the voters of their respective district.

The last time I checked, this is referred to as the people's House. We are either here to represent our constituencies and our people back home or we are representing the bureaucracy of the Federal Government.

Now, I don't know what side my other colleagues, particularly on the other side of the aisle, care to be on as it relates to this, but I personally think it is important to represent our people back home, not the bureaucracies here in Washington, D.C.

The other thing I have heard as it relates to this bill is it is mean. My goodness. What is mean about this? All it says is, when the IRS can certify that their employees who are delinquent have a plan to get back into compliance, they are able to hire again. Until then, there is a freeze on hiring.

There is nothing mean about that. It is just good common sense. It is an encouragement, and it is an incentive for the IRS to clean up its act.

Then we hear about the funding issue. I have never ever, ever once heard the other side say that there was plenty of funding for any Federal agency, the IRS or any agency.

I will tell you what is mean and what is destructive is an obstructive, intrusive Federal Government that does not allow the individual American people and our families to do what they do best, and that is grow a business, make a profit, and create jobs.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. ROUZER. I read somewhere not long ago that rules and regulations of the IRS and elsewhere have cost this economy $2 trillion in the last fiscal year—$2 trillion.

If we got rid of the rules and regulations that are harming the economy and that are keeping our economy from growing at a robust pace, then the IRS would end up having a whole lot more money.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Will the gentleman yield for a question?

Mr. ROUZER. I yield to the gentleman from Oregon.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Why shouldn't we have the same rule apply to the 10,000 employees of the House of Representatives?

Mr. ROUZER. This bill is about accountability. Every Member of this Congress is held accountable every 2 years.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has again expired.

Mr. LEWIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS).

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 1206, which would restrict the IRS' ability to hire qualified personnel until it has documented that

each one of its 80,000 employees has not violated an unusual, uncertain tax standard. This legislation is totally unnecessary and promises to further undermine taxpayer service and tax enforcement.

First of all, it is totally unnecessary, suggesting that IRS employees are tax delinquent when, in reality, IRS employees demonstrate a tax compliance rate much higher than that of Members of Congress or other Federal agencies.

Indeed, 99 percent of IRS employees are tax compliant in contrast to only 95 percent of the House of Representatives.

Further, IRS employees already are subject to the Federal Payment Levy Program that can levy Federal salaries to recover tax debts. Certainly, this is a bill in search of a problem.

Secondly, this bill would further impede the ability of the IRS to serve taxpayers and enforce tax laws. Due to Republican insistence on dramatically reducing the IRS funding by over $1 billion in the last 5 years, the IRS has already experienced extraordinary reductions in personnel and service.

Seven former IRS Commissioners from both parties have spoken about this unprecedented reduction and its negative impact on our tax system.

My constituents, your constituents, and constituents all over the country have suffered enough. Our national debt has suffered. Every time we collect $1, that yields another $4 in revenue.

So I would urge my colleagues to vote against this bill. I certainly will do so.

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

Mr. Speaker, the gentleman notes the Federal Payment Levy Program. I would like to clarify that this bill would only treat an employee as seriously delinquent in the most egregious case where no payments were being made because wages can be levied under the Federal Payment Levy Program. Most employees would fall within one of the exceptions and would be within the definition of seriously delinquent.

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

Mr. LEWIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER).

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman's courtesy.

Mr. Speaker, I like the notion of accountability. It is true that we are up for election every other year, and I am sure that my friend from North Carolina has a system in his office to make sure that the 18 people who work for him are not on this list of over 500 people. But that is not a suitable accountability. We are talking about an entire agency.

I think there is no good reason that we shouldn't have the same sort of accountability for almost 10,000 people who work for the House of Representatives.

Shouldn't we collectively set an example? After all, there are four times as many people who have tax delinquency who work for the House of Representatives.

Why shouldn't we set an example? If it can be easily administered and we want to send a message, why don't we send a message that we care about it?

We can learn from the gentleman about his system to make sure there are no tax delinquencies in his office. I would like to know that, and I am sure the leadership of the House of Representatives would like to implement it here.

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

Mr. LEWIS. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO).

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to this bill. It would hamstring the IRS and would make no real impact on tax avoidance in the United States. This bill is shameful.

If we are serious about cracking down on tax dodging, we would focus on ending corporate inversions. Our government must stand up and say to these corporations: Stop cheating the American people.

We cannot continue to allow corporations to pretend that they are American companies reaping the benefits that this country has to offer and all the while claiming to be a foreign corporation when the tax bill comes. They don't pay their fair share of taxes in the United States.

Corporations are cheating the American people out of revenue that could make such a real difference in the lives of children and families so that they can dodge taxes and gouge prices.

A quote from an article in The New York Times last week by Nicholas Kristof says: ''The Real Welfare Cheats. One academic study found that tax dodging by major corporations costs the U.S. Treasury up to $111 billion a year. By my math, less than one-fifth of that annually would mean more than enough to pay the additional costs of full-day prekindergarten for all 4-year-olds''—that is about $15 billion—''prevent lead poisoning in tens of thousands of children ($2 billion), provide books and parent coaching for at-risk kids across the country ($1 billion) and end family homelessness ($2 billion).''

The administration has issued new rules to curb inversions, but the Congress—the Congress—needs to work to end this abhorrent practice.

It is absurd that the U.S. Treasury does not have the authority to share a list of inverted corporations with other government agencies. Congress can give them that authority.

It is up to us to make sure that Treasury can provide such a list. Congress also needs to strengthen the definition of an inverted corporation in the Tax Code. We should also consider inversions a deal breaker when we dole out Federal contracts.

Inverted corporations should not receive Federal contracts. They are bad actors, and we should not be rewarding them with lucrative contracts for moving their mailboxes to avoid paying their taxes in the United States.

That is why Congressman DOGGETT and I introduced the No Federal Contracts for Corporate Deserters Act, so that inverted companies will no longer be able to benefit from Federal contracts at the expense of companies who do pay their fair share.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. LEWIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentlewoman an additional 1 minute.

Ms. DELAURO. Instead of pursuing this unnecessary and misguided bill that would punish the IRS, but honestly makes very little impact on tax avoidance, what we should do is we need to go after those corporations. They game our system at the expense of the American taxpayer of up to almost $11 billion.

Wouldn't every American like to have an opportunity to be able to say that they can send their kid to school, that they don't have to risk homelessness, and that they can provide their kid with an education instead of these corporations taking and ripping off the United States?

Let's get real on the floor of this House of Representatives. Do you want to do the right thing? Do you want to do what is morally responsible? Then, let us end these inverted corporations. Let them pay their fair share of taxes or tell them that it is illegal and that we can prosecute them.

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

Mr. Speaker, let me make a point that is being lost in the debate here. Current law actually requires that the IRS fire willfully noncompliant employees unless they have reasonable cause for not paying their taxes. That is current law.

Yet, in most cases—61 percent of cases, Mr. Speaker—the IRS fails to even document why delinquent employees were not penalized.

In addition, Mr. Speaker—and I think the American people would be stunned to hear this—there are instances of IRS employees who are delinquent in their taxes who have not only not been fired, but have received bonuses.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. ROUZER).

Mr. ROUZER. Mr. Speaker, I have listened to this debate today and the discussion about inversions. There is a broader point that is missed here.

Inversions aren't even an issue if America is the most attractive place to do business. Capital investment goes where it is welcome, not where it is unwelcome.

Why do you hear about inversions today? It is because we have an outdated Tax Code that significantly needs reform. It is because we have more rules and regulations than we

have ever had before that are stifling the economy to the tune of $2 trillion annually. It is because we have a healthcare law in place that is killing the economy and job growth.

I can't tell you how many businesses I meet and go and visit all across the district that are sitting right at 49 employees. I wonder why. It is because of the healthcare law that is unworkable and destroying the American economy.

Again, capital and investment goes where it is welcome. How do we make that possible again? We reform our Tax Code so that this is the most attractive place to do business in the world. We get rid of the rules and regulations that make it so difficult to do business, all the rules and regulations coming out of labor, EPA, and everywhere else.

□ 1400

It is not just one, it is all of them. It is death by a thousand cuts. I can't tell you how many people I have talked to all across my district who say: DAVID, do you know what? Business is just no fun anymore.

And so they are plotting their exit strategy. They are not plotting the strategy of growth. They are plotting a strategy to exit and retire with what they have been able to achieve so far.

Here is the fundamental question of this bill. Are we going to be on the side of the American people? Or are we going to be on the side of the bureaucracy? Are we going to defend the EPA? Are we going to defend the IRS? Are we going to defend the Department of Labor? Are we going to defend all these rules and regulations that are killing the American economy? Or are we going to stand with the American people? That is the question before us today.

Mr. LEWIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. POCAN)

Mr. POCAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, this week represents another missed opportunity for Congress to take action on the challenges facing the American people.

I understand that we are at this point because the majority can't pass a budget, they can't take action to combat the Zika virus, they can't help the people of Flint, Michigan, and they can't address the opiate crisis.

Unfortunately, your right wing and your extreme right wing can't seem to agree with each other. Instead of taking real action, we are going to vote today to prohibit the IRS from hiring any new employees until the Treasury certifies that none of the agency's existing employees have unpaid taxes.

This legislation is both unworkable and unnecessary. IRS employees have a tax compliance rate of over 99 percent, but a hiring freeze will hinder our ability to go after the real tax cheats in this country, and that is something we should all be able to agree on.

Instead of arbitrary changes to the IRS, Congress needs to take action to make our Tax Code work for the American people instead of corporate interests, something that is conspicuously absent from your debate today.

Let's talk about how we can close loopholes that allow multinational corporations to pay nothing in Federal income taxes while working class Americans and small businesses pay their fair share.

Let's have a debate about the corporate tax dodgers who are able to shift their headquarters out of the country with a stroke of the pen, all while continuing to use our American infrastructure resources and customer base.

Let's talk about the thousands and thousands of tax-dodging corporations, including the 18,000 corporations that are registered to a single building in the Cayman Islands, a building full of post office boxes.

Today corporate profits are at an all-time high, but the share of Federal revenue from corporate taxes continues to shrink, dropping from 33 percent of the revenue in 1952 to less than 10 percent today.

While many corporations complain about the 35 percent statutory tax rate, the reality is the effective tax rate is much lower. In fact, a 2013 GAO report found that U.S. corporations pay an effective tax rate of just 12.6 percent. A recent study from Oxfam found that U.S. corporations are currently hiding $1.4 trillion in profits from domestic taxation in tax havens like in Panama and the Cayman Islands.

While corporations dodge paying their fair share in taxes, the burden falls to the middle class and the small businesses in all of our districts, and that is just wrong. That is the reality of why we are here with these useless bills in consideration this week. Once again, the majority can't pass a budget well past the required deadline. Let's have a serious conversation about how we can adjust our Tax Code away from the corporate interests and in favor of working families.

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

Mr. LEWIS. Mr. Speaker, we owe it to ourselves and we owe it to the American taxpayers to do better. As a body, we can do better, much better.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage each and every one of my colleagues to vote ''no,'' to vote ''no'' on this pointless and harmful piece of legislation. This bill is not worthy of the paper that it is written on. Vote ''no'' on this mean-spirited bill. It is not the way to go.

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

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

The Internal Revenue Service, the people who work there, most of them, like most Americans, pay their taxes. The Internal Revenue Service is charged, obviously, with administering the Tax Code, they are charged with collecting taxes.

I served a long time in the U.S. Attorney's Office, and I can tell you that the Internal Revenue Service is probably the most intimidating Federal agency of the whole panoply of Federal agencies. The American people have a right to expect IRS employees, these IRS employees who are auditing taxpayers, collecting taxes, to abide by Federal tax laws.

Mr. Speaker, that is why there is a law on the books that says the IRS can fire an employee who is delinquent on their taxes. That is why I found it so amazing that when the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration went and did an investigation, they found that the IRS, the bureaucrats that run the IRS, in 61 percent of the cases where you had an IRS employee that was delinquent on their taxes, that they were not fired.

Further, it was shocking to find that there were cases when these employees who were delinquent on their taxes were not only not fired, but they received a bonus.

This is unacceptable and the American people deserve better. Allowing IRS employees to continue administering our tax laws when they themselves are in violation of that law undermines the trust of the American taxpayer.

I urge my colleagues to vote ''yea,'' on my colleague, Mr. ROUZER's legislation, H.R. 1206. It is an important step forward in creating accountability and restoring the public's trust in the IRS.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia). All time for debate on the bill has expired.

The Chair understands that the amendment printed in House Report 114–502 will not be offered.

Pursuant to the rule, the previous question is ordered on the bill, as amended.

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.

MOTION TO RECOMMIT

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I have a motion to recommit at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentleman opposed to the bill?

Mr. KILDEE. I am opposed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion to recommit.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. Kildee moves to recommit the bill H.R. 1206 to the Committee on Ways and Means with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith with the following amendments:

Page 3, after line 11, insert the following:

(d) SPECIAL RULE OF APPLICABILITY.—This section shall not apply for any year if the Federal tax delinquency rate for either chamber of Congress is greater than the Federal delinquency tax rate for the Department of Treasury, as published by the Internal Revenue Service in its Federal Employee/Retiree Delinquency Initiative (FERDI) for the prior year.

Page 3, line 12, strike ''(D)'' AND INSERT ''(E)''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Michigan is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, this is the final amendment to the bill, which will not kill the bill or send it back to committee. If adopted, the bill will immediately proceed to final passage, as amended.

This Republican bill is unnecessary because the IRS already, as has been said, has rules in place to terminate employees that are delinquent on their taxes. But it is important to note that out of the entire Federal Government, the employees of the Treasury Department have the lowest tax delinquency rate, a rate of 1.19 percent, one-fourth the delinquency rate for the U.S. House of Representatives, which is over 5 percent, and substantially lower than the delinquency rate for the general public, which is about 9 percent.

My motion would stop this bill from going into effect in any year that the Federal tax delinquency rate of either the House or the Senate is more than that of the Treasury Department. It is that simple.

You know what we are doing here. We are taking precious time on the floor of this House of Representatives to deal with a bill that will go nowhere, that has no impact, and is simply a talking point to continue to beat up the IRS.

Meanwhile, we have public health crises taking place. The Zika crisis, which endangers pregnant women, what have we done on the floor of the House to deal with that real crisis? What have you brought to the floor for us to vote on? Nothing.

And in my own hometown of Flint, Michigan, a city of 100,000 people who now for 2 years have not been able to drink water that comes from the tap because it has been poisoned by the terrible decisions of its State government, a community in crisis that has every right to expect that its government, its Federal Government, would come to the aid of these people, 100,000 people poisoned by their own State government in crisis, 9,000 children under the age of 6 who for 2 years have had lead going into their bodies. Lead is a neurotoxin.

Three people today in Michigan have been criminally charged for inflicting this terrible tragedy on my hometown, a city in America in crisis, facing a disaster. And what is the response of the United States Congress? What is the response of the Republican leadership?

Not 1 minute devoted to coming up with a solution for the people in Flint. Nothing. More messaging bills, more talk, no help for people in crisis, no effort to deal with the Zika crisis, and nothing, nothing for this great American city facing an existential threat and facing generations of impacts, unless the State, that so far has failed to step up, and the Federal Government act.

I sat through the hearings that have been held here in the United States Congress and listened to Members, Democrats and Republicans, offer concern and offer sympathy. But when I introduced the Families of Flint Act, an effort that would share equally the responsibility for solving this terrible crisis between the State and Federal Government, rather than arguing about who was at fault—we all have a sense that the State of Michigan is at greatest fault—but rather than litigating that question, we seek to solve the problem.

Not only do I not yet have one Republican cosponsor who has been willing to step up, nearly 100 Democrats have, and I am sure there will be more. And I asked for help from my friends on the other side, but no time on this floor has been devoted to what is clearly one of the biggest crises facing this Nation—a great American city facing a threat, a literal threat to its existence, a threat to the health of those people, a threat to the future of those children.

One of the first votes I cast when I came here to the House of Representatives was to cast a vote to provide relief to the victims of Hurricane Sandy, not my district, not my community, not my region, but fellow Americans.

□ 1415

I was proud of that vote. I was proud that, at that moment, on that day, as a Member of the House of Representatives, I was first an American, and when other Americans were suffering, we were willing to help. Why not Flint? Why spend time on these meaningless political messaging bills when there are real problems in this country that need to be addressed?

Mr. Speaker, I ask that we put aside this nonsense and get to the work that the American people sent us here to do.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from North Carolina is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, the motion to recommit is an attempt by the minority to gloss over the IRS' failure to enforce its rules for IRS employee conduct and over its failure to protect taxpayer dollars.

Quite simply, this bill would require the IRS to report to Congress as to whether it has employees with seriously delinquent tax debt or to report why it cannot provide that information to Congress.

As I have said multiple times, the American people deserve and expect IRS employees to follow the same tax laws that they administer. That is an expectation of the IRS; so it is not surprising that the IRS would have a low rate of delinquency amongst its employees. IRS employees should know that it is current law. Current law actually requires that the IRS fire willfully tax-noncompliant employees unless they have reasonable cause for not paying their taxes. What is shocking is that, in most cases, Mr. Speaker, the IRS leadership fails to even document why delinquent employees are not penalized, and 61 percent were not penalized for having delinquent taxes.

This legislation, Mr. Speaker, is a critical step forward in restoring accountability and trust in the IRS. It is a trust that has been broken—a trust, I would argue, that doesn't exist between the people and the IRS.

I urge my colleagues to make the IRS accountable to the American people—to vote against the motion to recommit and to vote ''yes'' on H.R. 1206.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to recommit.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to recommit.

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

Mr. KILDEE. 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 and the order of the House of today, 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 2 o'clock and 18 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1530

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. COLLINS of Georgia) at 3 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the order of the House of today, proceedings will resume on questions previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

The motion to recommit on H.R. 1206;

Passage of H.R. 1206, if ordered; and

Passage of H.R. 4885.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. Remaining electronic votes will be conducted as 5-minute votes.

NO HIRES FOR THE DELINQUENT IRS ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to recommit on the bill (H.R. 1206) to prohibit the hiring of additional Internal Revenue Service employees

until the Secretary of the Treasury certifies that no employee of the Internal Revenue Service has a seriously delinquent tax debt, offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KILDEE), on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk will redesignate the motion.

The Clerk redesignated the motion

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to recommit.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 177, nays 245, not voting 11, as follows:

[Roll No. 159]

YEAS—177

Adams
Aguilar
Ashford
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Graham
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Honda
Huffman
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascrell
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Yarmuth

NAYS—245

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Cooper
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dold
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers (NC)
Emmer (MN)
Farenthold
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce
Russell
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NOT VOTING—11

Beyer
Fattah
Fincher
Hoyer
Israel
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Matsui
Payne
Sewell (AL)
Van Hollen
Wilson (FL)

□ 1550

Messrs. BROOKS of Alabama, GOSAR, GOHMERT, RATCLIFFE, DESJARLAIS, MEADOWS, NUGENT, SCALISE, HANNA, LAMALFA, MICA, SANFORD, BISHOP of Utah, and ROONEY of Florida changed their vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

Messrs. TAKANO, DANNY DAVIS of Illinois, Ms. TSONGAS, and Mr. NADLER changed their vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

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.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 254, noes 170, not voting 9, as follows:

[Roll No. 160]

AYES—254

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Ashford
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bera
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Brownley (CA)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Cooper
Costa
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dold
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers (NC)
Emmer (MN)
Farenthold
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Graham
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kirkpatrick
Kline
Knight
Kuster
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Peters
Peterson
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce
Russell
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup

Westerman
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NOES—170

Adams
Aguilar
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Honda
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Jolly
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascrell
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sherman
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—9

Beyer
Fattah
Fincher
Hoyer
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Matsui
Payne
Sewell (AL)
Van Hollen

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1558

Mr. NORCROSS changed his vote from ''aye'' to ''no.''

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY COMMITTEE ON RULES REGARDING AMENDMENTS TO H.R. 4498, HELPING ANGELS LEAD OUR STARTUPS ACT

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

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, this morning, the Rules Committee issued an announcement outlining the amendment process for H.R. 4498, the HALOS Act.

The amendment deadline has been set for Monday, April 25, at 3 p.m. For the text of the bill as reported by the Committee on Financial Services and for more details, please contact me or the Rules Committee Web site. Our staff is also available to answer any questions that may arise from any Member of our body.

IRS OVERSIGHT WHILE ELIMINATING SPENDING (OWES) ACT OF 2016

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, 5-minute voting will continue.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on passage of the bill (H.R. 4885) to require that user fees collected by the Internal Revenue Service be deposited into the general fund of the Treasury, 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.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 245, nays 179, not voting 9, as follows:

[Roll No. 161]

YEAS—245

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Cuellar
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dold
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers (NC)
Emmer (MN)
Farenthold
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce
Russell
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NAYS—179

Adams
Aguilar
Ashford
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Graham
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Honda
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascrell
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Scott (VA)

Scott, David	Takano	Velázquez
Serrano	Thompson (CA)	Visclosky
Sherman	Thompson (MS)	Walz
Sinema	Titus	Wasserman Schultz
Sires	Tonko	Waters, Maxine
Slaughter	Torres	Watson Coleman
Smith (WA)	Tsongas	Welch
Speier	Vargas	Wilson (FL)
Swalwell (CA)	Veasey	Yarmuth
Takai	Vela	

NOT VOTING—9

Beyer	Lujan Grisham (NM)	Sewell (AL)
Fattah	Matsui	Van Hollen
Fincher	Payne	
Hoyer		

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. POE of Texas) (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1609

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 159 on the Motion to Recommit H.R. 1206, I am not recorded due to a family emergency. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

On rollcall No. 160 on H.R. 1206, I am not recorded due to a family emergency. Had I been present, I would have voted "nay."

On rollcall No. 161 on H.R. 4885, I am not recorded due to a family emergency. Had I been present, I would have voted "nay."

HOUR OF MEETING ON TOMORROW

Mr. WALKER. 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 North Carolina?

There was no objection.

HONORING BOBBY ROBERTS

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

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in honor of the lifetime of civic contributions and the legacy of one of Arkansas' great leaders, Bobby Roberts.

Bobby will be greatly missed after his retiring earlier this year from a 27-year career of service to our library system, particularly in his helping assure the growth of educational libraries and humanities throughout our State.

In assuming the role of executive director of the Central Arkansas Library System in 1989, Bobby helped take the system to new heights—expanding from 6 libraries to a total of 14, including 9 branches in the city of Little Rock.

Bobby Roberts has made our central Arkansas community better read, better networked, and better led. I extend my best regards in this next chapter of his life.

HACK THE PENTAGON BUG BOUNTY PROGRAM

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

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, the Department of Defense kicked off the first bug bounty program in the history of the Federal Government. Like similar programs used in industry, Hack the Pentagon is based on a coordinated vulnerability disclosure process. If a security researcher finds a security problem in public-facing Web sites that are operated by the DOD, he or she can submit it for review. Should the bug represent a security risk, the Department will then pay the researcher a bounty for his or her work.

Coordinated vulnerability programs allow us to crowdsource security, encouraging curious minds to share their discoveries responsibly while providing accountability for institutions that operate or develop software.

I congratulate Secretary Carter for his leadership in creating this program, and I hope other agencies consider adopting programs like this of their own.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage any hackers out there to check out Hack the Pentagon site and help make the pilot program a success.

CAMERAS IN THE SUPREME COURT

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the Supreme Court of the United States heard the historical case of United States v. Texas, on Monday, regarding executive overreach.

People all over the country are interested in this case, but only a handful of spectators could see the public proceedings. The courtroom is small, and seating is limited. If the public has the right to be present in the courtroom of the Supreme Court, the public should be allowed to view the proceedings in their entirety on television or through live streaming.

Imagine the benefit to law school students to see actual proceedings of the Supreme Court. Also, the public is concerned and wants to know what happens behind those closed doors. It is time to educate the world about what actually occurs in the most important court in the world—the United States Supreme Court.

I was one of the first judges in Texas to allow cameras in the courtroom. All the naysayers said it wouldn't work, but it did. It was a benefit to all. Let the world know what happens in the Supreme Court. Allow these cameras.

Currently, Representative CONNOLLY from Virginia and I are cosponsoring a bill to do exactly this. It is better to show all of the proceedings to the public than to rely on a 30-second sound bite from a news reporter on television during the 5 o'clock news.

And that is just the way it is.

□ 1615

GOVERNMENT BY THE PEOPLE ACT

(Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, in this often colorful Presidential election, which has gotten much attention not only here in the United States but around the world, it occurred to me in watching the coverage last night that there is actually something the majority of Americans and probably a majority of both those who are supporting Donald Trump and those who are supporting BERNIE SANDERS agree on; that is that they believe Washington, D.C., is bought and paid for.

Mr. Speaker, as someone who has chosen public service as a profession, that deeply concerns me.

A majority of Americans believe right now that we are all tainted by this campaign finance process, even though I believe that most who have chosen this profession are good and honorable people who are wanting to do the right thing. The fact is we are all tainted by the way in which our campaigns are financed, but we can change that.

It is time for public financing of elections. It is time for H.R. 20, Government By the People Act. Let's get all of the outside money entirely out of the system and return the confidence that the people will have in their elected officials.

HONORING DOYLE AND REBECCA CORMAN FOR THEIR IMPACT ON CENTRE COUNTY YOUTH

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate Doyle and Becky Corman for earning the Joe and Sue Paterno Community Impact Award in recognizing their dedication and their contributions to the youth of Centre County, Pennsylvania.

The Juniata Valley Council of the Boy Scouts of America, which I had spent more than three decades serving within the Council as a scoutmaster, executive board member, and president, offers the award. Given my history with the Council, I can tell you that the Cormans follow a long line of men and women who have dedicated their lives to the service of their community.

Mr. Corman served as a State Senator from Centre County for more than 20 years, from 1977 to 1998. Over the years, he and his wife, Becky, have provided vital support for community organizations, including the Boy Scouts, the YMCA, a scholarship to Penn State University, and much, much more.

They are also the parents of Pennsylvania State Majority Leader Jake Corman. The Cormans are a real credit to Centre County and its communities.

I congratulate the Cormans on this award, and I look forward to many more years of their work for our region's youth.

HOUSTON FLOODING ASSISTANCE

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I just returned from my district which I might say is under water with, again, another torrential rain that has caused so many Houstonians and those in the surrounding areas to suffer. We did this with Tropical Storm Allison last year in May 2015, and now again in 2016.

You see the depth of devastation by the families that I visited at M.O. Campbell and in apartment complexes. First, let me thank the mayor and county government officials who are working so hard.

We need to move as quickly as possible for the Presidential declaration of natural disaster. I know it is a process, and I accept that. But we also have to have a way of investing in the infrastructure of overcoming the terrible aspect of places where water comes with no place to go.

We need a national infrastructure effort and one that involves the State of Texas and Houston, Harris County, as well because we lost eight lives.

Finally, let me say, Mr. Speaker, as I indicate to the Texas Department of Transportation that receives Federal funds, we must put flashing lights and signals where there are underpasses where people have died. We have to save lives.

I will continue to fight for housing and for the Federal declaration and for FEMA. People are suffering, and we are going to work with them and give them hope.

EARTH DAY

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

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Earth Day, which we will celebrate this Friday. Each year on Earth Day we recommit to preserving a healthy and sustainable environment for our future generations.

When Pope Francis addressed Congress over 6 months ago, he called for a courageous and responsible effort to redirect our steps and to avert the most serious effects of the environmental deterioration caused by human activity.

That is why I believe that the greatest thing that this Chamber can do right now in honor of Earth Day is to fully reauthorize the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

The Land and Water Conservation Fund has provided critical funding to help protect and preserve our natural areas, our water resources, and our cultural heritage.

So it is an important source of funding that allows so many of our Nation's urban youth to understand the environment, to get to know the wilderness, to gain that valuable understanding and respect for wildlife and our environment.

We must act responsibly and permanently reauthorize the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

EARTH DAY

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

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Mr. Speaker, this Earth Day, we celebrate the historic steps that most of the world's countries, from tiny island nations to the biggest polluters, are taking to reduce pollution and to improve the state of our climate.

On Earth Day, more than 160 countries, including the United States, are signing the landmark Paris climate agreement, taking the next step toward creating a healthier and a safer environment for our communities and protecting our families and our children's health.

I am proud that the United States is leading this effort. I urge my colleagues to throw out those tired and false talking points about international inaction.

Instead, capitalize on this global effort by supporting a swift transition away from dirty fuels toward a future of low-cost, locally made clean energy.

This is our time to lead. Happy Earth Day 2016.

HONORING TONY R. RICHISON

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

Ms. FUDGE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in honor of Tony Richison, a veteran from Ohio's 11th Congressional District who died on March 30.

Mr. Richison and I were friends for many years. He was a respected leader in our community and served as a member of my selection panel for military service academy nominations.

Known for his big personality and love of service to his Nation, Mr. Richison entered the Army at age 16. He served for 10 years during the Korean war and received a Bronze Star for his bravery.

As a champion for returning servicemen and -women, he founded Veterans for Ohio, a nonprofit that provided assistance to veterans in Cuyahoga County.

Through his work, more than 30 veterans won disability claims and more than 80 gained much-needed housing and medical assistance.

Mr. Richison was a patriot, a community leader, and an advocate. The State of Ohio is indebted to him for his service and sacrifice. He will be greatly missed.

CONGRATULATING EAST BRUNSWICK HIGH SCHOOL

(Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the hard work of East Brunswick High School's We the People team. We the People is a civic education program that has reached more than 28 million students since its inception in 1987.

Each year approximately 1,200 students from across the country demonstrate their knowledge of complex constitutional principles in both historical and contemporary contexts.

This week a talented group of young minds from East Brunswick High School in my district will compete for one of ten spots in the final round of competition. I wish both the coach and the team the best of luck and continued success.

CONGRATULATING SECOND CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT APPOINTEES TO MILITARY ACADEMIES

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

Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the following young men and women from the Second Congressional District on their appointments to one of our Nation's military academies:

Miss Sara Elizabeth Burton from Hedgesville High School in Berkley County and Mr. Zane Kessler from Teays Valley Christian Academy in Putnam County have both received appointments to the United States Air Force Academy.

Mr. Drew Polczynski from Jefferson High School in Jefferson County received appointments from both the Merchant Marine Academy and West Point. His mother, Julie, informs me that he plans on attending West Point in the fall.

Mr. Charles Willis from Carlisle High School received a Presidential appointment to West Point.

Finally, Mr. Jeremy Hammes from Herbert Hoover High School in Kanawha County and Mr. Seth Kirby from Wirt County High School have both received appointments from West Point.

Congratulations to all of these hardworking, dedicated, intelligent, and patriotic young men and women on their appointments.

NATIONAL FINANCIAL CAPABILITY MONTH

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

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I join President Obama in recognizing April as National Financial Capability Month and highlight the vital role that the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants and State CPA societies play in educating all Americans.

CPAs have been leaders in increasing the financial capacity of Americans by creating and distributing free programs, tools, and resources.

Through the American Institute of CPAs' 360 Degrees of Financial Literacy program, some tens of thousands of CPAs volunteer to educate Americans and to open doors to the middle class.

The AICPA National CPA Financial Literacy Commission leads a nationwide effort to advance financial literacy. This is the tenth year of the Feed the Pig program, the AICPA's public service campaign along with the Ad Council that provides free resources to make smart saving decisions.

Literacy begins with the letters A, B, C. Financial literacy begins with the letters C, P, A.

POVERTY, OPPORTUNITY, AND UPWARD MOBILITY

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

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of this Special Order.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, in today's Special Order, my colleagues and I will focus on the important work being done in all of our communities to expand opportunity, alleviate poverty, and promote upward mobility for all Americans.

I want to personally acknowledge Speaker RYAN for his focus and leadership on this important issue and his efforts to energize local leaders to explore new, effective policies for combating poverty in the United States.

In 2014, we marked 50 years since the Great Society program was commenced by President Johnson. Over the past 25 years, Congress has taken numerous steps intended to reduce poverty in the United States, but these have not had the long-term effects that many expected.

This is largely because of an undue focus on welfare reform rather than just identifying specifically and focusing on addressing the underlying causes of poverty.

Identifying opportunities for self-improvement, addressing the increased growth in poverty and the pernicious effects across the U.S. are of keen interest to me, particularly given Arkansas' elevated poverty rate of 19.7 percent of our population.

□ 1630

I believe it is crucial to focus our attention on identifying ways to empower individuals to take control of their own livelihoods and futures so that they no longer feel that they must rely on external programs that, at best, only play an ancillary role in improving economic circumstances and, at worst, perpetuate intergenerational cycles of poverty.

In these important discussions surrounding poverty in America, I also believe it is critical that we focus on our rural, as well as urban, populations. In my view, the President's policies and proposals have largely ignored the needs of our rural communities that continue to struggle.

Arkansas has a significant population of rural, low-income families, whose hardships are often overlooked in the bigger picture of poverty reduction. That is because rural poverty occurs in lower population concentrations, and some deem the plight of rural poverty to be less acute than that in urban areas. It is important that both faces of poverty be recognized and that solutions be applicable and readily adaptable to a variety of circumstances and regions.

This past year, all of us in the House were graced with a visit by the Holy Father, Pope Francis. The Holy Father has stated that the principle of subsidiarity affords freedom at every level of society to work and to innovate.

The Pope argued passionately that day that attempts to resolve all problems through uniform regulations or technical interventions can lead to overlooking the complexities of local problems which demand the active participation of all members of the community.

In tackling the social challenges of the globe, the Pope expressed there are no uniform recipes. There is no one path to a solution. Instead, the Pope called on the principles of stewardship, subsidiarity, and collaboration to seek solutions.

Last year I started the Community Empowerment Initiative in my hometown of Little Rock to consider key strategies for tackling poverty reduction in Arkansas' Second Congressional District. The CEI also seeks to encourage community engagement and help educate communities to value their strength and identify their assets to foster community ownership and encourage individuals to be aware and involved in rejuvenating our communities and lives.

I am grateful for my colleagues who have joined me today to discuss this important topic. I look forward to sharing some of the success stories from my own district and highlighting action that Congress can take to support local initiatives.

I yield to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. WALKER). I invite him to come to the podium and talk about his experiences. He is a freshman Member of Congress with me. I have very much enjoyed getting to know Representative WALKER. He brings a unique perspective to this. I welcome my friend from North Carolina.

Mr. WALKER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Arkansas for taking the lead on this and talking about some issues that are very important to us. I do agree, since President Johnson's War on Poverty began in 1964, the United States taxpayers have spent over $22 trillion on anti-poverty programs. Yet, for many places in this country, poverty is worse, hunger is worse. Even in our district in the triad, we have places where there are food deserts and food insecurities.

After 50 years, we have to ask ourselves, have we seen any real progress in our communities. Families have been caught up in this generational cycle of dependence that has depleted the resources in many of our communities.

Somewhere along the way, the Federal Government missed the mark. We have created programs that measure success on how many people we put on Federal programs, not measured by how many people we are able to move off programs for upward mobility.

Last week, former Congressman J. C. Watts and I toured North Carolina's Sixth District, my home district. We saw passionate community members working to combat many aspects of poverty. Some were working with limited Federal Government assistance; some were doing so without any involvement from the Federal Government. These community members have found successful ways to feed the hungry in our food deserts and educate former inmates to become employable, contributing members of our society.

One nonprofit that we toured was the Welfare Reform Liaison Project in Greensboro, North Carolina. They work with a coalition of community partners under Project Re-Entry. Their goal is bringing the inside to the outside by assisting former offenders returning to the community after serving prison sentences.

It is not just about the program. We have to love the least of these—as people of faith, we are called to do so—and understanding that sometimes we must

put the relationship before the policy to achieve maximum success.

Another wonderful nonprofit we toured was BackPack Beginnings, 100 percent volunteer driven and community run. They directly provide food and necessities to children in need to make a positive and lasting impact on their health and their future well-being.

One county has no State or federally funded weekend feeding programs. These people have come behind to offer assistance for schoolchildren, and BackPack Beginnings works to fill that gap, all without the Federal Government's involvement, serving 4,000 children in 38 county schools.

Members of the people's House are committed to finding ideas that work to address the underlying causes of poverty and empower local community. I am proud to be part of that with my dear friend and colleague, the gentleman from Arkansas, FRENCH HILL.

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. WALKER for his contributions. I appreciate his thoughts.

When I think about one of the most challenging things that we face in our country, I think about homelessness. When I first became a Member of Congress, it was one of particular interest to me to learn what was happening in Little Rock about homelessness because Arkansas has the third highest rate for children and families in homelessness, so it was a keen issue.

One place I found that was a major success story in using private money and some public money was an entity called Our House. It was founded back in 1987 to address the gap in services for central Arkansas' working homeless and homeless families. They now have a 7-acre campus in downtown Little Rock, and Our House empowers homeless and near-homeless families and individuals to succeed in the workplace.

Between 110 and 120 men, women, and children call Our House's campus home every night, and it serves about 1,800 people annually, about 75 percent of whom are coming to Our House completely homeless. But the shelter's goal is not just simply to provide a safe place for a few nights. It is to permanently break the cycle of homelessness by equipping the working homeless with the skills to be successful in the workforce.

In her decade of leadership of Our House as executive director, Georgia Mjartan has done a remarkable job overseeing the expansion and growth of the shelter into a one-stop shop to address the root causes of poverty. She has collected the many stories of hope from the people who have been touched by her work.

One that particularly touched me was the story of a young woman who didn't graduate from high school, was unable to pay her rent and support her children on the very little money that she made from working in the fast food industry.

When she got to Our House, she was dejected and without a sense of purpose or hope for the future. Within a few months, she was receiving training that she needed to earn her GED, and she was securing a job that paid a living wage.

Two years after leaving Our House, she went back to tell Georgia about the turn her life had taken. As the head teacher for a daycare center, she had acquired her own place, continued the saving practices that she had learned at Our House, and was putting money away for her own kids to go to college.

Mr. Speaker, that is the kind of model that we need in this country to make a permanent break for our working poor.

I now yield to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. CHABOT). I ask my friend, a distinguished member of the Committee on Small Business, to talk about his views on what we can be doing in this area.

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I thank the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. HILL) for his leadership in this very important area.

Mr. Speaker, when families in this country struggle, it is appropriate that we take reasonable steps to help them through a rough patch. We have several programs designed to do just that, like the Food Stamp program. It is also known now as the SNAP program, or the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, which provides a short-term safety net for those who have fallen on hard times.

However, the Food Stamp program, like most welfare programs, was never intended to become a way of life for its recipients. Unfortunately, that is exactly what has happened. That is what has happened to far too many people in this country. It is supposed to be temporary help to the truly needy. Unfortunately, to many, it has become a permanent way of life.

To address this growing problem, we need to take steps to help people get off public assistance and back on their own feet. One way to do this is to enact strong work and job training requirements for those able to work.

That is why I introduced legislation, H.R. 4849, a couple weeks ago to restore and strengthen work requirements for able-bodied adults enrolled in the Food Stamp program, or SNAP program. Under this legislation, in order to continue to receive benefits, those recipients able to work must either find employment—which is what we would certainly prefer—or participate in a job training program in order to enable them to get work or to volunteer for the community in some eligible capacity.

So real help to other people in need in the community. That seems very reasonable that somebody who is receiving benefits, tax dollars, would actually give something back to the community or be on the path to better themselves so that they can get off the need to rely on their fellow citizens and on their own two feet, as we said before.

The legislation also addresses waste and abuse in the Food Stamp—or SNAP—program by expunging unused benefits after a 90-day period. The intent of the Food Stamp program is to assist those families in need on an as-needed basis. If a recipient hasn't utilized all their benefits after 90 days, which is a reasonable period of time, I think, then the recipient has not really demonstrated the need for those funds. So let's use those unused funds to help some other truly needy people or let's give that money back to the taxpayers, where it came from in the first place.

Ohio did a study and they found that in 25 people, there was $300,000 sitting in the SNAP account that they hadn't used, just building up. Unfortunately, that is oftentimes funds that are going to end up in either fraud or are going to be used for other purposes that was never intended for food stamps.

Food stamps are supposed to help people, the truly needy, not be there to end up being used for gambling purposes, buying lottery tickets, or to buy drugs or alcohol or anything like that. So this takes some of the abuses, I think, out of the system.

Mr. Speaker, these are commonsense reforms that will help make sure that food stamps go to those who actually need them while at the same time protecting our tax dollars from those who would take advantage of the system.

I want to thank, again, the gentleman from Arkansas, FRENCH HILL, for his leadership on this issue. This is a very important issue. There is a lot of money, unfortunately, that gets wasted in a lot of these programs. Let's make sure that the safety net is really helping people and not being abused. I thank him for his leadership on this issue.

Mr. HILL. I thank my distinguished friend from Ohio.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DOLD). A distinguished member of the Committee on Ways and Means and a former member of the Committee on Financial Services, Mr. DOLD has been quite keen on ways to improve opportunities for people throughout the metropolitan Chicago area. I welcome the gentleman and look forward to his remarks.

Mr. DOLD. Mr. Speaker, I certainly want to thank my good friend from Arkansas for leading this Special Order on a topic that, frankly, is extremely important. It is a nonpartisan issue from my perspective because really what we are talking about is how do we enable some of the neediest folks among us in our communities all across our country to be able to provide for themselves. I think, obviously, one of those key ingredients is about getting a good job.

Ultimately, as we look over the past period of time, since the War on Poverty began, our country has spent over $20 trillion—over $20 trillion—to move

the needle from about 15 percent in poverty to what it is today at about 14.6 percent in poverty. I submit to you that that is criminal, that so many today, after spending so many resources, are still in poverty.

Whether it be housing needs, whether it be nutrition needs, ultimately what this really boils down to, I would argue, is that we need to be focusing on how do we get evidence-based reforms. How do we focus on outcomes? How do we know that the assistance that is out there—because there isn't a community member out there who doesn't want to help a neighbor.

I would submit to you, the stories that I see when I go up into north Chicago, into Waukegan, into Des Plaines and into Round Lake, these are areas around my district where, honestly, we have people who are struggling to make ends meet, those who require assistance.

Frankly, we need to be able to have a springboard and, frankly, we need to think outside of the box about programs that are enabling individuals to be able to have better outcomes so that we don't have a cycle of poverty, but yet we are able to break that cycle and actually talk about TANF reforms, talk about how do we get some education reforms.

□ 1645

Just last week I spent some time over at the Lake County Jail talking to inmates who oftentimes come out of prison with little hope of being able to find a job. And we know the statistics right off the bat. If they don't find a job within 6 months, they have a 66 percent chance of going right back into prison. That doesn't help them, that doesn't help our community. That is at a huge cost. We need to focus on our outcomes.

So one of the things that certainly I think that we ought to be looking at, one of the things that the Committee on Ways and Means has been looking at, and a piece of legislation that I have offered, is talking about how we get people into a job, accelerating individuals, accelerating those hard-working Americans that want to be able to stand on their own two feet in a job.

And this would be a pilot program. Because the one thing that we do know, Mr. HILL, is that a one-size-fits-all mentality is not going to work. We know a one-size-fits-all mentality doesn't work with education, a one-size-fits-all mentality doesn't work with pick your program.

We need to allow innovators in our country that know what works well in Arkansas, what works well in New York. We are going to hear from our good friend, Mr. REED, if he ever decides to get up and get to a microphone. We are going to hear from all those folks that, again, a one-size-fits-all mentality does not work.

This would be a pilot program that would enable these institutions, that would enable different States to run a pilot program to enable employers to be able to pick up, let's say, half the cost of a person's salary for the first 12 months. So the government would pick up half, the employer would pick up half. The idea there is that we would be able to offset some of that on-the-job training that is so very, very critical.

The other thing that I think we ought to be looking at is social impact partnerships, another interesting idea. Representative TODD YOUNG, also a member of the Committee on Ways and Means, introduced a bill that I am a cosponsor of. It is a bipartisan piece of legislation that will allow private investment in local communities for new public-private partnerships.

I think this is enormously important. If the programs are successful, then the government will have reimbursed the investors, which is a practical way of doing it. We are going to reward success, and it will breed more success.

The unemployment rate today, if we were to go and pick up the paper, will say it is around 5 percent. And yet I know if you go into Waukegan, Illinois, today, for African American males, the unemployment rate is 43 percent. That is criminal. Frankly, we can and must do better. So it is about coming up with ideas about rewarding outcomes, about focusing on job training, about focusing on education.

At the Lake County Jail last week, I went in and they were actually doing GED classes. I am thrilled that we are actually trying to empower people with education and some of the skills necessary to empower them when they get out, but we have so much more work to do, so much more work to be able to allow them to be able to have a chance at getting that job to be able to provide food for their families, be able to put a roof over their head.

The Lake County Housing Authority, run by David Northern, again, is an organization that is working hard and is actually doing some innovative things. They are actually putting people into work, giving them a roof over their head, and actually having some forced savings. They are putting them through a program so that when they graduate from this program, they actually are graduating not only with a good job, they are graduating with a roof over their head. They are also graduating with the savings account full of about anywhere between $4,000, $6,000, and $8,000—savings that they didn't know that they could have, putting them on a completely different path.

This weekend I was at the Eddie Washington Center up in Waukegan. They just had their graduation. These are grown men that have hit rock bottom. They have gone in for help. And the Eddie Washington Center is an agency that will provide a roof over their head for these men. They will get them jobs and tasks to do in order to help run the facility. They will get them put into a job, and then they work through this process. It is a program that lasts anywhere between 6 and 9 months. But at the end of that 6 to 9 months, they have a graduation.

Again, these are individuals that have a job. They have built up that ability, that discipline. They have got a roof over their head, they have had a change in their life, and they have been put on a different path. They, too, also are required to save and have a bank account.

It is about trying to do things differently. Again, I think that is what we are trying to do. We are trying to do things differently and have an outcome, because the one thing that we know is that poverty doesn't discriminate, in the sense that it can be in Arkansas, Illinois, New York, and Nevada. It can be all over the place. Frankly, we need to find a way that we minimize the amount of poverty in our Nation.

So I am delighted to be here today. And I want to thank my good friend from Arkansas for not only organizing this time here on the floor, but for shining a light on things that, frankly, we have so much more work to do on. So much more work to do. Frankly, we need to make sure that they know that we want better outcomes. We want better outcomes for these individuals that are struggling day in and day out.

So, again, I am honored to be up here again today. I want to thank my good friend for yielding to me. I look forward to working with you and, frankly, all the Members of this body because in the 114th Congress, we need to make it our mission to end poverty as we know it. I look forward to working with you all.

Mr. HILL. I thank the gentleman from Illinois. I appreciate his passion for this issue and his hands-on approach about finding things in his community and district that work. I believe that we all can share that information and learn from each other, which is a key purpose for this hour.

Mr. Speaker, last week, Representative TIPTON and I were up in Manhattan. We went to The Doe Fund. What an impressive operation that is. I came away so renewed in faith. What is going on there in New York, where they face an enormous avalanche of challenges, is so well tackled by the men and women of The Doe Fund. I look forward to talking about that, but it is a nice segue for me to yield to the gentleman from western New York, (Mr. REED), my good friend and a distinguished member of the Committee on Ways and Means, for his views on how we can tackle poverty.

Mr. REED. I thank the gentleman from Arkansas for yielding and for taking the leadership in putting this Special Order together to discuss poverty in America.

Before I get into some of the substance, I want to talk about this from a personal perspective. I have 11 older brothers and sisters. My father passed when I was 2. I was raised by a single

mom. It was tough. But she always taught me the lessons of life that have carried me through, and that is to have a good attitude, a positive, optimistic attitude, a commitment to hard work, a commitment to discipline, and a commitment to respect our fellow man.

So I come here to this floor this evening as a Republican to say to all of America: We care. We care about our fellow American citizens that are stuck in poverty for generations.

As my colleague from Illinois had indicated, we have spent over $20 trillion out of the Federal coffers of hard-working American taxpayer dollars on the war on poverty. And the harsh reality is that war has been lost.

The policies and the visions of old must change. We must attack this issue in a new model by, first, demonstrating to our fellow citizens that we do care, that we are not here to penalize, to judge, but what we are here to do is offer a new vision.

I know my colleagues on the other side of the aisle often chastise us Republicans as people who want to take things away and that we don't really care about those people that are suffering in America. That frustrates me, that angers me, because we do care.

And what we are saying to those fellow American citizens is that we are offering a new way of dealing with this issue. We want to empower you. We want to provide an opportunity for you and your family to flourish.

How do we do that?

How we do that is what we are talking about here tonight, as my good friend from Arkansas has opened his remarks with. We empower people to have an opportunity to have the tools that really will combat and cure poverty in America, and that is a good-paying job, a good education.

Before my father passed, my mom and dad had a promise to each other. They recognized and they talked to me and now I am passing it on to my kids in my household that education is key to the success that you will experience in life in America.

So what we need to do is make sure that education is provided to this generation in a way that empowers them with the tools to pull themselves out of poverty. We also have to recognize that the work ethic in America is what makes us strong, that provide these opportunities, and that we should not have policies out of Washington, D.C., on this war on poverty that have penalized work as people try to rebuild themselves and pull themselves out of poverty.

We should have a reform of what they call the welfare cliff. What that essentially is, if you are going back to work, you are essentially penalized because your benefits are pulled away from you.

What we need is a commonsense system that says: We are going to stand with you. Life is going to throw you curve balls. We will give you a helping hand and stand with you so long as we stand together and you move yourself and stand on your own two feet as you go forward.

That is what this welfare cliff reform is all about. It is about making sure that the programs have resources that encourage and promote education and technical training and skills that people can then put to their own uses so that they can have a job for themselves and their family.

I will end with this. We have a system, too, that essentially says: In this war on poverty, we are going to gauge success by how much money you spend on this program. We are going to gauge success by how many people come to the government office and see you on a day-to-day basis.

What we need is a system that changes that whole metric and that essentially says to the system: You know what we are going to gauge success on? How many people you move out of poverty and into that position where they stand on their own two feet. It is not just the money that is spent, but the lives that you fundamentally have changed because you stood with them through that difficult time.

So as we go forward, I applaud my colleague from Arkansas. I applaud my colleagues that have come here tonight to demonstrate that, as Republicans on this side of the aisle, we are not going to continue the status quo of decades of failure on the war on poverty.

We need to do better. We have an obligation. I will roll up my sleeves with any colleague on the other side of the aisle and say: This is the time we come together. Because it is not a Democrat or Republican issue. That is an American issue. And enough is enough.

Mr. HILL. I thank the gentleman from New York. I appreciate his comments and I appreciate his personal testimony today about the importance of this issue. It is a bipartisan issue. It requires all of us working together.

The concept behind our discussion is new ideas, new directions, because what we have done for the last 50 years is not working. And somebody who has been a leader on the Committee on Financial Services for seeking out the best ideas, particularly in how we can tackle a housing solution for so many people in need of quality housing, is the distinguished gentleman from Missouri (Mr. LUETKEMEYER), chairman of our Subcommittee on Housing and Insurance.

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. I thank the gentleman from Arkansas. We certainly are appreciative of all the remarks of my colleagues who are here this evening—and Mr. HARDY, who is following—with regard to this important issue and something that the Speaker is focusing on, which is poverty and upward mobility.

Mr. HILL took time out of his schedule last year to invite me to his district. We were able to go down and visit with some of the residents in public housing units, and we had some great conversations with them.

□ 1700

We also met with some community leaders there in Little Rock and discussed the underlying causes of poverty and those charged with identifying opportunities for people in their communities.

I certainly appreciate the gentleman's commitment to this conversation. I know that he is patient about it. He has spent lots of time with it and is again, this evening, spending more time, so I congratulate him on that.

This past fall, I had the honor of joining several of my colleagues in New Orleans, and we were examining the state of housing in New Orleans 10 years after Hurricane Katrina. We wanted to find out what the local housing authority had done right, what they had done wrong, what their problems, what their pitfalls, and what their barriers have been in trying to get things done because, basically, they had to start from scratch.

Everybody saw the devastation of the hurricane, people living in houses that were devastated, if they were still standing at all, and so it was very interesting to visit that. We visited not just the sites, but the residents themselves.

I will never forget the story of one of the ladies who lived in public housing there. She lived there all her life, lived in public housing all her life, and she was raising her children in public housing; but she had a goal that she was going to escape this public housing, and she was going to have her children escape public housing and someday own her own home.

To her credit, that particular day, she was so tickled, I will never forget, the smile was from ear to ear. Her son had just received notification that he was approved for a loan to be able to go buy his first house. He had escaped public housing and had fulfilled her dream for not only herself, but her children as well. It was very encouraging, rewarding, and you could see the pride in her.

I think that is the thing that we need to be looking for for all of the folks who don't want handouts, they want hands up. They want to be able to provide for themselves and lift themselves out of this. All we need to do is enable that to happen.

So we must replicate that story, and I think that we can do that.

I am proud to say that the House Republicans are leading the charge by doing this with this Speaker's Task Force on Poverty, Opportunity, and Upward Mobility, and with the hard work of Mr. HILL this evening putting this together to explain to people our positions, to identify new ways to promote independence and dignity.

As chairman of the Subcommittee on Housing and Insurance, we are a part of that task force. We are a part of this discussion that we are having, and I am glad to be a part of it as well.

We must develop 21st century solutions for housing assistance with a

higher purpose than simply perpetuating programs that marginalize American families.

Over the past 16 months, as part of my duties as chairman, I have spent time meeting with public housing authorities from not just across my own State, but around the United States as well. One thing is clear: the status quo is not good enough.

In our committee, we have also commemorated the 50th anniversary of the Department of Housing and Urban Development by holding a series of hearings to examine whether or not HUD has fulfilled its mission of providing housing opportunities for those in need.

Since fiscal year 2002, the Federal Government has given more than $550 billion to HUD, 60 percent of which, the annual funding goes to the Office of Public and Indian Housing. The Section 8 budget alone increased 71 percent between fiscal years 2002 and 2013.

Unfortunately, for HUD, success isn't measured in the number of Federal programs or in dollars spent. I have had no indication from anyone that the growing need is anywhere close to being met. The reality is that the funding situation isn't getting better, so asking for more Federal dollars isn't the solution. It is time to roll up our sleeves and work together to build a stronger housing safety net.

I am proud to work with my colleague and my friend, Mr. CLEAVER from Missouri—two guys from the ''Show-Me'' State to show them how to get it done—and we passed H.R. 3700. I am the first to point out this legislation wouldn't necessarily change the world, and it won't end homelessness overnight or meet overwhelming need for affordable housing, but it does reform the outdated and duplicative housing policies and programs that haven't been touched in decades and represents a first step in a long journey to reforming our housing system. The bill passed the House by a vote of 427–0, and I encourage the Senate to pass it without further delay.

Let me close by throwing a few more statistics and a couple of other little thoughts I have here as well out very quickly.

I had the opportunity to visit with some folks from Great Britain; and when we talk about a housing problem or discuss housing in this country, we don't really know the size of the problem because, in Great Britain, they have 17 percent of their people living in public housing, where here it is about 4. The average age of the child living in Great Britain with their parents is 35. Holy Cow. This is not acceptable, but that is where they are with their housing programs in their country.

In our country, 60 percent of the people that live in public housing are seniors and disabled. So a lot of times, let's remember, we are talking about the 40 percent whom we need to find ways to move them out, to empower them, to encourage them to be able to get out on their own, but the other 60 percent are folks that probably need to be in this particular subsidized situation where they can have an opportunity to live in their own home.

I mentioned a while ago I was in New Orleans, and it was interesting to see that the part that they had rebuilt was interesting from the standpoint that it wasn't just building these tenements where people would be stacked on top of each other, but they were building communities. They would build mixed-use buildings, where you have not just people who would rent and be subsidized, but people who would rent and be able to afford to rent themselves, as well as people who owned the property. These mixed-use properties, by doing this, they were able to actually form communities.

So I think there is a model there for us to look at and to begin to consider how to get these things done.

Another thing, the PHA Administrator came by my office last week. He was in town, and we discussed, again, how to work with this 40 percent to get them to find ways to get out on their own and to enable them. Work requirements are something. He said: Hey, they work.

If you give people the opportunity to work and perhaps transition from what they have, as Mr. REED talked about a while ago, I believe it was, this welfare cliff, if you can find a way to sort of feather that thing so that they can slowly transition off, there are lots of folks who want to be able to move from subsidized apartments to their own home, to owning their own home.

I think, at the end of the day, we in Congress need to find a way to get our economy going because the best way to solve this whole problem is with a job. If people have a job, a good-paying job, they can afford to go out and begin to rent on their own and then, hopefully, be able to, at some point, own on their own.

That should be the dream for everyone, like this lady, a while ago, I was talking about from New Orleans. That was her dream. That is the dream of most people in this country. If that is the case, we need to find a way to do that, and the best way is to improve our economy so they have jobs to be able to pay that.

At the end of the day, I think we need to remember that we want people to have not just a place where they can live, but where they can have a life. I think if that is our goal, we will keep our priorities in perspective, and we will be able to do the job of helping our citizens, our constituents, and the folks of this great country.

Mr. Speaker, I thank, again, the gentleman from Arkansas for his great work on this and having me be a part of it this evening.

Mr. HILL. I thank my colleague from Missouri. I enjoy so much our service together on the Financial Services Committee, and I appreciate his leadership in tackling the puzzle of how to create a housing mission that helps people that need it the most.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. HARDY), my good friend, who is a fellow member of the freshman class in this Congress.

Mr. HARDY. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend from Arkansas for coming and hosting this serious discussion on the serious issues in this country.

According to the Census Bureau, 15 percent of the population is living below the poverty level. For States that were hit hardest in the 2008 economic downturn, like Nevada, the recession is not just a memory for too many, it is still a reality.

At the lowest point, Nevada's unemployment rate was an astronomical 13.7 percent, and the poverty rate was at 16.2 percent. The only thing that is more stark than that number is the fact that, despite the improvement of the national unemployment rate, the national poverty rate has not budged in the last 4 years.

But there is a silver lining here, and it is in the Silver State. Unlike national figures on poverty, Nevada has seen poverty rates drop as the unemployment rate has dropped also.

One of the most effective ways that my State has been able to improve the lives of the most impoverished is through smart community involvement on the local level. Unlike so many Federal approaches that operate on a one-size-fits-all solution, local, community-based solutions are tailored and are specific to community and, in many cases, conditions of each individual's needs.

These approaches work best because they are closest to the situation and usually have the best understanding of the factors on the ground. The impoverished aren't always just a statistic to their community. They are neighbors; they are friends; they are loved ones.

In my community, there is an organization that not only has ideas, but it is actually acting on them and putting them to work in the community to improve the situation. The Hope for Prisoners program, whose mission is to help ex-offenders reintegrate into society and find gainful employment, is a model for success. Jon Ponder, the Hope for Prisoner leader, brings together families, religious leaders, business leaders, and law enforcement to break this vicious cycle that plagues many communities and ours, also.

The various community members act in a selfless service, often using their own time and their own money to make a difference. That is something that we need to get back in this country is that selfless service.

And remember: Who is your neighbor? Folks, where I grew up, everybody was your neighbor, even if you had never met them. We have a responsibility to reach out and give of ourselves.

These are things that Jon Ponder has done. Various community members like Jon Ponder have graduated individuals out of this program. One of

those graduates has started a successful small business, Love's Barbershop. Not only is Love's owner a contributing member of the community, Love's Barbershop lifts the entire community by creating jobs for other Nevada families.

In the case of Hope for Prisoners, the participants join the program on a voluntary basis. If an individual is not ready and willing to break the cycle of incarceration and poverty, no solution will find success.

Investment does not end with those going through the program, however. The success of local, community-based solutions has shown everyone involved to be fully invested. The local businesses employing the participants have bought in completely to working with the program and are willing to give ex-offenders a shot, a shot at working hard, earning a wage, and contributing to society.

Local law enforcement have also been invested. Rather than simply policing the streets as crime stoppers, they are active partners in the community. They work in tandem with the entire community.

The idea of mentoring individuals is such a powerful tool that we all have, and it is available to us. Are you using that tool that is available to you?

Remember: Who is your neighbor? We can make a difference.

Jon and Hope for Prisoners have taken this idea of mentoring and turned it into a job creator and, more importantly, a lifesaver. While Hope has been operating for only 5 years, they have been able to help more than 1,000 people in southern Nevada, with only a 6 percent re-incarceration rate.

Too often, individuals released from incarceration face the uncertainty of a future plagued by limited employment opportunities available to them. Without employment, these individuals become at risk for re-incarceration or poverty and homelessness.

Programs like Hope for Prisoners work. The numbers and the survivors speak for themselves.

While there is still much to do to address poverty in our country, we should all be looking to our States for examples. States are not only the national laboratories of industry, they can also be the laboratories for hope.

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Nevada. I am so inspired by the success that he talks about in Nevada on a local level that is working and how powerful mentoring is.

□ 1715

I mentioned a few minutes ago that our colleague, Representative TIPTON from Colorado, and I were up in New York last week. We visited The Doe Fund, which just recently celebrated 30 years of fighting homelessness and hopelessness in the boroughs of New York. They provide affordable and supportive housing for individuals and families struggling with chronic homelessness.

They are famous because of their Ready, Willing & Able program, the bright, colorful uniforms all across the boroughs of New York that provides homeless and formerly incarcerated individuals with transitional work, housing, case management, life skills, education assistance, occupational training, job readiness, and graduate services.

About 2,000 individuals per year are helped through The Doe Fund's extensive network of training and jobs. It is exactly the kind of thing, Mr. Speaker, that we want in all of our cities where citizens come together and help the least of these, those coming off parole and those trapped in alcohol or drug abuse.

My hats are off to Harriet McDonald, the executive vice president and cofounder, and her husband of The Doe Fund and all that they are doing good and the success they have by the number of former Doe Fund beneficiaries, like Don Pridgen, who now is a caseworker helping his fellow citizens as an alumnus of The Doe Fund.

Arthur Brooks said recently at the American Enterprise Institute: ''The Doe Fund is an extraordinary success not just because of its numbers (it has lower criminal recidivism and higher work attachment than virtually any other program for the homeless in New York City) but because it specializes in taking care of some of the most difficult members of society—the hardest cases.''

That is what impressed Representative TIPTON and me on our visit last week. My friend from Nevada was talking about mentoring, and that is so essential, in my view, to the idea of educational attainment because, truly, if the best program to end poverty is a good job, we have got to stop the horrendous dropout rates that we have.

We have to have people that have the kind of mentoring they are not getting, potentially, from their family or in their school system only to be able to stay in school and think ahead about their future, to have aspirations for their future. If we can close that gap of staying in school, we can close that learning gap as well.

Some programs in my district that have impressed me in this regard are, first, Greenbrier High School. Greenbrier High School is a public school in a rural part of my district that is doing both skill workforce training while students are in high school as well as getting them up to 2 years—2 years, Mr. Speaker—of college credit by partnering with the University of Arkansas at Little Rock to have a dual enrollment system.

This saves families money and gets people the kind of educational attainment that we want. This is all done in the confines of a successful, locally controlled local public school.

Representative BROOKS of Indiana stopped me this week and said that she couldn't be with us for this important hour of discussion about the ways and means of beating poverty in our society, and she wanted me to say—and I think it is illustrated by Greenbrier High School, Mr. Speaker—that, if we could lower dropout rates, we, in turn, could change the direction of family success and family income.

My friend from Nevada was talking about mentoring programs, and we have a bright story there in Little Rock with Donald Northcross, founder of the OK Program. OK stands for ''our kids.''

Donald is a former deputy sheriff in Sacramento, California, who moved to Little Rock, inspired by the work, vision, and leadership of Fitz Hill, president of Arkansas Baptist College in Little Rock.

Donald was troubled by the violence and despair that he found in Black communities in California and the growing incarceration rates of young Black men.

Determined to make a difference, Donald founded the OK Program back in 1990 and is now spreading it across the United States with a goal of using it as a way to mentor young African American males while they are in their middle school years and through high school years to make sure that they are on the right track.

These are just a few examples of what you are hearing around all of our districts whenever I travel in the U.S. about how people are banding together as citizens in our great country to tackle poverty using local resources and local ingenuity.

I hope, Mr. Speaker, that we can come back in a few months and talk about this issue again and give more Members an opportunity.

I want to thank those that joined me today on the floor to discuss this important issue about how we alleviate poverty in our States and our local communities and how we overcome barriers of our existing Federal programs or other program barriers that are preventing success. There is no doubt that we have unique, successful opportunities throughout this country to beat this challenge.

I look forward to continuing to work with my colleagues in the House and the Speaker's Task Force on Poverty, Opportunity, and Upward Mobility. I thank Speaker RYAN for his personal dedication and leadership to this topic across our country.

I want to thank our team in Arkansas and in Washington, D.C., and my staff for their commitment to this issue and how we are coming together to find solutions in the Second Congressional District to both urban and rural challenges.

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

DEMOCRACY SPRING: MONEY IN POLITICS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia). 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 include extraneous material on the subject of my 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, in a 10-day march that started on April 11, thousands of Americans came to Washington, D.C., from all over the country to fight for one thing: our democracy.

In peaceful protests right outside this building, Capitol Police arrested more than 1,300 of them as they called on this body to make basic changes to reinforce the institution that makes the United States so special.

The reason they marched is simple, Mr. Speaker. In a Nation founded on the will of the people, States have systematically disenfranchised those same people and it is the will of well-funded special interests that now run our elections.

We have found ourselves in this predicament primarily through inaction, the same kind of inaction poised to give the Supreme Court the longest vacancy in nearly 100 years.

These folks came to the Capitol to ask our leaders to do something, and their requests are pretty simple.

For starters, they want to see the restoration of the Voting Rights Act to prevent voter discrimination in the 21st century because voting discrimination does still exist, something Chief Justice Roberts acknowledged even as he struck down parts of the original Voting Rights Act.

It is targeted against voters of color, those with language barriers, and those with disabilities. And Congress should be doing something about it.

That is not the only call that came out of last week's rallies, though. They also want updates to our election day procedures, updates that are sorely needed.

In a world as technologically advanced as ours where you can pay for your lunch with your phone and use a fingerprint to unlock your computer, we have hours-long wait times at some voting polls. We have provisional ballots and ineffective, if not outright confusing, notification systems for how, when, and where to register to vote. It is another issue Congress should be doing something about.

But perhaps the most important issue that these rallies brought to the table is the need to make sure that the voices of real people, not those of corporations or special interests, are what are heard in our elections. For that, we need to create a path back from Citizens United that allows us to regulate how money is raised and spent in elections.

Because of that ruling, we need a constitutional amendment that makes clear what common sense already dictates: corporations are not people and shouldn't get a say in who governs our Nation.

What is really interesting here is that the work has already been done. The call of these protesters wasn't for Congress to investigate or draft or identify solutions to these problems.

The solutions already exist. They asked that we pass a few pieces of legislation that will put our democracy back where it belongs: with the people.

So, Mr. Speaker, I stand in solidarity with the individuals who came to Washington last week for Democracy Spring. I stand in strong support of reforms to how we run elections and how we ensure the right to vote.

I urge my colleagues to follow suit in saving our democracy.

Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to yield to the gentlewoman from Illinois, JAN SCHAKOWSKY, a U.S. Representative.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. I thank my colleague so much for taking the leadership this evening on such an important and central issue. It is really about our democracy.

Our country has long been known and respected around the world as a beacon of democracy. We aspire to let every person participate in our system of government and give each person's views and votes equal weight. But today our democracy itself is in jeopardy.

Instead of promoting voter participation, States are erecting barriers to keep Americans from voting. Instead of giving people an equal voice in our elections, corporations and the wealthy are claiming outsized influence. The Supreme Court, tasked with protecting our rights, is being crippled by congressional inaction.

Over the past days, thousands of Americans have come to Washington to demand that we restore American democracy. I join them in their call for action: Pass the Voting Rights Amendment Act, stop the outsized role that money plays in politics, and fill the vacancy on our Supreme Court.

Last year marked the 50th anniversary of the Voting Rights Act. The Voting Rights Act broadened access to democracy and fulfilled the promise of the 15th Amendment. It ensured that every American had the opportunity to take part in the democratic process.

But in recent years, courts and State legislatures have torn away at these rights. In 2013, the Supreme Court rolled back voter protections with its misguided Shelby County decision, striking down key provisions of the Voting Rights Act.

Before the Shelby County decision, the Voting Rights Act required States with a history of voter discrimination to clear any changes that they wanted to make to their voting laws in advance.

What happened when this provision got struck down? No surprise. Certain States rushed to pass new voting restrictions.

On the very day of the ruling, Texas officials announced they would implement a photo ID law that had previously been blocked.

North Carolina went even further, imposing a strict photo ID law as well as cutting back early voting and reducing the time period for voter registration. This law disproportionately affects communities of color.

This November is the first Presidential election since the weakening of the Voting Rights Act. Sixteen States now have new voting restrictions in place.

The Voting Rights Amendment Act, introduced by my Republican colleague, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, would restore key protections of the Voting Rights Act.

Despite bipartisan support for this bill, House leadership has simply failed to take action. The inaction is unforgivable.

But voting rights are not the only part of our democratic process that is under attack. Citizens United, another misguided Supreme Court decision, has unleashed a flood of money from rich donors and powerful corporations that is now drowning out the voice of the American people.

In the 2014 elections, the top 100 donors to super-PACs gave nearly as much as 4.75 million small donors combined. This election cycle, the Koch brothers alone have pledged to spend almost $900 million.

□ 1730

Just in the early phase of the 2016 Presidential race, 158 families were responsible for more than half of all the money raised in Presidential campaigns.

The American people want action. They are demanding that we get money out of politics—the big money. Congress continues to ignore the will of the American people. Republican leadership has failed to take legislative action to address the egregious spending allowed by the Citizens United Supreme Court decision. For example, they haven't brought up H.R. 20, the Government By the People Act, which would provide matching funds for candidates who agree to rely on small donors to fund their campaigns. This would empower individuals to support candidates and balance the influence of big money.

This is the sort of legislation the House ought to be considering. We don't just need legislative fixes, though. Repairing our democracy also requires confirming justices who understand that corporations are not people and money is not speech. But here, too, Republicans are refusing to do their job.

On March 16, President Obama fulfilled his constitutional duty—you can read it in the Constitution—by nominating D.C. Circuit Court Judge

Merrick Garland to fill the vacancy on the Supreme Court. But even before Garland's nomination was announced—in fact, just about an hour after Judge Antonin Scalia passed away—Senator Majority Leader MITCH MCCONNELL promised nothing but obstruction. He said he would not hold a hearing, he would not have a vote, and that this was going to wait until the next election.

Republican Senators have refused to hold hearings, they have refused to have an up-or-down vote, and many of them have refused to even meet with the nominee at all. Even those Senate Republicans who haven't publicly endorsed this obstruction are doing the bare minimum. They may have courtesy meetings, they may even say they would support hearings, or maybe even a vote, but words are not enough. We need action, not photo ops.

The Constitution makes clear that the President—the sitting President, this President, Barack Obama—nominates judges to the Supreme Court. Then the Senate's job is to advise and consent on the President's nominee. It doesn't say: and you only do it in the first 7 years of a President's term, and you don't do anything in the last year of a President's term. There is simply no excuse for the Senate to resist taking any action.

I find it really disrespectful to the American people and I find it disrespectful to this President that they are saying that he cannot have the right; as every other President in history, even in the last year of his term, has had to nominate and have considered, and, in fact, all of those nominated in the last year were actually approved. So there is no excuse for the Senate to resist taking any action.

Senate Republicans are putting politics ahead of the Constitution. That is not democracy. Big donors are not democracy. Taking away voting rights is not democracy.

It is time for this House of Representatives to really represent the American people, listen to their calls for change, and take action to strengthen our democracy.

Again, I thank my colleague for yielding.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Illinois for her very eloquent and very important remarks.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, let me thank the gentlewoman from New Jersey, who has led these Special Orders for communicating to the American people, and the gentlewoman from Chicago, Illinois, who has a history and record of reform. I thank the Congresswoman for her very well-stated challenge in a message and effort.

Let me also thank those hundreds who have seen the inside of a Washington, D.C., jail. They have done so in the name of those who cannot speak for themselves—the millions of Americans who sit languishing because decisions are made against them and not for them. Unfortunately, big money, inertia, and the Congress not doing its job has taken the dominant place in American history.

Hundreds of Democracy Spring protestors were arrested on Capitol Hill. We heard them repeatedly over the last week. Having had the experience of standing before the Sudanese embassy, standing in a fight for immigration reform myself, as well participating by way of fight and registering people to vote in the deep South in the aftermath of the 1965 Voting Rights Act, I think that protest and petition is a right of the American people—peaceful protest and petition—and I want to applaud those who sacrificed or stood their ground protesting the inertia of this Congress and the help that is needed by millions of Americans.

Democracy Spring should be an agenda that all of us can support. It is, in fact, one that speaks to the question of how we are going to treat the least of those and how we are going to do what is right for the American people.

There is no doubt, I think, if you were to ask one of our leading fighters in one of the States with the most draconian voter right laws, Reverend William Barber, who will be on the Hill tomorrow, he will know firsthand what voter suppression is all about. Clearly, it is an indictment of the undermining of the Bill of Rights, due process under the Fifth Amendment, and equal protection under the law.

There are examples of voter ID laws where thousands are barred from voting. Maybe mistakenly the States did not realize that they did not have the offices, like Texas in over 80 counties, where individuals were supposed to get their voter ID; or in Alabama, where the Governor closed offices where people were to get their voter ID; or in other States, of course, where other reasons have been put forth—the stopping of early vote or the lessening of early vote by North Carolina, and, of course, the voter ID law.

After section 5 of the Voting Rights Act was eviscerated, destroyed, in the Shelby case by the United States Supreme Court, despite having the right to have a disagreement with me—they are the Supreme Court—they were absolutely wrong. As Justice Ginsburg said: For you would not stop using polio vaccine because you have not seen polio in the United States in any large way for a very long time.

That is what we stand here on the floor today to talk about. That there is a need for a reckoning in this country that those who are part of Democracy Spring are standing up for. That is to ensure the restoration of the Voting Rights Act that is fair.

Mr. Speaker, I believe the Voting Rights Act protects all of our rights to vote, irrespective of color. It does not respect color. It only indicates that if you have been barred from voting unfairly, then we have the right—the Federal Government, the Department of Justice—to review that.

Lo and behold, section 5 saved money, millions of dollars, in fact. My own State has used millions of dollars, millions of tax dollars, to pursue and fight the Voting Rights Act, when in actuality the Voting Rights Act saves money.

If a jurisdiction like, for example, Pasadena, Texas, which redid their city council structure that eliminated Hispanics from being able to even win in that city—if they had been able to have their particular process reviewed and found that it is in violation of the Voting Rights Act and unconstitutional to one vote, one person, then they may not have foolishly constructed that scheme and done one that maybe all parties could work together on. I believe in that.

I have done some wonderful things with bipartisan friends, Republicans and Democrats, working on important issues. Criminal justice happens to be one of them. But that did not happen. So now section 2 becomes the arm of the way of trying to solve these problems, and, of course, in doing so, we have lost our way.

Let me say that I was here when President Bush signed into law the 1965 reauthorization, the 1965 Voting Rights Act, worked on it extensively and submitted amendments. Happily, it was voted for with a large margin by a bipartisan Congress 98–0 in the United States Senate, and a big celebration in the White House celebrating the signing of the reauthorization of the Voting Rights Act with section 5 after 15,000 pages of testimony.

Why can't we do that?

The American people deserve that kind of response. Democracy Spring, you are right, let us reauthorize the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

That draws me as well to the issue of the Supreme Court Justice and to recognize that constitutionally we are in a no man's land. No man's land is that we have taken the Constitution and, unfortunately, we burned it. The Senate has the responsibility of advice and consent, and it has a responsibility to address the question of the missing Supreme Court Justice.

Justice Scalia was grounded in conservatism. All of us respected that. We disagreed on many occasions, but Justice Scalia wrote opinions that everybody agreed with. When it was a majority court, when there were others who had previously disagreed on other matters, they agreed.

That is the way the Supreme Court works, but if you block from even a consideration or a meeting or a hearing, then you are literally tearing up the Constitution, ripping it up, and burning it up. Democracy Spring were willing to go to jail because they believe that is wrong, and I join them and stand with them in their protests and their petition.

Now, let me step away for just a moment—my colleague and I will get

back—but I must say that I am, again, mourning the loss of those in my district who lost their lives through this terrible storm over these last couple of days. We expect rain to continue. I wanted to just make sure that, as I indicated yesterday when I was in my district, we are praying for their families.

As Members of the United States Congress, I am hoping that we will find a way to work with places like New Orleans and Houston, Texas, who are 50 feet below sea level, that we are not just getting a hurricane. People understand hurricanes, they understand tornados, and they understand earthquakes. They don't understand just plain rain that comes up to 20 inches or more and you are literally under water, as we were in the spring of 2015 and now we are again. Homes destroyed of the most vulnerable of my constituents, those who are most impoverished.

I cite this because I am in the midst of discussing that we should be doing our job. One of those issues is to look at the cost and the relationship to lives lost, to doing an infrastructure system, a retention system, and other systems that have been represented as being helpful, trying to work with various constituencies so they don't have to go through that again.

Dying in one's car in an underpass, dying in one's car, can't get out, we had at least four people. We are up to eight. As I said, no one would understand it. It is not a flaring hurricane: Oh, you had a terrible hurricane, we understand it. Tornado. Oh, you had an earthquake, like the tragedy in Ecuador and Japan. We offer our sympathy to them.

They don't understand just rain that causes loss of life—truck drivers, a young mother, a mechanical engineer. What are the horrors of dying in your car, drowning, and you are thinking someone is coming? You are using your cell phone, you think you see lights, and no one is showing up.

I am burdened by this. I wanted to acknowledge them and offer my sympathy, and hope that tomorrow I will again come to the floor for a moment of silence.

Let me step back to this because it ties in that we have to do our job here in Congress. All of us in our districts have had instances where the Congress' failure or the Federal Government's failure probably has impacted in some way some terrible loss of life.

As I continue, we need a Supreme Court Justice, we need the reauthorization of the Voting Rights Act, and, as I just indicated, we need an infrastructure bill. We passed one, but we need one that gets into the weeds of these questions dealing with flooding and the loss of life and the loss of property that we have.

□ 1745

Finally, let me say this since I was here during this, and I use the Constitution in a way that, I think, is very, very important.

I had a bill that I introduced that said a corporation is not a person. Citizens United is premised on that fact. The decision came down from the United States Supreme Court 5 years ago. That decision was the opening of the door of the dominance of big money over politics, and politics and policy has grown, seemingly without restraint and with dire consequences for representative self-government.

''A functioning democracy requires a government responsive to the people—'' we call ourselves the ''people's House'' ''—considered as political equals, where we each have a say in the public policy decisions that affect our lives. It is profoundly antidemocratic for anyone to be able to purchase political power and when a small elite makes up a donor class that is able to shape our government and our public policy.''

I offer that as an article written by Liz Kennedy on January 15, 2015: ''Top Five Ways Citizens United Harms Democracy and Top Five Ways We're Fighting to Take Democracy Back.''

She goes on to talk about how big money allows the wealthy elite few to overpower other voices. That sounds very familiar in the fight against gun violence and in the inability to get any gun legislation passed whether it has to do with gun storage bills that I have, whether it has to do with protecting our children, whether it has to do with background checks or with immunity that has been given to gun manufacturers and keeping away people like the Sandy Hook families or, maybe, families out of Chicago, where my colleague has been working so hard, Congresswoman KELLY.

''Secret political spending exploded after Citizens United because the disclosure requirements relied on by the Court do not yet exist.''

No. 3: ''The purported 'independence' of outside spending is often a farce, allowing for evasion of contribution limits and disclosure requirements.''

She goes on to cite that big money in politics distorts representation and makes one group bigger than the other group.

Then No. 5: ''The Supreme Court's decisions have distorted the Constitution by preventing commonsense rules to protect representative self-government.'' Might I say that that deals with the gun legislation as well.

I think I will close with the simple words that we must do our jobs. We need to do our jobs. One of the reasons that we are in Court on the DACA and DAPA is that Congress did not do its job, and the President has the constitutional authority that says to take care, which means that that President, whoever he is, does have prosecutorial authority and discretion on how laws should be enforced, i.e., the immigration laws.

The President is absolutely right. I do not know how the Supreme Court is going to rule. I would ask that they be very attentive to doing this in a constitutional manner, which means they have the ability to look at the Take Care Clause. That may not work, but they have the ability to look at standing; and I would make the argument that none of the States have been injured, because, as for all of the things that they are arguing about—driver's licenses and otherwise—they don't have to do anything.

The President is saying that these individuals will not be deported because they are not dangerous. He is not saying that States need to provide them with benefits, and they should not, by interpretation, suggest that he is dictating to them unfunded mandates of items that he has not asked. That is not in his executive order. It does not say what benefits they are supposed to get. In essence, in the President's doing his work, unfortunately, he is now being penalized for helping and following the Constitution.

We have a Presidential campaign going on, and the one thing that I can be proud of is that the candidates who are now running in the Democratic primary have made it very clear of their opposition to big money in politics, of their opposition to Citizens United, and of their willingness to fight against it.

In particular, I want to quote from the Boston Globe on then-Secretary Clinton: ''She took a mostly hands-off approach to Wall Street regulation.'' She stayed away from it. She is not immersed in big money, which is a plus for all of us. She understands the people's voice must be heard and realizes that we must do something with Citizens United.

I have joined in cosponsoring a constitutional amendment to change it, but in whatever way that we can move forward to change it, the voices of the people must speak. Public finance is a reputable and reasonable way to run Presidential campaigns and to run all of our campaigns, but until it is done, it is important for us to listen to the voices of the people and to make sure that, however big money comes in, it does not carry this House—this body and the other body—on its back, marching towards legislation that will not help the American people.

Democracy Spring was a movement of quality and dignity, and I am here today to thank them for their willingness to peacefully petition and protest. Over the years and decades, America has seen those protests peacefully leading to, as Dr. King might say, a promised land in which all of us can enjoy the benefits of what America truly stands for.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. I am always grateful for the gentlewoman from Texas who comes and shares her wisdom and her passion and her concern.

Mr. Speaker, as we close out this Special Order hour, I just want to share a few more comments.

We should be doing whatever we can to ensure that every American is able to participate in the democratic process and ensure that elected officials

truly represent the voices of their constituents. The right to vote and the elections in which we cast our ballots are the foundations of our democracy, and policymakers should be strengthening those systems and expanding that right whenever and wherever possible. Instead, for the past few years, we have been restricting it.

In a Nation whose founding documents begin with ''we the people of the United States,'' the local, State, and Federal Government should champion the cause of ensuring that every single American can make his voice heard with as little difficulty as possible. I support every effort to do so, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

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

RESTORING RESPECT FOR AMERICA'S RULE OF LAW

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MOOLENAAR). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING) for 30 minutes.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to have the opportunity to address you here on the floor of the United States House of Representatives.

I listened to a lot of discussion here with which I disagree, of course; but I keep hearing this term ''do your job'' that seems to echo out of the left constantly. ''Do your job.''

One of the arguments is that the President of the United States has a constitutional right to nominate to the Supreme Court. He does. That is pretty clear in the Constitution. However, the Senate determines what advice is, and the Senate determines that which is consent, and no nomination to the Federal court can move forward without the Senate's advice and consent. It is the Senate's job then to evaluate the President's nominations, and they can do so with or without hearings, with or without interviews. The Senate writes its own rules just like the House writes its own rules, Mr. Speaker. I would like to put this back in perspective here.

We have a lameduck President who has made appointments to the Supreme Court, which seems to believe that the Constitution means what they want it to mean, and they want to read it to say what they want it to say rather than what it actually says and rather than what it actually was understood to mean at the time of its ratification.

When you have Justices on the Supreme Court who embody that belief, who act on that belief, then we here who take an oath to support and defend the Constitution—and that is, actually, all of us here in the House of Representatives, Mr. Speaker, and everyone in the United States Senate for that matter—recognize that, if we are going to support and defend the Constitution and encourage the nomination and the advice and the consent and the confirmation of the Senate and encourage then a Presidential appointment to the Supreme Court of someone, we know the President is incapable of nominating anyone to the Supreme Court who actually believes what the Constitution says and what it was understood to mean at the time of its ratification. He has demonstrated that in the past with his appointments to the Court. He will demonstrate that again.

We have a Constitution to preserve, protect, defend, and support and defend, so our obligation then is to say: Mr. President, you are a lameduck. Let's stick with the tradition; let's stick with the practice; let's stick with the statements that have been made by a number of Democrats in the past when the shoe was on the other foot. People like JOE BIDEN and HARRY REID and CHUCK SCHUMER all would agree with Senator CHUCK GRASSLEY: no hearing, no confirmation in the Senate, no vote in the Judiciary Committee, and no vote on the floor of the Senate for this lameduck President's appointments because we have a Constitution that has got to be restored, and instead of being restored, it would be destroyed by another Presidential appointment.

We were sitting with a deadlocked Court that sat 4½ to 4½ out of a 9-member Court, and you could kind of toss a coin on whether you would get a decision that came down on what the Constitution said and what the law said or what they preferred the policy was. There are a couple of bad examples of that. This is even with the stellar Justice Scalia's sitting on the bench not even a year ago on June 24 and June 25.

On the 24th of June, the Court came down with a decision in King v. Burwell, in which the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court decided that he could write words into ObamaCare that didn't exist. They were not passed by this Congress—not by either Chamber of this Congress, as a matter of fact. It wasn't a phrase that was conferenced out or was something that was contested. It was never in the bill. It was the phrase that read, ''or Federal Government.'' Had that component been in ObamaCare, then the Federal Government could have gone into the States and established the exchanges in the States that refused to establish exchanges to comply with the suggestion that came from this Congress, by the way, by hook, by crook, by legislative shenanigans, just to quote some Democrats who lamented at the methodology they had to go through to push ObamaCare down the throats of the American people.

In any case, the law never enabled the Federal Government to establish exchanges in the States, and the Constitution doesn't allow that authority. In my opinion, there is no enumerated power for the Federal Government to create exchanges for health insurance policies within the States; but the Supreme Court ruled with the majority opinion, which was written by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, that they could add words into ObamaCare. Where it reads that the States may establish exchanges, they added that the States or Federal Government may establish exchanges. They made it up, and they wrapped themselves in the cloak of constitutional authority in Marbury v. Madison and in a whole series of, presumably, precedent cases along the line. That was June 24, on Thursday.

That would kick the breath out of your gut to hear that, if you are a constitutionalist, and it would bring you to a sad state of mourning. You would lay your head down on the pillow at night, having trouble sleeping, thinking: What am I going to do tomorrow? I couldn't react today. What am I going to do tomorrow? Lord, wake me up with an idea on how to preserve our Constitution.

The Supreme Court of the United States believes that they can write law when here, in Article I of our Constitution, Mr. Speaker, it reads: ''All legislative powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States.'' That is here, in the House and the Senate. Article I, which are the first words of our Constitution, reads: ''all legislative powers''; but the Supreme Court, wrapped in the cloak of Marbury v. Madison and their imagination of what ''precedence'' and ''stare decisis'' might mean to them decides that they can write words into the law. A Supreme Court writing law.

Then the next morning—that morning that I was hopeful that I would wake up with an idea on how to address a Supreme Court that has overreached—there came the next decision at 9 my time, 10 D.C. time. It was the decision of Obergefell, in which the Supreme Court created a new command in the Constitution. Not just discovered a right that never existed—they manufactured a command.

There is no right in the Constitution for a same-sex marriage. There is no reference in there at all. There is not one single Founding Father who would have ever accepted an idea that they had founded a nation that embodied within our Declaration or our ratified Constitution or the subsequent amendments that there was some right, let alone a command, to a same-sex marriage. That is a completely manufactured—not just a right but a command—by the Supreme Court of the United States.

I have some history with this. The Supreme Court of the State of Iowa did the same thing to Iowans in 2009. I sat in the legislature and was an author of the Defense of Marriage Act in about 1998.

□ 1800

One of the pieces of debate was why do we need to bother to do this. Yes, it would make sense if marriage were threatened. But it was so far beyond the pale that why would we bother to do this. We saw litigation coming in

Hawaii at that period of time that was trying to force same-sex marriage on America.

We wrote—and I was one of the authors of it—the Defense of Marriage Act and put it into Iowa law. And from 1998, 11 years later, the Supreme Court of the State of Iowa created a command for same-sex marriage in Iowa.

Iowans rose up and threw three of them off the bench the following election in November of 2010 not because of the policy decision, but because they had not kept their oath of office to support and defend the Constitution.

They are obligated to read and understand and believe the Constitution and then issue their judgments based upon the law, the text of the law, and, as an ancillary component of this, the intent of the legislature itself.

Because, after all, the legislature is the voice of the people. The judges are not. They are unelected. They are appointed for life. They are unaccountable.

So there it was on June 25, 2015, on Friday, that the Supreme Court manufactured a command for same-sex marriage. Now, this is appalling to me, Mr. Speaker, because I can read this Constitution and understand what it means. I could read the precedent cases along the way that have flowed from Marbury on down to today.

It is no longer possible to look at this Supreme Court and discern what a likely decision of the Court might be by studying the text of the Constitution and the text of the law because we have a Court that will make it up as they go along, write law as they go, and discover what they would call a new right in the 14th Amendment to the Constitution, equal protection under the law. There is equal protection already. There has long been equal protection.

That amendment was about making sure that babies who were born to the newly freed slaves post-Civil war would be American citizens and they would enjoy all of the rights and all of the privileges of being a citizen of the United States. A person that enjoyed personhood in good standing, that is what the—the 13th Amendment ended slavery, and the 14th Amendment guaranteed equal rights.

Now this Court has twisted it into a command that there is not a difference between a man and a woman when it comes to joining them together in matrimony. Well, there is a difference. It has been husband and wife in every one of these States until such time as the activists got busy.

Those are the kinds of things that, if the States want to establish same-sex marriage, so be it. That is the voice of the people. It is constitutional, and it fits the structure of our United States Constitution, along with the various State constitutions and the structure of the rule of law.

But if a court wants to manufacture a new right, let alone a new command, that is wrong. And this Congress ought to speak up. We need a President that will appoint Justices to the Supreme Court that will rule on the text of the Constitution, its original meaning, and on the understanding of what the text of that Constitution says.

So I would back up to the King v. Burwell decision, Mr. Speaker, and add this for the benefit of those folks that are listening in. And maybe there are some staff at the Supreme Court that are listening.

If you discover a law, if it is a law like ObamaCare that comes before the Supreme Court and you the read the text of that and it doesn't include ''or Federal Government'' and you believe that Congress wanted the Federal Government to be able to establish the exchanges or intended to write that into the law, you don't get to just write it in and say that is what they really meant. You have to remand it back to Congress and tell us: This is what the law says.

So, therefore, if Congress wants the law to say something different, we have to amend it here in the House and the Senate and get a Presidential signature on it. That is the constitutional structure of this government that we have, Mr. Speaker.

It is a bit frustrating for me to listen to the dialogue otherwise that the Senate is not doing their job because they withhold a Presidential appointment when you have a President that has proven that he is not going to put up an appointment that will protect our Constitution.

This is the time we must defend our Constitution. We must nominate and elect a President of the United States who will make those appointments to the Supreme Court, who believe the Constitution means what it says.

Mr. Speaker, I didn't actually come here to talk about that. That is my rebuttal to what I have listened to for the last 40 minutes or so.

IMMIGRATION

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I came here to talk about the rule of law, for sure. Part of this is stimulated by an immigration hearing that we had yesterday in the House Judiciary's Immigration and Border Security Subcommittee.

This is the type of hearing that I have listened to too many times. It was one of the hardest hearings I have sat through in my time here in this Congress, Mr. Speaker.

This was a hearing that had witnesses, such as Sheriff Jenkins from Frederick County, Maryland, who has been enforcing immigration law and standing up for the rule of law.

He has been prudently using the legal and justifiable evidence that he had before him, and he has been criticized for his effectiveness by the people that don't want to enforce the law. He is a good witness, Sheriff Jenkins.

Additionally, we had witnesses from two families that were suffering tragically. One of them was the mother of Joshua Wilkerson. Her name is Laura Wilkerson. She has testified before the Judiciary Committee in the past at least once.

I have met her at an immigration event in Richmond, Virginia, on another occasion and listened to the tragic, tragic story of her son, Joshua, who was essentially abducted from his school—he was about a sophomore in high school or so—and hauled outside of town where he was beaten mercilessly and bludgeoned and finally murdered.

The perpetrator, an illegal alien who law enforcement had encountered and released onto the streets of America, who had no business being in America in the first place and who law enforcement already had picked up at least once—this illegal alien beat this boy to death.

Then he went and bought gasoline and burned his body. He hauled his body out and poured gasoline on it and burned Joshua Wilkerson's body. Then he went and took a shower and went to a movie, as if it was just another day in the life of.

Well, Mr. Speaker, it was another day in the life of America and Americans. It was another life lost to an illegal criminal alien who was unlawfully present in America and who had no business to be here, one who had been encountered by law enforcement officers in the past, one whom I believe ICE declined to pick up and place into removal proceedings. This happens every day in this country. It happens hundreds of times in this country each year.

These incidents of illegal aliens that are arrested and turned loose on the street because the President has this idea of prioritization or prosecutorial discretion are costing lives in America. They are costing, in the end, thousands of lives in America.

It was a sad, sad story told by Laura Wilkerson yesterday. She had the courage and the heart to come here and share her story with us and to place that awful, brutal, ghastly memory again into her mind's eye and pour that forth into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD so that some of us will soak that up and be mobilized to do something more, to do something more to resist the President's policy of amnesty, de facto amnesty, amnesty by executive edict, that has been part and parcel of the Obama policy since the beginning of his time here in office, and it has been getting worse and worse every month.

I thank God for Laura Wilkerson. I ask God to bless the life and the memory and the soul of Joshua Wilkerson, who has paid a tremendously high price because we have an ideological President who, I would say to the other side of the aisle, is not doing his job. In fact, he is ordering law enforcement officers not to do their job.

Federal law requires that, when immigration law enforcement officers encounter an individual who is unlawfully present in the United States, ''he

shall be placed in removal proceedings.'' That is the law.

Our Border Patrol officers are told that, if you are here to enforce the law and you are determined to do so, you better get yourself another job. They have become the welcome wagon on the southern border.

Now, most anybody that crosses that border and makes it across the Rio Grande River or across the land border that stretches from Texas all the way across through New Mexico, Arizona, California, to the Pacific Ocean knows, if you just claim asylum, you can be a refugee and this Federal Government will roll out the welcome wagon.

Former Member of Congress Michele Bachmann and I stood on the banks of the Rio Grande River at Roma, Texas, here a summer and a half or so ago and watched as they inflated a raft on the other side of the river, two coyotes.

It was a fairly good size raft. They helped a lady into that raft on a Sunday afternoon in broad daylight exactly at the shift change for the Border Patrol.

They helped a pregnant lady into the raft. She had two little bags of her property. They brought that raft across the river, brought it up to the shoreline under the eyes of the city police and the Border Patrol, but it was shift change.

One of the coyotes got out of the raft while the other one stabilized it. They helped the pregnant lady out of the raft and onto U.S. shores and then handed her two little ditty bags. He then got back into the raft.

The two coyotes went back across the river, deflated the raft, folded it up, put it in the trunk of their car. It was a car that we had watched go around and around over there, knowing that it was a coyote car because they recognized it from the U.S. side of the river.

The lady stood there. She and her unborn baby and her two ditty bags were waiting for the Border Patrol to show up. It takes a little longer during the shift change, but they show up, no doubt. I didn't follow this case any further, and they would have preferred that I didn't.

Here is what I will predict happened: She applied for asylum, the baby is now born, and the baby is an American citizen. She is the parent of an anchor baby.

Well, that is the kind of person that Barack Obama has granted a de facto, at least a temporary, amnesty to for the Deferred Action for Parents of—I keep wanting to tell you what that word means to me, but the parents of Americans is what the President would like to call it—Deferred Action for Parents of Americans, DAPA.

Well, I watched one of those parents of Americans—a parent now—come across the border in an inflatable raft with two coyotes. They got paid something to do that. I don't know how much.

Now the President has issued the edict that we grant this de facto permit, this amnesty, for the parents of anchor babies to be staying free in the United States.

That suspends the rule of law. It defies the rule of law. It defies the very law, the specified law, itself.

That case was heard before the Supreme Court this week, Mr. Speaker. The question is: Does the President have prosecutorial authority, prosecutorial discretion?

Well, the precedents along prosecutorial discretion—and I don't know that the Supreme Court has ever heard and ruled on a case of prosecutorial discretion. I believe they have not.

But the precedents that are out there in the lower courts and the practice has been that, if a chief executive officer can project his policy through his subordinates, they have to pick and choose which cases they will prosecute.

Well, when they do that, that is called prosecutorial discretion. It has to be on an individual basis only, and that is by the words of the former Secretary of Homeland Security Janet Napolitano, who testified before the Judiciary Committee to that extent.

In the first Morton memo that brought out this prosecutorial discretion, it creates four different categories or groups of people.

So they are utilizing categories or groups of people, declaring it to be prosecutorial discretion, when, in fact, it is not prosecutorial discretion because it applies to groups of people. It created four different groups of people.

That is the story of Joshua Wilkerson.

The witness sitting next to Laura Wilkerson is Michelle Root of Modale, Iowa. Michelle Root is the grieving mother of a 21-year-old daughter who was a 4.0 student at Bellevue University.

She wanted to become a law enforcement investigator. She had the best grades that you could possibly have, living and loving life. She had graduated and enjoyed the graduation ceremonies the day before when an illegal, criminal alien, drunk-driving perpetrator, ran her down and rear-ended her in the street and killed Sarah Root.

Sarah Root was a 4.0 student with the world ahead of her, wanting to contribute to this country, to life, to society, living and loving life. Her life was abruptly ended by a criminal alien who had been encountered by law enforcement before whose immigration attorneys knew him.

□ 1815

Two of them have been quoted in the newspaper at this point. He had been released. He had been released onto the streets where he now had three times the blood alcohol content allowable by law, drag racing in the streets, killed Sarah Root. Her mother, Michelle, told the story yesterday of her daughter, whom she loved so deeply, and all through the rest of her life and her family's life, they will carry this hole, this ache in their heart that didn't need to be.

Sarah Root would be alive today if the President had done his job, if law enforcement had been allowed to do their job, if ICE had responded when local law enforcement called them, and if ICE—and on top of that, sometimes ICE issues a detainer, and local law enforcement releases them from a sanctuary city.

This is mixed up both ways. We have ICE, who is prohibited from doing its job, who sometimes won't when they want to; local law enforcement who won't cooperate with ICE because ICE sent out a letter a year-and-a-half ago or so that said ICE detainers are a recommendation, they are no longer mandatory.

Congress passed a law and directed the Department of Homeland Security to establish the rule that would have the force and effect of law that ICE detainers are mandatory. They wrote the rule that ICE detainers are mandatory, and Dan Ragsdale, the interim director of ICE, issued a letter that said to all local law enforcement: no, it is a recommendation, it is not mandatory.

Now we have in this confused, jumbled-up mess of the refusal to enforce the law, to take care that the laws are faithfully executed—we have the deaths of our children—our children—Joshua Wilkerson, Sarah Root.

And while Sarah Root's mother is in transit to come here to testify—by the way, this drunk driving, illegal alien, homicidal accident that killed Sarah Root, the 4.0 student happened—I keep hearing about the valedictorians that come across the river. Sarah was very close to being the valedictorian of her college class. She didn't get a chance to live and love life beyond 1 day after her graduation.

While her mother is here with tears in her eyes, flying from Omaha where this tragedy took place, to testify before the United States Congress, there is another incident in Omaha, this time a very similar incident, another illegal alien who had been incarcerated before or picked up before and released again.

This illegal alien killed Margarito Nava-Luna, a 34- or 35-year-old man who was walking down the streets of Omaha. This driver, this illegal, had three times the blood alcohol content as well, as was the driver who killed Sarah Root.

Now, every one of these are preventable. They are preventable. Whether they are a willful homicide or whether they are preventable, but these are the cities, Mr. Speaker, where the Obama administration has released these criminals into. They have released over 30,000 of them. These are where their reoffenses have taken place, in multiple cities around, obviously, California and on up along the Pacific Coast. Where there is a lot of illegal immigration, that is where you see a lot of the recidivism crime. Here is Arizona. Here is Texas. You have got it in the heart of the heartland, though. That is Colorado. Over along the East Coast, something has happened in most

of the States, and this is because of the prosecutorial discretion.

This President, his administration has released over 30,000 criminals, criminal aliens onto the streets of America. And of those that they released, there have been at least 124 of them who have been charged with homicide for 135 murders. That is 135 dead Americans who would be alive today if the President didn't have the policy of releasing criminal aliens onto the streets. Those are the ones we know of, those are the ones that are the recidivism within a 5-year window of time whose names we know, whose incidents we know, but that doesn't include anywhere near all of them, Mr. Speaker.

This is the locale. This is the face of one of these perpetrators, Mauricio Hernandez.

What did he do?

Mauricio Hernandez, a sexual predator who impregnated the 13-year-old daughter of his live-in girlfriend and repeatedly had sexual relations with her in ways that I won't repeat here on the floor, took her off to soccer games where he also gave her an abortion-inducing drug, and she went into a portapotty and had a baby who was alive. He went in and saw that baby, and this girl was then hauled home. The baby was left to die. That baby died.

Mauricio Hernandez was the perpetrator. He is another illegal alien, another one who had been encountered by law, another one who had been granted this de facto amnesty because of the President's policy.

Mr. Speaker, I can stand here every night. I could come here and give you these stories, and I can give you the data on the thousands of Americans who are dead at the hands of the criminal aliens who have been incarcerated for a temporary period of time and released by multiple jurisdictions across this country, and every American who dies at their hands is a life that could be saved if we just followed our laws. That is what is at stake here.

But we are going to have to personalize it because people over on this side of the aisle have their fingers in their ears on data, but when they see the faces, when they hear the anguish in the voices, especially of the mothers—I will conclude with this, Mr. Speaker—or the voice of the father, Scott Root, who said when they arrested this perpetrator who killed his daughter, he was out before they could bury his daughter, he was out on $5,000 bail, which was less than it cost him to bury his daughter, and that individual absconded back out of the United States now, not to be reached again by the arm of the law, which is not long enough because they put him out on bail.

I don't want to see any more bail to criminal aliens. I want to see law enforcement. I want an expectation that when the law is broken in the United States, that there is going to be an enforcement, that it be applied equally without regard to any of these categories that the President encourages us to be members of, that being one of God's children is good enough to be protected by the law, but everybody treated equally.

Secure our borders. Restore the respect for the rule of law. Save these lives. Send these people into prison, and when they are done, send them back to the country that they can live in legally for the rest of their lives if they don't stay in our prisons for the rest of their lives.

Mr. Speaker, this is an infuriating topic that America needs to know a lot more about. I would ask, Mr. Speaker, that this country keep the families of these victims in their prayers every day until such time as we restore the respect for the rule of law again in America.

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

WHAT MEXICO REPRESENTS TO ALL OF US

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. O'ROURKE) for 30 minutes.

Mr. O'ROURKE. Mr. Speaker, to listen to some in this country, and certainly some of my colleagues, Mexico represents nothing more than a threat to the well-being, the safety of this country, and to every son and daughter in every community within the United States.

It is also a threat, some will tell you, to our economy, to our financial well-being in our homes, in our cities, in our States. This vision of Mexico and our relationship with that country and where the two join at the U.S.-Mexico border is dominated by this kind of anxiety, this scare-mongering, and an attitude of fear that neglects the truth, the facts, and the opportunities that our relationship with our closest partner on the world stage truly presents.

It is my hope tonight to share with my colleagues the facts, the positive truth about what Mexico represents to all of us, certainly in the communities along the U.S.-Mexico border, El Paso, Texas, the city that I have the honor of representing and serving in Congress, the State of Texas, where I will be joined by colleagues who represent districts deeper into the interior of Texas, but really to everyone everywhere in the United States.

When I listen to some of my colleagues, who can be forgiven much like those in ancient history who, not having traveled to distant lands or across the oceans, could only envision monsters or frightening things that were going to come and get them should they venture past what they knew and what was safe and what was home to them, those who do not know Mexico, who do not live on the U.S.-Mexico border may understandably have their thoughts and their concerns dominated by this anxiety and fear.

It is my hope, as someone who lives in and represents part of the U.S. side of the U.S.-Mexico border, to shed some light using facts and using real people, real U.S. citizens, real Mexican citizens, and real people from El Paso and Ciudad Juarez, which together form the largest binational community in the Western Hemisphere and one of the largest binational communities anywhere in the world.

When you hear people who are concerned about Mexico and what it represents to the United States, that fear is often dominated by two different areas. One is economic and the other is fear about our security in this country. Let me lay some of those fears to rest. Let me address some of those concerns at face value using the facts and figures from the United States-Mexico relationship and, again, from the district that I represent in El Paso, Texas.

Let me start with some of the economic concerns and address them with the economic facts and the economic argument. Some of my colleagues may not know this, but Mexico is our third largest trading partner. And for some States—like the State of Texas, like the State of New Mexico, like the State of Arizona, like the State of California—Mexico represents our number one trading partner. For many other States deeper into the interior, Mexico represents our second largest trading partner.

But the volume of trade between our two countries is unlike any other, even among our top trading partner, China, for with Mexico, for every dollar of import value that we bring into this country from Mexico, 40 cents of that dollar was value that originated here in the United States, components, manufactured goods that were built here in America by Americans, by U.S. citizens that were exported to Mexico for final assembly and manufacture before reimportation into the United States.

It is why when we export to Mexico, we win; when we import from Mexico, we win. That volume of trade between our two countries is responsible for one out of every four jobs in the community that I represent, El Paso, Texas. It is responsible for more than 400,000 jobs in the State of Texas, more than 6 million jobs throughout the United States.

I want to make clear that our relationship with Mexico does not just benefit border communities like mine or border States like Texas. You look at New York, 381,000 people depend on our relationship with Mexico for the jobs they go to each and every morning. In Ohio, the number is 224,000. In the State of Washington, 128,000. In fact, every single one of our 50 States has a significant trading and jobs-based dependent relationship with Mexico.

Were we to jeopardize that with harmful rhetoric or wrong-headed policies, we would not just jeopardize this historic relationship with our partner to the south, we would jeopardize the

very well-being and lifeblood for 6 million American families spread throughout this country.

In fact, if we don't do a better job of facilitating the trade we have with Mexico right now, we run the risk of losing the jobs we already have. The Department of Commerce estimates that for every minute of delay on our international ports of entry that connect the United States and Mexico, because we are not getting more trade into the United States from Mexico and out of the United States into Mexico, we lose about $166 million. For every minute of delay, $166 million lost to the United States economy.

Now, let me talk about the security argument. I just heard from my colleague from Iowa that Mexico and Mexican immigrants, whether they are undocumented, whether they are pursuing a better life in this country, whether they are—as almost all of them are—net contributors to our economy, to our communities, to the safety of our cities, that somehow they represent this terrible threat, the primary threat for our country, and the sky and everything with it is falling should we not be able to deport these 11 million undocumented immigrants from communities like Washington, D.C., from El Paso, Texas, from Fort Worth, from throughout the United States.

□ 1830

I would like to share something with my colleagues and with you, Mr. Speaker, about the effect that immigrants have on the safety of our communities. As I mentioned, I represent El Paso, Texas, which, with Ciudad Juarez, forms one-half of the largest binational community anywhere in the world. Twenty-four percent of the people that I represent were born in another country, most of them, the country of Mexico. And I will tell you, it is not in spite of that fact that we have so many migrants in our community but, in large part, because of it that El Paso is this country's safest city of over 500,000.

So of all large cities in this country, from Los Angeles on the West Coast to New York on the East Coast, El Paso is this country's safest city. And it has been not just in the past year, but for years before this last one; and for the last 10 or 15 years, it has been rated one of the top five safest cities in the United States. And that is because the relationship that we have with Mexico.

The migrants who come from that country are coming to this one to build a better life for themselves, certainly; but more importantly and connected to our relative safety, they are building a better life for their kids. They are keeping them focused on their studies, on contributing to their communities, on staying out of trouble and getting ahead and doing better. That is what I want you to know when we talk about security connected to immigration and when we talk about security relative to Mexico.

I also want my colleagues, who themselves are taxpayers, and the taxpayers they represent to know that today we spend $18 billion a year to secure the U.S.-Mexico border. In the last 10 years, we have doubled the size of the Border Patrol force, from 10,000 agents to 20,000 agents, and we are reaching, if not already past, a point of diminishing returns where we can do no more good by spending more dollars and by adding more agents to already swollen ranks of the Border Patrol. Let me give you some facts that bear that out.

In the year 2000, we had 1.6 million apprehensions at our border with Mexico. This last year, in 2015, we had 330,000 apprehensions.

Another way to look at this is that, in 2005, the average Border Patrol agents on the southern border, our border with Mexico, made 106 apprehensions a year. Ten years later, 2015, last year, the average agent made 17 apprehensions the entire year; and in El Paso, again, one of the most critical sectors for our connection with Mexico, the average agent made 6 apprehensions all year—not in a week, not in a month, but 6 apprehensions for the entire year.

So El Paso is the safest city. Other border cities on our side of the U.S.-Mexico border are much safer than the interior of the United States. We are spending record sums, and we are seeing record-low levels of apprehensions. We are literally seeing less than zero migration from Mexico now, and we have been for a number of years.

When I hear my colleagues about securing the border before we proceed with immigration reform or any other sensible, realistic, logical policy with regard to Mexico, it begs the question when they ask if we secure the border: How much more secure can we get? How many more billions of dollars do you want to spend? How many more miles of walls do you want to construct? How many more thousands of agents do you want to hire? How many fewer apprehensions can we have? How far below zero can our immigration from Mexico reach?

The last point on the security issue that I want to stress for my colleagues is this one. Despite the rhetoric, despite the anxiety, despite the fear that is often provoked on cable TV or even in this Chamber, there has never been nor is there now any credible terrorist organization, terrorist threat, or terrorist who is using the southern border—our border with Mexico—to infiltrate the United States. And I have that on public record from the Director of the FBI, the Director for the National Counterterrorism Center, and the Secretary of Homeland Security.

The danger of continuing to surge more resources where we don't have a problem is that we take our eye and our money and our men and women off those places where we know we have had threats in the past, like our international airports. In fact, even at our northern border with Canada, attempts have been made in the past, and certainly with homegrown, home-radicalized terrorists or potential terrorists in our communities.

That is where we know we have a threat. That is where we need to pursue that threat. It doesn't mean that we do not remain vigilant against the potential for a terrorist threat coming along our border with Mexico; but I would argue that, with 20,000 agents, $18 billion spent a year, drones flying overhead, 600 miles of wall, we are very vigilant against the potential for any terrorist incursion from Mexico.

Before I yield to my good friend from Dallas-Fort Worth, I want to talk a little bit about the people who actually live in this binational community that I have been talking about, El Paso and Ciudad Juarez, where, between the two communities last year, there were 32 million crossings. Thirty-two million times someone crossed from El Paso into Ciudad Juarez or Juarez into El Paso. I thought I would share with you, through these pictures to my right, some of the remarkable people that I live with in the El Paso-Juarez community and some of the amazing people that I represent.

The first person that we are looking at is Armando. I started with Armando at the end his day as he closed up the plant that he manages in Ciudad Juarez. Even though he and his children live in the United States, are U.S. citizens, and attend U.S. public schools in El Paso, Texas, he crosses over the border into Mexico every morning. He works a hard day managing a plant there; and then he comes back over into the United States, where he pays his U.S. property taxes, his U.S. income taxes, where he contributes by going and helping to coach his son's soccer game, which is where we took this picture with Armando and his wife. He is one of these 32 million people that is crossing the border. He is somebody that has come from Mexico that is contributing to this country, whose children are growing up here. He is someone that I am very proud to have in my community.

This next slide shows a picture of Israel. Israel lives in Ciudad Juarez but attends school at the University of Texas in El Paso.

In its infinite wisdom, the State of Texas granted instate coverage for citizens of Mexico to attend schools in our communities in the State of Texas because we know that Texas will be the net beneficiary of their talent and their human capital.

So Israel gets up very early every morning, sometimes before 5 o'clock, so that he can make it over the international bridge in time to get to the University of Texas at El Paso, where he is an all-star student and also works at the Keck Lab, which is one of the premier additive manufacturing facilities at any academic community in the United States. These are 3–D printing jobs that are the future of manufacturing technology. And if we do right

by Israel, Israel is going to want to spend his life and his career and add value and add tax base and add tax income and create jobs in our country, in the community that I represent. That is why I crossed the bridge with Israel to learn a little bit about him and his experience.

This slide shows a picture of Vicky, whom I joined in downtown Ciudad Juarez. She is walking up Avenida Juarez. Another block or two and we will pass the Kentucky Club, which I want everyone to know we did not go into. It was before 5 o'clock. But Vicky, who is a Mexican national, is carrying her shopping bags because at least once a month she comes over to the United States, to my community, to spend her hard-earned money in our local retail establishments and other stores to do the shopping for her and her family.

In fact, Mexican nationals like Vicky spend about $1.4 billion in the El Paso community annually. That supports tens of thousands of retail jobs and small-business owners that I represent here in the House.

This is the face of the border, the face of Mexico, the face of our connection. This was Vicky, with whom I crossed the border a couple of weeks ago.

This next slide shows Manuel, who is driving a load of Werner ladders.

Werner is the largest ladder manufacturer in the world. They manufacture about 70 percent of those ladders in Ciudad Juarez. The inputs for those ladders come from all over the United States. They are connected to jobs in this country that go over to Mexico. They are connected to jobs there and then reimported here for export for benefit of the United States and Mexico.

Here he is crossing his load—his part of the $90 billion in U.S.-Mexico trade that crosses our ports of entry that are connected to those 6 million jobs spread throughout the United States.

If we could get those bridges moving a little faster, get more CBP officers to facilitate that trade, we can get more loads of ladders moving across, more jobs connected in the United States to trade and manufacture in Mexico. It is good for my community, good for each of the communities represented by the Members here in the Chamber tonight.

And the last slide I will show you is Lisa, and you can see that I jumped into the backseat of her car as she left the plant that she works in in Ciudad Juarez.

She moved down to El Paso from Michigan about 20 years ago. She has been working in Ciudad Juarez every day with other U.S. and Mexican citizens, creating value in both countries, economic growth in both countries.

And so here we are in her car, about to cross back into El Paso, Texas, where, again, she pays her taxes, where she contributes to her community, and where she is the face of the U.S.-Mexico relationship and why it is so important not just to preserve it, not just to respect it, but to grow it and to capitalize on it and create more jobs, more opportunities, more growth in both of our countries.

I thought these five El Pasoans and Juarenses, whom I have the pleasure of living with in El Paso, the honor of representing here in the House, might tell you a little bit of a different story than the one that has prevailed and dominated from people who do not live on and, frankly, do not understand the border or our relationship with Mexico.

But someone who does and who is here with me tonight, represents a congressional district in Fort Worth and Dallas, who understands the importance of our relationship with Mexico better than almost any other person that I have worked with, is MARC VEASEY. I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. VEASEY).

Mr. VEASEY. Thank you very much, Representative O'ROURKE. I really appreciate your work on this issue. You have been doing a great job of really kind of setting the facts straight about this issue.

There has been a lot of rhetoric out there about what immigration means. And the fact that you have worked so hard to bring recognition about the economic benefits that the border has, particularly to our State of Texas, and you have been very tremendous in your efforts, I really, really do appreciate that.

I wanted to just talk about the fact how important the relationship is—the economic impact that you talk about all the time—how important it is to Texas and the United States.

According to the United States Trade Representative, U.S. goods and services traded with Mexico totaled an estimated $500-plus billion in 2015. Mexico was the United States' second largest goods export market in 2015. In 2013, Texas, our home State of Texas exported over $109 billion in goods with Mexico, and that was a 63 percent increase since 2008.

It is really hard to argue with those numbers. It just shows how healthy the relationship is with Mexico and about how incredibly foolish it would be to try to create barriers between our two countries that would cause economic harm to both Mexico and the United States and our border State of Texas.

The United States' relationship with Mexico, again, when you look at the economic picture, agriculture is something that people oftentimes take for granted—how they get their milk, how they get their fruit, how they get their vegetables.

Agriculture is how we eat in this country. I have met with different organizations that represent agriculture. I just had some cattle raisers from the Fort Worth area here. They talked about the fact that we don't have a comprehensive immigration reform bill and how we need to improve our guest worker program and how it is really hurting their industry.

□ 1845

And these are conservative Republicans that are telling me this, Representative O'ROURKE. These aren't liberal Democrats or advocacy groups. These are people that are concerned about economic growth and prosperity in the United States and in border States that are saying that, hey, we have a huge problem here in agriculture.

One of our conservative institutes in the State of Texas, Texas A&M University down in College Station, did a study back in 2012 that looked at dairy farms and found that the dairy farms are very heavily dependent upon migrant labor. Three-fifths of the milk in this country is dependent upon migrant labor.

I think that that speaks in and of itself.

Without these employees, the study predicts economic output would decline by $22 billion, and 133,000 workers would lose their jobs. And what are we going to do if that happens? Like, what are we really going to do? What are Republicans going to do if that happens, if they were able to create borders and barriers between our southwest border?

They are certainly not going to make it up with any sort of social services to help people because they are always hollering about how they don't want to expand government. So what are they going to do if we lose all of that money? They are going to do absolutely nothing, and it would be very detrimental.

Then there is also immigrant entrepreneurship. In addition to providing a reliable workforce, immigrants are also a boost to local economies when they open up businesses in their communities. More than 40 percent of the Fortune 500 companies here were founded by immigrants or by their children according to the Partnership for a New American Economy.

I want to highlight one of my friends that has a business in my district, Gloria Fuentes. She was actually my guest, Representative O'ROURKE, at the State of the Union earlier this year. She was someone, back in the 1970s, that was fleeing her home country of El Salvador. She immigrated to the United States, and her visa expired. Later, she became a permanent resident in 1986. And because of her hard work, working extra jobs, going to nightclubs at night to sell tamales and tacos, now she has a restaurant chain of 15, all across the State of Texas. That was done by someone that came here as an immigrant.

Why wouldn't we want to make it easier for people like Gloria to migrate to this country? Why wouldn't we want to make it easier for us to be able to exchange and trade ideas with people from countries that are south of our border?

We are really moving too slowly on the immigration issue. And again, the rhetoric about the southwest border is

really hurting our country, particularly when you look at the net migration and how many people have decided that—you know what?—they don't want to live in the United States anymore just because of all of the rhetoric, the hateful rhetoric that is out there, mainly coming from the Republican side. I think that it is time that it stop because I think that our country—I know that our country—is better than that.

I just want to thank you for getting this conversation started. I want to thank you for your expertise and depth on this issue. Particularly with you coming from El Paso, it is certainly great to have you talking about this so much and reminding people about the facts, because there are a lot of things out there that are floating around the Congress—again, coming from the Republican side—that are completely untrue and deliberately false and meant to spread fear across our country. But the fact that you are here and you are educating the country on this very important issue means a lot to our State and to the United States. So thank you very much, Representative O'ROURKE, and thank you for letting me share this time with you.

Mr. O'ROURKE. I thank my friend from Texas, amidst all this heat and the rhetoric around Mexico, our relationship with that country, the cost or benefit of immigration, that he is able to shed some light using the facts, sharing the truth, so that we understand our shared interdependence, shared benefit, and the value of the relationship between the United States and Mexico.

Mr. Speaker, may I ask how much time remains?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman has about 3 minutes remaining.

Mr. O'ROURKE. Mr. Speaker, I invite my colleagues who have used the excuse—because they believe it—that we must first secure the border before we can do anything else, before we can improve our relationship with Mexico, before we can capitalize on the shared production platform that is the United States and Mexico today, where 40 percent of the value of everything that we import from Mexico originated in this country, is connected to jobs in this country; I invite my friends who use securing the border as an excuse not to move forward on immigration reform, despite the fact that we have 11 million people here who are living in the shadows, who, despite that, do their best to contribute to this country each and every day in service to this country and creating jobs in this country, in serving those in this country; I invite you to see the truth, to look at the facts, and to understand that our relationship with Mexico has never been more important, our border with Mexico has never been more secure, by any metric we want to look at.

Whether it is apprehension, whether it is the total spent on the security of that border, whether it is the number of men and women, 20,000, who are patrolling that border with our closest partner—certainly the closest trading partner in the State of Texas, I would argue the most important country for the United States—whether you look at it economically, demographically, historically, or culturally, I hope these facts, this truth, this light that we are working to shed on the issue, will help my colleagues to make better decisions, better policies, and move forward in the self-interest of this country, every district, and every person we represent, to do the right thing when it comes to Mexico, to do the right thing when it comes to immigration reform, and to do the right thing in the interest of the United States.

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

CHICAGO STATE UNIVERSITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. RUSH) for 30 minutes.

Mr. RUSH. Mr. Speaker, I come here to the House floor today to express my deep concern and disappointment regarding the grave financial challenges facing the Chicago State University, which is located in my district on the south side of Chicago.

Mr. Speaker, due to the enormous budget crisis currently taking place in my home State of Illinois, the university has not received the State funding that is essential to maintaining its multifaceted operations. Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, after 7 months of utilizing its financial reserves, Chicago State University is now in a dire position. Chicago State University must confront the real possibility of closing its doors in the immediate future.

Mr. Speaker, the impact of this pending reality is far reaching in its scope, and it would adversely affect thousands of students and hundreds of faculty and staff, many of whom reside in my district, the First District of Illinois. The entire Chicagoland region would be severely adversely affected by the closing of the Chicago State University. Mr. Speaker, my district is home to 4,300 students who are enrolled at Chicago State. Fifty-eight percent of these students are my constituents.

The great need for this institution is demonstrated by the fact that almost 88 percent of enrolled students receive financial aid. Of those students on financial aid, 44 percent are first-generation college students, and 54 percent of these students are low-income individuals. In fact, Mr. Speaker, Chicago State University is renowned for recruiting and graduating nontraditional minority students who, due to a variety of reasons, have been denied many of the economic, social, and educational benefits enjoyed by the greater American society.

As U.S. News and World Report notes, Chicago State University ranks first in Illinois in awarding bachelor's degrees to African Americans in the physical sciences, health professions, and other related sciences. Additionally, the school also ranks fourth in Illinois in awarding baccalaureate degrees to Latino students in the education sector.

Mr. Speaker, closing Chicago State University, even on a temporary basis, would have a profound impact on the lives of all these students who have worked so hard to beat the odds and who desperately seek to provide a better life for themselves and for their families.

Additionally, as one of my district's largest employers, if the university were to close, it would have a devastating rippling effect on the economics of Chicago's greater south side and also in the lives of the 850 faculty and staff who are employed by Chicago State University. Undoubtedly, the school's closing would also stifle any opportunity for economic recovery in communities on Chicago's south side and in the nearby suburban area of the city of Chicago.

To help address this pending dire situation, in the coming days I will be introducing a bill in the House to provide Federal assistance to the university until this budget impasse in the State of Illinois can be resolved.

Mr. Speaker, Chicago State University is far too important to the families, to the communities that I represent, to simply leave its fate to chance or to the political gamesmanship and indifference of its governmental leaders.

Illinois Governor Bruce Rauner should not allow this historically crucial, minority-serving institution of higher education that so faithfully serves the needs of African Americans and Latino American students to shut down on his watch. Legislative leaders in the State of Illinois must not allow this legendary institution to close its doors on current and future generations of upward-bound students.

□ 1900

Mr. Speaker, April 29 will be forever be known as the Day of Educational Infamy in my State of Illinois. It will be regarded as the day that Illinois lawmakers let the students of Chicago State University down. It will be regarded as the day that Illinois lawmakers let the citizens of the State of Illinois down.

It will be regarded as the day that Illinois lawmakers stood in the schoolhouse door to deny access to the universally acknowledged benefits of higher education to predominantly minority students who study and matriculate at the Chicago State University.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot afford to not afford to fund the Chicago State University. We must do everything in our power to address this ominous situation and provide help to this critical institution that has proven to be so vital to the needs of my constituents,

to the needs of the citizens of the State of Illinois, and to our Nation as a whole.

We must act, and we must act now. Save Chicago State. Save Chicago State. Save Chicago State University.

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

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for April 19 on account of unforeseen circumstances.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled a bill of the House of the following title, which was thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 2722. An act to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in recognition of the fight against breast cancer.

SENATE ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

The Speaker announced his signature to enrolled bills of the Senate of the following titles:

S. 719. An act to rename the Armed Forces Reserve Center in Great Falls, Montana, the Captain John E. Moran and Captain William Wylie Galt Armed Forces Reserve Center.

S. 1638. To direct the Secretary of Homeland Security to submit to Congress information on the Department of Homeland Security headquarters consolidation project in the National Capital Region, and for other purposes.

BILLS PRESENTED TO THE PRESIDENT

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported that on April 19, 2016, she presented to the President of the United States, for his approval, the following bill:

H.R. 1670. To direct the Architect of the Capitol to place in the United States Capitol a chair honoring American Prisoners of War/Missing in Action.

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, further reported that on April 20, 2016, she presented to the President of the United States, for his approval, the following bill:

H.R. 2722. To require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in recognition of the fight against breast cancer.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. RUSH. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 7 o'clock and 2 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, April 21, 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:

5095. A letter from the Assistant General Counsel for Regulatory Affairs, Consumer Product Safety Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Safety Standard for Automatic Residential Garage Door Operators [Docket No.: CPSC-2015-0025] received April 19, 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 Energy and Commerce.

5096. A letter from the Deputy Bureau Chief, Wireline Competition Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Connect America Fund [WC Docket No.: 10-90] ETC Annual Reports and Certifications [WC Docket No.: 14-58] Rural Broadband Experiments [WC Docket No.: 14-259] received April 19, 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 Energy and Commerce.

5097. A letter from the Director, Regulations Policy and Management Staff, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — Food Additives Permitted for Direct Addition to Food for Human Consumption; Folic Acid [Docket No.: FDA-2012-F-0480] received April 19, 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 Energy and Commerce.

5098. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's IRB only rule — Indexing Adjustments for Sections 36B and 5000A (Rev. Proc. 2016-24) received April 19, 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 Ways and Means.

5099. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's IRB only rule — Fringe Benefits Aircraft Valuation Formula (Rev. Rule. 2016-10) received April 19, 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 Ways and Means.

5100. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's IRB only rule — Revenue Procedure: Purchase Price Safe Harbors for sections 143 and 25 (Rev. Proc. 2016-25) received April 19, 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 Ways and Means.

5101. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's IRB only rule — 2016 Automobile Price Inflation Adjustment (Rev. Proc. 2016-23) received April 19, 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 Ways and Means.

5102. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final and temporary regulations — Inversions and Related Transactions [TD 9761] (RIN: 1545-BM88) received April 19, 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 Ways and Means.

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. KLINE: Committee on Education and the Workforce. H.R. 4293. A bill to amend the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 to ensure that retirement investors receive advice in their best interests, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 114–511). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. BRADY of Texas: Committee on Ways and Means. H.R. 4294. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that retirement investors receive advice in their best interests, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 114–512, Pt. 1). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. KLINE: Committee on Education and the Workforce. H.R. 4294. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that retirement investors receive advice in their best interests, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 114–512, Pt. 2). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

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. LEVIN (for himself, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. NEAL, Mr. HOYER, and Mr. LARSON of Connecticut):

H.R. 4996. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to return the estate, gift, and generation skipping transfer tax to 2009 levels; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. EMMER of Minnesota (for himself, Mr. GUINTA, Mr. BARR, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, Mr. MULVANEY, and Mr. HILL):

H.R. 4997. A bill to amend the Home Mortgage Disclosure Act of 1975 to specify which depository institutions are subject to the maintenance of records and disclosure requirements of such Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. WELCH (for himself, Mr. KEATING, and Ms. CASTOR of Florida):

H.R. 4998. A bill to amend the Atomic Energy Act of 1954 to provide for consultation with State and local governments, the consideration of State and local concerns, and the approval of post-shutdown decommissioning activities reports by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. BEYER (for himself and Mr. WITTMAN):

H.R. 4999. A bill to ensure the effective and appropriate use of the Lowest Price Technically Acceptable source selection process; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. GRAYSON:

H.R. 5000. A bill to amend the National Labor Relations Act to establish an efficient system to enable employees to form, join, or assist labor organizations, to provide for mandatory injunctions for unfair labor practices during organizing efforts, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina (for herself, Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. KIND, Mr. RUSH, Ms. MATSUI, and Mr. LEWIS):

H.R. 5001. A bill to continue the use of a 3-month quarter EHR reporting period for health care providers to demonstrate meaningful use for 2016 under the Medicare and Medicaid EHR incentive payment programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, 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. KELLY of Pennsylvania (for himself and Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania):

H.R. 5002. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend and modify the section 45 credit for refined coal from steel industry fuel, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. ROKITA:

H.R. 5003. A bill to reauthorize child nutrition programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, 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 Mr. WEBER of Texas (for himself, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. YOHO, Mr. GOHMERT, Mr. OLSON, Mr. FARENTHOLD, and Mr. BABIN):

H.R. 5004. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to disallow certain biodiesel and alternative fuel tax credits for fuels derived from animal fats; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. BLUMENAUER (for himself and Mr. HANNA):

H.R. 5005. A bill to prohibit the hiring of additional employees of any office of the legislative branch until the Speaker of the House of Representatives or the President pro Tempore of the Senate certifies that no employee of the office has a seriously delinquent tax debt; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Ms. FRANKEL of Florida (for herself, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. HIMES, and Mr. SCHWEIKERT):

H.R. 5006. A bill to amend section 214(c)(8) of the Immigration and Nationality Act to modify the data reporting requirements relating to nonimmigrant employees, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. REICHERT (for himself, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. TIBERI, Mr. NEAL, Mr. PAULSEN, Mr. HOLDING, Mr. SMITH of Missouri, Ms. ESTY, Mr. BYRNE, and Mr. HIMES):

H.R. 5007. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exempt private foundations from the tax on excess business holdings in the case of certain philanthropic enterprises which are independently supervised, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. MACARTHUR (for himself and Mr. KIND):

H.R. 5008. A bill to direct the Secretary of the Treasury to improve tax compliance in the construction industry, including clarifying the employment status of service providers in the construction industry, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. BOUSTANY (for himself, Mr. NEAL, Mr. BILIRAKIS, and Mr. CÁRDENAS):

H.R. 5009. A bill to amend titles XVIII and XIX of the Social Security Act to ensure prompt coverage of breakthrough devices under the Medicare and Medicaid programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, 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. COHEN (for himself, Ms. NORTON, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. TSONGAS, Mr. CONYERS, and Mr. VISCLOSKY):

H.R. 5010. A bill to amend the Fair Credit Reporting Act to require the inclusion of credit scores with free annual credit reports provided to consumers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. FLEMING:

H.R. 5011. A bill to designate the Federal building and United States courthouse located at 300 Fannin Street in Shreveport, Louisiana, as the ''Tom Stagg Federal Building and United States Courthouse''; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. GALLEGO (for himself, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mr. SERRANO, and Mr. RANGEL):

H.R. 5012. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to limit the grounds of deportability for certain alien members of the United States Armed Forces, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. MOOLENAAR (for himself, Mr. BENISHEK, Mr. BISHOP of Michigan, Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan, Mr. TROTT, Mr. UPTON, and Mr. WALBERG):

H.R. 5013. A bill to provide assistance to communities for the emergency improvement of water systems, and other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture.

By Mr. POCAN:

H.R. 5014. A bill to protect the legal production, purchase, and possession of marijuana by Indian tribes, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, 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. ROUZER:

H.R. 5015. A bill to restore amounts improperly withheld for tax purposes from severance payments to individuals who retired or separated from service in the Armed Forces for combat-related injuries, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, 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:

H.R. 5016. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to require the Secretary of Education to provide student borrowers with instruction in general principles of financial literacy through its online counseling tool, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. DESANTIS (for himself, Mr. SALMON, Mr. PETERS, Mr. BLUM, Mr. RATCLIFFE, Mr. POE of Texas, and Mr. YOHO):

H.J. Res. 89. A joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States relating to the equal application to the Senators and Representatives of the laws that apply to all citizens of the United States; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. TED LIEU of California (for himself and Mr. YOHO):

H.J. Res. 90. A joint resolution to provide limitations on the transfer of certain United States munitions from the United States to Saudi Arabia; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. CÁRDENAS (for himself, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. AGUILAR, Ms. BASS, Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. BECERRA, Mr. BERA, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. COSTA, Mr. BEYER, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. DESAULNIER, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania, Ms. ESHOO, Ms. ESTY, Mr. FARR, Mr. FATTAH, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Ms. FUDGE, Ms. GABBARD, Mr. GALLEGO, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. GRAYSON, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Ms. HAHN, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. HIMES, Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. HONDA, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. ISRAEL, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mr. JEFFRIES, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mr. KENNEDY, Ms. KUSTER, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Ms. LEE, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. LEWIS, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. MCNERNEY, Ms. MENG, Mr. MOULTON, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. NEAL, Mr. O'ROURKE, Mr. PERLMUTTER, Mr. PETERS, Ms. PLASKETT, Mr. POCAN, Mr. POLIS, Mr. QUIGLEY, Miss RICE of New York, Mr. RICHMOND, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. RUIZ, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Mr. RUSH, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. SIRES, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. TAKANO, Mrs. TORRES, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. VEASEY, Mr. VISCLOSKY, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Ms. ADAMS, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mr. MEEKS, Ms. TITUS, Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico, and Ms. LOFGREN):

H. Res. 694. A resolution amending the Rules of the House of Representatives to require that a standing committee (or subcommittee thereof) hearing be held whenever there is a moment of silence in the House for a tragedy involving gun violence; to the Committee on Rules.

By Ms. LEE (for herself and Mr. CONYERS):

H. Res. 695. A resolution recognizing the 50th anniversary of the Vietnam War,; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, 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.

MEMORIALS

Under clause 3 of rule XII, memorials were presented and referred as follows:

202. The SPEAKER presented a memorial of the Senate of the State of Georgia, relative to Senate Resolution 924, urging the United States Congress to enact legislation for the purpose of enhancing hunting, fishing, recreational shooting, and other outdoor

recreational opportunities, as well as strengthen conservation efforts nationwide; which was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources.

203. Also, a memorial of the General Assembly of the State of Tennessee, relative to House Joint Resolution No. 70, urging the President and Congress to take immediate action to protect citizens and lawful residents from the consequences resulting from the uncontrolled influx of undocumented immigrants into this country; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.

204. Also, a memorial of the Senate of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, relative to Senate Resolution 1371, condemning the structures and mechanisms being considered by the Committee on Natural Resources of the United States House of Representatives in its discussion draft entitled Puerto Rico Oversight, Management, and Economic Stability Act that are contrary to democratic processes and the rights of the People of Puerto Rico; which was referred jointly to the Committees on Natural Resources, the Judiciary, and Education and the Workforce.

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. LEVIN:

H.R. 4996.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1 of Section 8 of Article 1 of the United States Constitution

By Mr. EMMER of Minnesota:

H.R. 4997.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18: To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mr. WELCH:

H.R. 4998.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18: The Congress shall have Power To. . .make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mr. BEYER:

H.R. 4999.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution provides Congress the power to ''provide for the common Defence'' and ''to make Rules for the Government and Regulation of the land and naval forces''.

By Mr. GRAYSON:

H.R. 5000.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, of the United States Constitution.

By Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina:

H.R. 5001.

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.

By Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania:

H.R. 5002.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The Congress enacts this bill pursuant to Article I Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. ROKITA:

H.R. 5003.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8 of the Constitution of the United States

By Mr. WEBER of Texas:

H.R. 5004.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3

The Congress shall have Power to regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.

Article I, 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 Defense and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.

By Mr. BLUMENAUER:

H.R. 5005.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

US Constitution Article I

By Ms. FRANKEL of Florida:

H.R. 5006.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I Section 8 of the Constitution

By Mr. REICHERT:

H.R. 5007.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

''Article I, 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 Mr. MACARTHUR:

H.R. 5008.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3

By Mr. BOUSTANY:

H.R. 5009.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

(a) Article I, Section 1, to exercise the legislative powers vested in Congress as granted in the Constitution; and

(b) Article I, Section 8, Clause 18, which gives Congress the authority ''To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof;

By Mr. COHEN:

H.R. 5010.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3 (relating to the power to regulate foreign and interstate commerce) of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. FLEMING:

H.R. 5011.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article III, Section 1, which gives Congress the authority to ''ordain and establish'' courts inferior to the Supreme Court.

By Mr. GALLEGO:

H.R. 5012.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18

By Mr. MOOLENAAR:

H.R. 5013.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution

By Mr. POCAN:

H.R. 5014.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3

The Congress shall have Power . . . To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.

By Mr. ROUZER:

H.R. 5015.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1

The Congress shall have the Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debt and provide for the common Defense and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.

By Mr. SALMON:

H.R. 5016.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18:

The Congress shall have power . . . To make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the foregoing powers, and all other powers vested by this Constitution in the government of the United States, or in any department or officer thereof.

By Mr. DESANTIS:

H.J. Res. 89.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. TED LIEU of California:

H.J. Res. 90.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

U.S. Constitution, Article I, Section I, which includes an implied power for the Congress to regulate the conduct of the United States with respect to foreign affairs; and U.S. Constitution, Article I, Section 8, which authorizes the Congress to: (1) ''provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States,'' and (2) ''make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers.''

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 194: Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. WESTERMAN, Mr. BYRNE, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, Mr. LAHOOD, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. ROSKAM, Mr. WALKER, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. KELLY of Mississippi, Mr. FLEISCHMANN, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, and Mr. PEARCE.

H.R. 403: Mr. PERLMUTTER.

H.R. 446: Mr. HONDA and Mr. TED LIEU of California.

H.R. 509: Ms. BROWNLEY of California.

H.R. 556: Mr. KENNEDY.

H.R. 634: Mr. PERLMUTTER.

H.R. 635: Mr. PERLMUTTER.

H.R. 664: Mr. BROOKS of Alabama and Mr. ABRAHAM.

H.R. 729: Mr. SCHIFF.
H.R. 923: Mr. TIPTON.
H.R. 953: Mr. ROTHFUS.
H.R. 969: Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Mr. MICA, and Mr. LAHOOD.
H.R. 1150: Mr. SHERMAN.
H.R. 1197: Mr. NADLER.
H.R. 1211: Ms. MENG.
H.R. 1218: Mr. KNIGHT, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. CLAY, and Mr. POLIS.
H.R. 1220: Mr. QUIGLEY.
H.R. 1221: Mrs. TORRES.
H.R. 1247: Ms. MENG.
H.R. 1256: Mr. SMITH of Missouri.
H.R. 1312: Mr. FATTAH.
H.R. 1336: Ms. LEE, Mr. PAULSEN, and Ms. KUSTER.
H.R. 1343: Ms. CLARKE of New York.
H.R. 1356: Mr. CARNEY.
H.R. 1538: Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico.
H.R. 1594: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. LAMBORN, and Mr. DELANEY.
H.R. 1603: Mr. JOYCE.
H.R. 1610: Mr. SABLAN.
H.R. 1655: Mr. HONDA.
H.R. 1688: Mr. DUFFY, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. MICA, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. GARAMENDI, and Ms. CLARKE of New York.
H.R. 1706: Mrs. CAPPS.
H.R. 1718: Mr. WOMACK, Mr. LOUDERMILK, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. GRAYSON, Ms. JENKINS of Kansas, Mr. SHUSTER, and Mr. ASHFORD.
H.R. 1733: Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois and Ms. EDWARDS.
H.R. 1779: Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois and Mrs. DINGELL.
H.R. 1818: Mr. YODER, Mr. SMITH of Texas, and Mr. DESJARLAIS.
H.R. 1961: Ms. MENG.
H.R. 2035: Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi.
H.R. 2255: Mr. BRAT and Mr. WOMACK.
H.R. 2622: Mrs. CAPPS and Mr. YODER.
H.R. 2698: Mr. SHUSTER.
H.R. 2759: Mr. DONOVAN, Ms. STEFANIK, and Mr. CICILLINE.
H.R. 2866: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.
H.R. 2889: Ms. NORTON and Mr. CUMMINGS.
H.R. 2894: Mr. MCGOVERN.
H.R. 2901: Mr. HECK of Washington and Mr. VARGAS.
H.R. 2903: Mr. PAYNE.
H.R. 2911: Mr. POMPEO and Mr. FITZPATRICK.
H.R. 2920: Ms. LOFGREN.
H.R. 2992: Ms. ADAMS, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. CAPUANO, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. KILDEE, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. NADLER, Mr. SERRANO, and Mr. HECK of Washington.
H.R. 2993: Mr. DESAULNIER.
H.R. 3222: Mr. RUSSELL and Mr. BABIN.
H.R. 3223: Mr. LIPINSKI and Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.
H.R. 3237: Ms. LEE and Mr. TAKAI.
H.R. 3294: Mr. TIPTON.
H.R. 3308: Ms. SEWELL of Alabama and Ms. PLASKETT.
H.R. 3323: Mr. SESSIONS.
H.R. 3326: Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Mr. MCCAUL, and Mr. FLORES.
H.R. 3351: Mr. SWALWELL of California.
H.R. 3355: Mrs. KIRKPATRICK.
H.R. 3406: Mr. SARBANES.
H.R. 3520: Mr. VAN HOLLEN and Mr. LANGEVIN.
H.R. 3533: Mr. POLIS.
H.R. 3546: Ms. LEE and Mr. TIPTON.
H.R. 3623: Mr. MACARTHUR.
H.R. 3632: Mr. PETERS and Mr. POLIS.
H.R. 3688: Mr. POE of Texas.
H.R. 3691: Mr. COHEN.
H.R. 3706: Mr. SIRES and Mr. ISRAEL.
H.R. 3815: Mr. SIRES, Mr. BUCHANAN, and Mr. LANCE.
H.R. 3832: Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 3861: Mr. PETERS.
H.R. 3865: Mrs. BLACK.
H.R. 3880: Mr. HARPER.
H.R. 3892: Mr. HUDSON, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, and Mr. WESTERMAN.
H.R. 3929: Ms. ESHOO.
H.R. 3982: Mr. HARRIS.
H.R. 4016: Mr. MARCHANT.
H.R. 4137: Mr. HARPER, Mr. CONYERS, and Ms. LEE.
H.R. 4219: Mr. BRAT and Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 4251: Mr. TAKAI.
H.R. 4309: Ms. PLASKETT.
H.R. 4320: Mr. DONOVAN.
H.R. 4365: Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, Mr. GRAVES of Missouri, Mr. YODER, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, Mr. DESJARLAIS, and Mr. MULLIN.
H.R. 4447: Mr. YARMUTH and Mr. MCGOVERN.
H.R. 4448: Mr. POSEY.
H.R. 4479: Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. NOLAN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Ms. EDWARDS, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Ms. KUSTER, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Mr. TAKANO, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. TAKAI, Ms. ADAMS, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, Ms. GABBARD, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. BEYER, Mr. GALLEGO, Mr. RUSH, and Mr. THOMPSON of California.
H.R. 4488: Mrs. TORRES.
H.R. 4561: Mr. SHERMAN.
H.R. 4562: Mr. SHERMAN.
H.R. 4592: Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois and Mr. HIGGINS.
H.R. 4614: Mr. WITTMAN and Mr. JONES.
H.R. 4615: Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. MCNERNEY, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, and Mr. GARAMENDI.
H.R. 4625: Ms. NORTON, Ms. EDWARDS, and Ms. JACKSON LEE.
H.R. 4626: Mr. GIBSON, Mr. ZELDIN, Mr. HANNA, and Mr. BISHOP of Georgia.
H.R. 4640: Mr. LOWENTHAL.
H.R. 4656: Ms. MOORE.
H.R. 4665: Mr. POLIS and Mr. PAULSEN.
H.R. 4667: Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. DOGGETT, and Mr. JONES.
H.R. 4668: Mr. HASTINGS.
H.R. 4683: Mr. DOLD and Mr. O'ROURKE.
H.R. 4684: Mr. KING of New York.
H.R. 4694: Mr. GARAMENDI.
H.R. 4697: Mr. COURTNEY.
H.R. 4700: Miss RICE of New York.
H.R. 4715: Mr. SMITH of Nebraska, Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina, Mr. ROHRABACHER, and Mr. WESTMORELAND.
H.R. 4732: Mr. HECK of Nevada.
H.R. 4740: Mr. GRIJALVA.
H.R. 4768: Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia.
H.R. 4769: Mr. BURGESS.
H.R. 4773: Mr. CARTER of Georgia, Mr. MASSIE, Mr. YOUNG of Iowa, Mr. POE of Texas, Mr. CALVERT, Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina, Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky, Mr. WEBSTER of Florida, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. TIPTON, Mr. LABRADOR, and Mr. YODER.
H.R. 4775: Mrs. LOVE, Mr. FARENTHOLD, and Mr. HARPER.
H.R. 4798: Mr. COHEN, Mr. VELA, and Mr. PERLMUTTER.
H.R. 4803: Ms. MCCOLLUM.
H.R. 4816: Mr. KELLY of Mississippi, Mr. WALZ, and Mr. SMITH of Texas.
H.R. 4843: Mr. BUCSHON and Mr. KILMER.
H.R. 4893: Mr. MARCHANT and Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan.
H.R. 4905: Mr. TAKANO.
H.R. 4923: Mr. CURBELO of Florida, Mr. DENT, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, Mr. HOLDING, Mr. BISHOP of Michigan, Mr. EMMER of Minnesota, Mr. MESSER, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Mrs. NOEM, Mr. KING of New York, Ms. ADAMS, Mr. KIND, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mr. LEWIS, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. POLIS, Mr. GARAMENDI, and Mr. BOUSTANY.
H.R. 4963: Mr. GRIJALVA.
H.R. 4969: Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, and Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky.
H.R. 4978: Mrs. BLACK.
H.R. 4986: Ms. MATSUI.
H.R. 4989: Mr. DOLD.
H.R. 4991: Mr. O'ROURKE.
H.R. 4992: Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN.
H.J. Res. 88: Mr. JOLLY, Mr. COLLINS of New York, Mr. GUINTA, Mr. SESSIONS, Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California, Mr. MULLIN, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. HILL, Ms. JENKINS of Kansas, Mr. BYRNE, Ms. FOXX, Mr. ROKITA, Mr. MESSER, and Mr. KLINE.
H. Con. Res. 39: Mr. AGUILAR.
H. Con. Res. 97: Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, Mr. ROHRABACHER, and Mrs. LUMMIS.
H. Con. Res. 100: Mr. MCCAUL, Mr. ISSA, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, and Mr. NEWHOUSE.
H. Con. Res. 112: Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas and Mrs. NOEM.
H. Res. 290: Mr. FITZPATRICK.
H. Res. 313: Mrs. MILLER of Michigan.
H. Res. 360: Ms. MENG, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, and Miss RICE of New York.
H. Res. 494: Mr. EMMER of Minnesota.
H. Res. 540: Mr. POLIS.
H. Res. 569: Mr. ENGEL.
H. Res. 582: Mr. YOUNG of Alaska.
H. Res. 590: Mr. ISRAEL.
H. Res. 647: Mr. CURBELO of Florida and Mr. BYRNE.
H. Res. 675: Mr. VISCLOSKY, Mr. BISHOP of Michigan, Mr. MACARTHUR, and Mr. JOYCE.

PETITIONS, ETC.

Under clause 3 of rule XII,

57. The SPEAKER presented a petition of the St. Charles Parish Council, relative to Resolution No. 6216, urging the Federal Congressional Committees to include local and state stakeholders in the process of drafting legislation to craft an affordable and sustainable reauthorization of the National Flood Insurance Program; which was referred to the Committee on Financial Services.